

# Healing Hearts

Healing, Consciousness & Wellbeing News

April 2024



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To view all 'Healing Hearts' magazines refer:  
Reiki Energy for Life  
Natural Therapy Pages

## HEALING HEARTS

Edited by Suzanne King, *Reiki Energy for Life*

*"A good head and a good heart are always a formidable combination."* This Nelson Mandela quote epitomises what can be achieved when intelligence melds with kindness to create positive legacies for future generations.

This edition considers positive legacies from various perspectives; from the importance of community kindness, providing care to patients in need, to nature conservation and wildlife protection. The legacy ideas presented by the Tasmanian Land Conservancy and all community contributors will get you thinking on what you can do to help make the world kinder, more caring and peaceful.

# Editor's Letter

**“Protecting the biosphere should be our highest priority, or else we sicken and die. Other things like capitalism ... are not forces of nature, we invented them. It makes no sense to elevate economics above the biosphere.”**

Quote by David Suzuki, famous Canadian environmental activist

As my mother's death edged ever closer, it occurred to me what an incredible legacy she and my father had built in their lifetimes. How blessed was I to have parents who would instil in me the most positive of qualities, to be loving, gentle and kind and to touch the earth lightly. This legacy of love and kindness dwells forever in my heart and in turn, pours from me to nature and all sentient beings.

This means that the ripple effect of my parents' love and motivations in life, washes through me, and in turn I too hope I can leave a legacy of loving kindness, peace and harmony. This might be as simple as people remembering my care and gentleness as a reiki practitioner, or that I brought sunshine into their lives. Perhaps my mission to bring reiki into clinical settings in Tasmania has come to a fruition. Or, perhaps I have managed to join other like-minded people to protect our beautiful natural environment, for I know we are just caretakers in this life.

What I do know, is that there is infinite need for us to be constantly working towards a positive legacy for the future. Kindness, as a legacy, was spoken about often by former New Zealand Prime Minister, Jacinda Ardern. In her famous 'Kindness and Kaitiakitanga' (looking after the environment) speech to the United Nations in 2018, she spoke of the importance of "looking outwardly and beyond ourselves."

To 'look beyond ourselves' might mean simply taking time out to chat to people, or becoming involved in a philanthropic, charitable, research or scientific endeavour. Perhaps it means donating or making a bequest to a foundation or volunteering your time. There are vast ways to strive to elevate the health, wellbeing and justice for humans, animals, and the environment across the globe. There is just so much to be achieved in our lives to ensure the health and happiness of future generations.

I hope this edition inspires you to think of ways that you can be personally responsible for making change. As Karen Angarita says in her interview (refer page 8), "together we can do more". Each of us can find a way to join with others in making our world a gentler, more sustainable, greener, cleaner, pristine and peaceful place, to enable happiness, health and wellbeing for future generations. In the meantime, what I know for certain, is that kindness is the key.

Best wishes,

Suzanne King  
Reiki VII Practitioner  
*Reiki Energy for Life*



## Notice of final edition for 2024:

After bringing readers *Healing Hearts* quarterly magazine since April 2021, I'm now taking a break to explore new horizons, including pursuing my long-held dream of teaching Reiki. After practicing Reiki since 1999, it's about time! I look forward to bringing readers more news and inspiring stories in 2025.

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## 86 Hampden Rd, Battery Point

You will find healing from different perspectives in the TasEthical Building, 86 Hampden Road, Battery Point. From building financial wellness with TasEthical to healing modalities - all practitioners are under the one roof.

Serving the community's financial, physical and mental health needs are:

### Directory

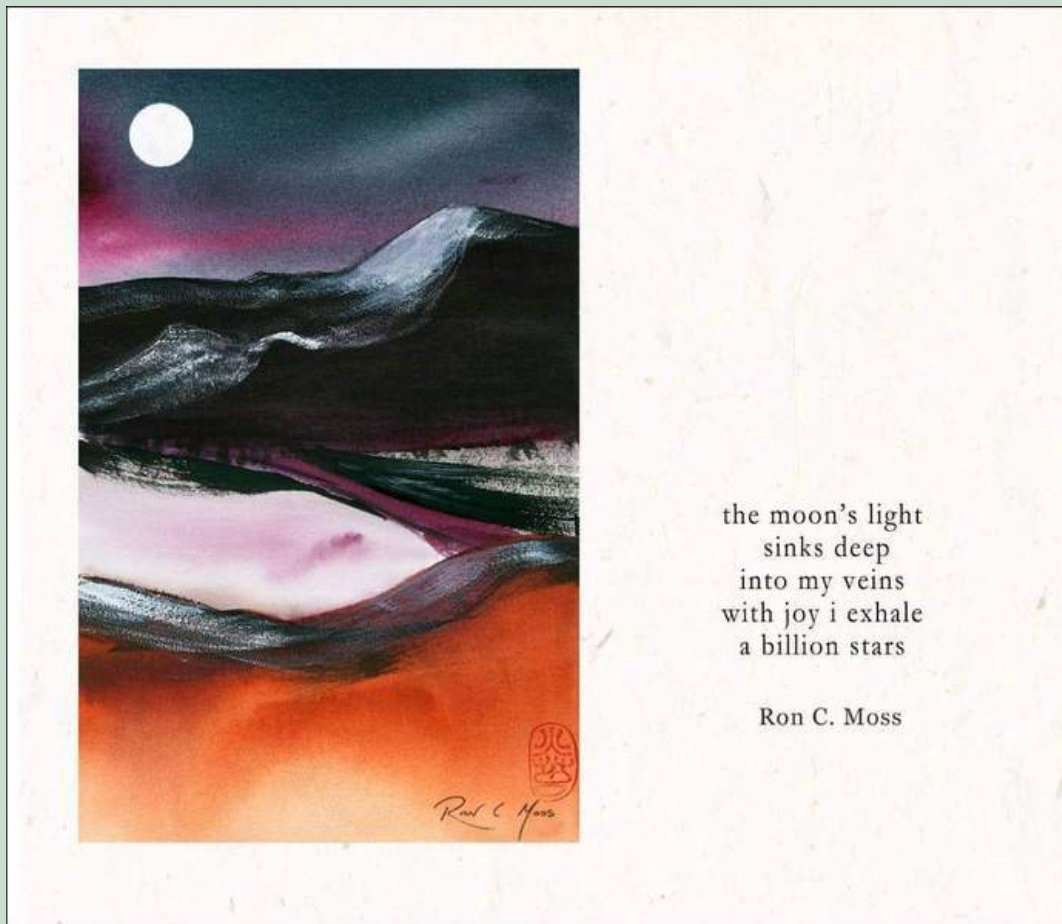
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My work allows me to express my constant amazement at the profound beauty and endless creativity of the Universe, for which we are all part of. Here on earth, we are all connected, beneath the moon's light.



Ron C. Moss is a celebrated Tasmanian visual artist and poet who has won many international prizes for his work.

His expressions are through ink haiga paintings, which are artworks containing Japanese tradition haiku poetry. *'The moon's light'* (as shown above) follows tanka poetry tradition, which is like haiku, but written in English language.

Ron has published numerous books including: *Bushfire Moon*, *The Bone Carver*, *Broken Starfish* and *Cloud Hands*. There are also various journals and sites like the Haiku Foundation where you can view his haigu collection. For more information on art, poetry and books, email:

[ronmoss8@gmail.com](mailto:ronmoss8@gmail.com)



Suzanne King, Reiki VII Practitioner,  
*Reiki Energy for Life*, Battery Point

# Reiki Across the Community

**About Reiki:** Reiki is natural healing modality which is used as a complementary therapy to ease anxiety, pain and discomfort. As a reiki practitioner either doesn't touch or just lightly touches the patient, the therapy is so gentle it is suitable for everyone; from babies to the elderly to pre and post operative patients and everyone in between.

In my lifetime I aim to facilitate for reiki natural energy healing to become available across the community, especially within clinical settings. To my way of thinking, if reiki is available in over 850 hospitals across the United States (let alone all the hospitals in the United Kingdom and beyond), then surely there is a way to make reiki more available and recognisable in Tasmania. As a complementary healing modality, reiki can just naturally be practiced alongside any allopathic treatments, including chemotherapy and radiation treatments for cancer. Overseas, reiki practitioners appear in many hospital settings like in palliative care, oncology and cardiology wards, and provide complementary treatments to people suffering from chronic illnesses and pain.

A reiki treatment provides soothing, comforting care in such a gentle way. How easy would it be for a practitioner to just sit with patients in oncology wards, or clinical settings like the Icon Cancer Centre, and by way of a gentle touch (or even no touch at all!) the patient experiences reduced pain (i.e. neuropathic pain) and anxiety. To facilitate this vision, and after 24 years of practice, it's time for me to get teaching, because I can't forge ahead with this vision alone.

Suzanne is one of the few Reiki VII Practitioners in Australia. For more information about *Reiki Energy for Life*, refer to:

**Website:** <https://www.naturaltherapypages.com.au/connect/reikienergyforlife/energetic-medicine/pain-alignment-tension-blockages>

**Website:** <https://reikienergyforlife.com>

## Community Legacies

Legacy feedback received via the Taroona Good Karma Network featured strong conservation themes. Here are two stand-out contributions (names with-held for privacy).

"We are planting our yard with native bird attracting flowering shrubs and trees as our legacy for native wildlife. Planting any flowering grevillea and bottle-brush will attract bees and native nectar eating birds."



"We live on a bush block, which was also once used as a berry farm. My partner and I have a long-term vision, we are already agreed, and working towards leaving our farm to the aboriginal community. Half of the farm is not cleared and the plants in this area have traditional uses, like Pepperberry (*Tasmannia lanceolata*) also known as Mountain Pepper. The other half of the farm is used for agriculture, but we use practices which are wildlife friendly. Our vision for the future is that when we pass away, the property can be handed over to the Tasmanian aboriginal community so they can run a social enterprise. We envisage that the farm would be a place where they can collect bush tucker, as well as grow healthy food for the community (and for sale)."

# Loving the Land - A Natural Legacy

## Interview with: Annabelle Sweetman, Tasmanian Land Conservancy



Annabelle Sweetman  
Portrait by: Karen Brown

**About Annabelle:** After working in a wilderness lodge in the heart of Alaska for five years, Annabelle and her husband moved to Tasmania, to remain in the heart of nature. At first, she worked for an outdoor walking company at Freycinet before landing a Tourism Tasmania job, where she focused on Tasmanian walking experiences for close to two decades. Yet throughout this time, the values of the Tasmanian Land Conservancy (TLC) called to her heart. So she feels ecstatic to now be working as TLC's Planned Giving Coordinator. This role allows her to play a part in TLC's vision, of making Tasmania a global leader in nature conservation. It also allows her to combine her community-minded spirit, love of learning people's stories, building relationships, and helping people to connect to nature.

**How does the TLC provide a way for science, nature conservation and the community to come together?:** As an apolitical organisation, the TLC's aims are to purchase land of ecological significance to conserve critical habitat for unique plants and wildlife, including endangered and vulnerable species. TLC natural reserves being protected in perpetuity include areas as diverse as mountain tops, coastal environments, woodlands, wetlands, grasslands and sanctuaries for diverse plant life and migratory birds. Protection of these ecosystems ensures that special species have a chance to thrive for generations to come.

The TLC commenced in 2001 with just \$50 in the bank and has now grown (through donations, bequests, partnerships and grants) to become one of Tasmania's largest private landholders. More than 100,000 hectares is now conserved through TLC's network of 28 reserves plus partnerships with landholders and communities.

**Annabelle, how do you connect people to TLC reserves and promote the importance of leaving a positive legacy for the future?:** We are fortunate to be able to take people onto our reserves with our Conservation Science and Planning Team who explain our initiatives across climate resilience, conservation management and ecological monitoring. This is what was most uplifting for me when I started work with the TLC; that I could learn first-hand from scientists as to how species are thriving in places like the Vale of Belvoir (500 hectares of what is recognised as one of the most important places of nature conservation in Australia).



Pine Tier  
Photo: Rob Blakers

You can watch people transform between seeing them in the carpark and leaving our reserves. My job is to find out what is important to people, what might be triggering their conscience or desire to gift to the TLC. In telling them our story and what their contribution can go towards, it helps them understand where their money will go, and how this will help protect animals, endangered species, flora and fauna, well into the future. Apart from the impacts of climate change, these discussions help people to think about spiritual or indigenous aspects, which all tie into why people want to preserve the beauty of Tasmania.

## Interview: Annabelle Sweetman, Tasmanian Land Conservancy continued

**How do you find these natural reserves?** We have staff on our team who actively look at real estate and connect with property owners who are eager to sell to TLC. We review and assess land for individual benefits and natural values, prioritising conservation efforts on protecting whole ecosystems; properties that contain habitats for endangered species. Our reserves are 70-90% high natural value coverage and once we own them, we place a conservation covenant on them. This is a legally binding instrument that means that they are protected in perpetuity, even if ownership is transferred.

**What are some examples of reserves that TLC are excited about protecting?:** Our science team is over the moon about recently protecting Sloping Main; a 660 hectare property on the Tasman Peninsula which features extraordinary wetlands that act as habitat for seven endangered species. It's exciting when we can connect conservation areas through either existing TLC reserves, national parks or protected crown land. That is what we really celebrate as these connected reserve areas provide a protected corridor for animals.



TLC protected Sloping Main reserve  
Photo: Courtesy Tasmanian Land Conservancy

One of these connected conservation areas is Pine Tier, for which we are currently fundraising. This is a property in the Central Highlands that we have been eyeing off for over nine years. Pine Tier is like the last part of the puzzle (the “hole in the donut”), surrounded by national parks and aboriginal owned lands, between Skullbone Plains and Five Rivers.



TLC protected Prosser River Reserve  
Photo: James Hattam

Pine Tier will complete the picture, and make one continuous reserve stretching across 20,000 hectares of land. It is a truly special place, where the the Pine and Little Pine Rivers converge in the geographical centre of Tasmania. Standing there, you can look south to the snow-capped peaks of the Franklin-Gordon Wild Rivers National Park and to the north, to the Walls of Jerusalem National Park.

**What legacy stories come to mind?:** Melbourne based couple, Bruce and Ann McGregor, very generously used a \$1.6M bequest from Bruce's father David, to purchase TLC's Prosser River Reserve on Tasmania's East Coast, as a legacy for nature. The reserve is a sanctuary for so many endemic bird and other vulnerable species. In turn, Bruce and Ann are delighted that this bequest has created a living legacy of such environmental importance. We really celebrate those stories – it's so wonderful to see people motivated by leaving a conservation-minded legacy.

## Interview: Annabelle Sweetman, Tasmanian Land Conservancy continued

### **What do you think motivates people to think about leaving a legacy?:**

I believe there is a flow-on effect of inter-generational happiness that comes from giving. TLC is very transparent about what happens with funds and making sure that it is delegated as expected by the donor. It can help people bring hope especially for the next generation by protecting the environment for their grand-children and future generations.



Panorama of Pine Pier: Photo by Rob Blakers

There are many people who are in a “double income, no kids” situation and they want to do something that links with their values. There are also people who, with their children, come to a decision to not pass on an inheritance; they want their money to go towards doing something important.

“Giving while living” is becoming more popular. Many people want to give now and see, first hand, what they can contribute to. I recently met a lovely gentleman in his 80s who was giving to twelve charities. Apart from ensuring there were funds for his ongoing care, he didn’t want to leave money in his Will. He wanted to give it now and see the difference his money was making. Another donor was gifted money by her mother as part of what would be her inheritance. Instead of holding onto it, she donated to the TLC which made her mother (who was in her late 90’s) very happy. I think gifting can create an ongoing positive feeling and opens a person up to want to give more. It instils generosity, which can be contagious!

**How can people help leave a positive legacy by supporting TLC?:** Our donation types are diverse - from regular giving, people’s own Foundation Funds (for amounts of \$10,000 or more), bequests and fundraisers. It doesn’t have to be big amounts. Every little bit counts. People give as little as \$10 a month or \$50 donations every now and again, which goes towards conserving places like Pine Tiers. There are so many things that create stress in our lives, so even if a small portion of your income goes into TLC and conservation, your contribution works to elevate your feelings of self-worth.

**How can people connect with the TLC?:** I would encourage anyone who would like to know more, to subscribe to our newsletter. To get further involved, I recommend looking into our giving, event and volunteer programs. People can get involved in weeding and other land management activities on our reserves. We also have annual events, including a Discover Day event (usually held in Spring) where the public can visit our reserves. It’s always fantastic seeing people connect at these events and find inspiration in nature and in each other’s stories.



**For more information on the important conservation work of the Tasmanian Land Conservancy, refer to:**

Website: <https://tasland.org.au>  
Sign up to TLC’s Newsletter [here](#)



# Legacies from the Land of the Snow Leopard

## Interview with Cholpon Tabyldieva of Red Cross Connected Women



Cholpon (left) pictured with Suzanne, Reiki Energy for Life

**About Cholpon:** As a member of one of the oldest tribes in Kyrgystan, Cholpon beautifully balances her sacred Sayak tribal customs and crafting a fulfilling and deeply happy life in Tasmania. She speaks fluent Kyrgyz, Chinese, Russian and English and after many years working as a travel agent and doing voluntary work, now cares for people who are living with a disability. In Kyrgystan it is expected that when you marry a woman foregoes their right to work, but Cholpon has managed to forge ahead with careers after studying in Bishkek and obtaining a Degree in International Relations. She most recently contributed to the *Connected Women Tasmania Multicultural Cookbook* sharing the special recipe of 'Kyrgyz Manty' from her homeland.

**About Kyrgystan:** Follow the map north of India, Bhutan and Afghanistan and you will find Kyrgystan centred between Tajikstan (to the south), Kazakhstan (to the north), Uzbekistan (to the west) and China (to the east). Here the winter temperature can plummet to – 40 degrees Celsius, so all animals need to be brought inside for protection. There are still Kyrgyz nomads living in yurts, although the capital of Bishkek, is a thriving and multicultural city. The country is known for being blessed with stunning scenery; crystal clear lakes (like Issyk-kul and Song Kol), beautiful valleys (like Ala-Archa National Park) and the Pamir and Tian Shan snow-capped mountains; home to the endangered snow leopard.

The country has a mixed culture, reflective of historical Mongolian, Turkish Ottoman Empire and Soviet Union influences. The Kyrgyz people however have also held on to their own culture, practicing shamanism in their everyday life, and have many unique cultural practices which they ensure are handed down through the generations. Some traditions resemble Australian aboriginal traditions, like greeting someone with a smoke ceremony.

**How did you come to live in Tasmania?:** It was destiny. I was due to fly from Dubai to Bishkek on 5 September and my husband was due to fly on 1 September. There were difficulties for both of us, so each of us changed to the 3rd, so that is how I met my future Tasmanian husband! He was sitting next to me on the flight. He was flying to Kyrgystan to help save the snow leopard, by providing law enforcement training to rangers to help stop poaching. So the snow leopard is very important to me.

**What was difficult about moving to the other side of the world to live?:** When I came to Tasmania, there was only me and my daughter from Kyrgystan. No-one else comes from my country so I started to do volunteering jobs to find connections and friends. I worked at the Food Co-Op in Dodges Ferry and then I met the coordinator of the Red Cross Connected Women Group which led to working with refugees and newcoming migrants. I help to make them not feel isolated and make sure they are not discriminated against.

## Legacies from the Land of the Snow Leopard continued

**What are some important cultural traditions that you would want to keep alive, ensuring a positive legacy is passed from your generation to the next?:**

Knowing my history is very important for us, so we don't get lost, and even though we are open to people and other countries, knowing our heritage keeps us centred. I don't want to forget my ancestors and the fact that our tribe is the oldest tribe. Our tribe is divided into two parts. There are those who are close to the lake (Issyk-kul) and the other half of the tribe lives in Naaryn, a city. We call ourselves the 'water' sayaks and the other tribe is the 'dry' sayaks.



Cholpon's family yurt in Kyrgystan

When we were growing up, we learned all about our heritage, so we know all of our grand-fathers going back to the 6th century.

**What are some of your beloved cultural practices?:** We are very hospitable people. Here, when you go to someone's house you make an appointment first, whereas in my country you just go straight to the house. I grew up with a big family, with six children and up to thirteen people living in the one house. We cook a lot and the "door is always open". Anyone can come in for tea or food. You don't invite; people just come. If you have already eaten, it is expected you will eat more. We have our own yurt (built right next to the house) which fits 150 people. We have a lot of parties and celebrate everything. Always we come together and share food like lots of noodles and meat and Kymyz (horse milk).

Then there are practices like making our traditional vests and garments. The pattern is a Mongolian ornamental pattern which depicts the sacred Maygul flower, which is only found on the very tops of mountains. This flower is sacred to the Kyrgyz people. The traditional hat is called a Shokulo, which I was also taught how to make. The pattern is also a nomadic ornament. Our practices are peaceful, no guns, no fighting, but Kyrgystan is the home to kokbory, a fierce polo-like game played on horseback (not for the faint-hearted!).

**What traditions would you like to pass on to your daughter?:** I am teaching my daughter to share, to cook for people, and to have people in the house. I want connection to other people and to always be open. I always want my door to be open for people who need help or need food. I want my daughter to cook traditional food occasionally but to also cook with fresh food. I want to her to understand where she came from and to understand her identity, even if she is very happy in Australia. I want her to be open to everyone, to be accepting of every culture, every person, and understand that this world just needs our help and protection.

**How has *Connected Women Tasmania* been a positive influence in your life?:** The Program has provided a great way for me to make friends in Tasmania. We meet on Mondays and cook together on Fridays. It's been uplifting and empowering being part of this group. That's what the Program aims to do; to promote friendship, make sure migrant women do not feel discriminated against and it also provides a way for us to participate in community life. So it's made a big impact on my life here. I have felt very valued and supported by participating and it's promoted my sense of belonging. So far, through the Program, we've created the Multicultural Cookbook and who knows what other great projects will happen this year.

**To purchase a copy of the Multicultural Cookbook, and to find out more about Red Cross *Connected Women Tasmania*, refer to:**

Contact: Aynalem Dilla  
Email: [adilla@redcross.org.au](mailto:adilla@redcross.org.au)

# Building Communities of Care the Colombian Way



Karen Angarita

**About Karen Angarita:** After growing up in the small city of Cucuta, Colombia (near the Venezuelan border), Karen has spread her wings. In Colombia she worked in various fields, graduating as a Systems Engineer while working as a commercial advisor in a bank. Now she has a new life in Tasmania, working as a Disability Support Worker, which brings her great happiness and fulfillment. Not only does she feel like her life is flourishing, but her love and commitment to clients and her deep sense of community, means she is in high demand.

**Karen, what was it like growing up in Colombia?** I grew up with my parents and four sisters, just across the bridge from Venezuela. In my country, churches are everywhere and it's common to go to Mass even every day, so I had a strong Catholic upbringing. It wasn't until I came to Australia though, when I met many other nationalities, that I started to broaden my perspective. Although religion has been strong in my life, I now feel I am more broad-minded, more spiritual, more open in my beliefs and to other people's religions.

**What are your perspectives on leaving a positive legacy for the future?:** Everything comes back to kindness, respect and love. As human-beings we are connected, that is what I talk to my son about. I tell him, "I want you to be a kind person". If someone comes to our home, they are always welcome. The legacy that I would like to leave for the future for my son and my family is the importance of upholding a sense of community. To naturally think "we are not the only one". All of us are connected in some way. We need to love each other no matter what religion. "We are love".

When I think about technology and Artificial Intelligence, yes there are benefits, but at the same time, there is a big difference

between AI and us, and that is our capacity to connect, to feel, to love. An application cannot do that. Only we can develop feelings, express kindness, respect and provide loving care to someone else.

**How did you come to move to Tasmania and change careers?:** In my country, I did everything that society expected me to do. I was a good Catholic girl, I received top academic marks, went to university, became a Systems Engineer, and had a family. Just when I was achieving success professionally and my son was going to a good school, my partner thought about going to Australia. That idea tapped into a part of me that wanted to explore the world. I'd had those thoughts growing up, but then life had taken over. Now that idea began to grow again.

In Colombia we work eight hours a day, five or six days a week to survive but in Australia it's different. When I came to Australia, by chance I got a job in aged care as I spoke Spanish. So I started to work with a Colombian family who needed support with two family members one who had suffered a stroke and the other one had dementia. I realised that I enjoyed taking care of people in a loving way. It comes naturally to me, as being the eldest child, I looked after my sisters, my grandmother, and my father when he had cancer. So I grew up with a sense of service and care. So I felt that being a carer is something I really wanted to do.



A fun day together with family in Colombia

## Interview with Karen Angarita continued

Also, I grew up in a very unified family where we always support each other. We extend support like this to people who are close to us. That is, if someone is important to me, like my good friend, my family welcomes, cares and supports them as another member of the family. That is our motto "we support each other because we are family". So I made a decision to study Community Services in Australia and become a support worker and not try to progress as an engineer. In my migration pathway, I was pleading to work with vulnerable people and be part of the community.

**What are some social differences that you've experienced?** In my country, we are used to connecting with our neighbourhood, but that doesn't happen in Australia. I find it hard to connect with people here. In Colombia, you know everyone's life, you connect more, and you feel part of community. I feel that is important, as "together we can do more". So I am planning to pass down these values to my son.

Life is about how to help others and I very much want to pass on a sense of community to my son and others. I have a sense that we are losing our sense of community, so I want to make sure that connection is kept alive. It's so important to have social connection. When you are in touch with other people, our brains are designed to release endorphins, so when you are isolated, you won't release this 'happy' hormone, which means you become depressed and sick.

I sadly think society is becoming more isolated. So being in touch with someone, sharing love, having a chat; that is so important. The power of love, I believe in that, and I want to pass on that value. Also making people laugh!



Another big difference between Colombia and Australia, is that my home country does not have a disability pension or anything like the National Disability Insurance Scheme (NDIS). In Colombia, care comes from your family members. The job of a support worker doesn't exist in Colombia, unless you have private insurance, or you are rich and can pay a lot for support. People can live in really poor conditions because of sickness.

There is a big socio-economic gap in Colombia for people who are living with a disability. If your child has a special condition, there is no help coming, except from what the family can provide. In Colombia there is no residential care for the elderly, or for people living with dementia like here in Australia. The only way to get a nurse or care is to pay a lot of money. If you cannot afford to pay, you become lost and might even become homeless.

**What do you best love about your job as a Disability Support Worker?** When I came to Australia I thought "caring is my passion". I don't do the job just for money. Of course it is a way of living, but I am so blessed for doing something that I truly love and enjoy. This feeling of fulfillment is passed down to my clients through acts of service. How rewarding it is for me to see them improving their lives despite living a disability. It makes them feel worthy of great things, valued, respected and dignified. That is priceless for me! I love my job and it is because I truly care. It is my genuine call to work with people with a disability. I love my clients and because of my high level of care, I am in high demand. I think of my clients as a "present from the Universe".

# On a Mission: A Brazilian Legacy of Love



**About Camila Vieira:** After graduating from her physiotherapist studies, Camila worked in hospital ICU respiratory wards in Brasilia for six years. Now Camila has been in Australia for two years and is working hard to become a registered physiotherapist in this country. In the meantime, Camila works as a part-time Disability Support Worker, and is devoted to her clients and their respective families. She naturally brings great happiness and brightness to her clients and everyone she meets. Her level of care and compassion has left an indelibly positive mark on people's lives. Through her generosity of spirit, she is on a mission, travelling a pathway of kindness, to inspire her patients and project that loving kindness to future generations.

**Camila, what were some of the values you learned, growing up in Brazil?:** I am grateful for what my parents passed on to me, which was love, and also how to be responsible in life and how to make decisions. My parents' legacy to me, was not the same for them. For example, they did not have the opportunity to receive an education. I am very grateful that my parents gave me an education. My schooling has not only paved the way for me to get where I am today, but also it has enabled me to use my skills to provide care for others.

As I received an education, I was able to work in hospital ICU wards and take care of people who were fighting for their lives. Over the years I've witnessed many people in ICU take their last breath. I've become resilient about death, but these experiences have been personally transformational. Being with patients when they have passed away makes me see my own life in different ways, like how to place more value on my own life.

**What are your thoughts on leaving a positive legacy for future generations?:** I believe there are four major factors that are of utmost importance to enable a positive, inspirational legacy for the future. These major factors are: selflessness, compassion, generosity, and respect for others. I feel that my legacy is related to how I care for people, and the compassion with which I handle situations around me. To me, life is nothing more than a constant giving of ourselves to others. Giving our best so that we can positively impact the lives of others. This is why I became interested in physiotherapy; knowing that I can contribute to people's recovery from sickness and injury is very satisfying work. During the six years I worked in ICUs at various hospitals in Brazil, I realised that I was there to leave a legacy for those seeking healing. I couldn't give them the cure, but I could give attention, care, a friendly conversation, a smile, affection, love!

I still have contact with my patients in Brazil; they remember me well. Like I had an 85-year-old patient who considers me her daughter and we are in constant contact. Even though there is an ocean between us, we are still connected. So I feel I have left a positive mark on their lives. I am always thinking how I am caring for someone's loved one, because that's what we all are - someone's loved one. For me, this is how we truly endure, through love, kindness, and the inspiration we leave behind. In the future, it will be important for me to have a family and important for me to pass on the value of being kind. I always feel in my heart that my mission is to take care of people and show respect and kindness to other people.

# A Honduran Perspective: Being humanitarian and spreading the Spirit of Kindness



**About Diana Flores:** Growing up in Tegucigalpa, Honduras, Diana's hard-working parents always instilled in her the importance of 'thinking big'. Through their encouragement and support, she started to learn English from the age of five, and throughout her life, committed herself to study. Now she has a Bachelor of Science in Business Management, a Masters in Project Management and has vast experience working in the community development sector. In 2013, Diana and her husband made the momentous decision to travel on a Skilled Regional Visa to live in Tasmania. Now she is a mother to 8-month-old Adrian and works as a Team Leader for Settlement and Youth Services at the Migrant Resource Centre, while her husband is an emergency doctor at the Royal Hobart Hospital.

Here in Tasmania, life is complete. She lives a peaceful life in an idyllic beachside suburb; far from Tegucigalpa (a city of close to 1.3 million people). As their little family makes up the only three Hondurans living in Tasmania, she possesses a unique understanding of what it is like to live so far from her culture and heritage. She now uses knowledge of her own experiences, intertwined with her broad leadership and project management skills, to connect with community and to support migrants and humanitarian entrants to Tasmania. Life here is good, her job is deeply rewarding, filling her heart with joy and fulfilment.

**Diana, what legacies do you think your parents gave to you?:** The most important thing for my parents was for us as children to have the best education. My father always focused on how important it was as women to get a University Degree and to learn how to stand up for ourselves. He always emphasised the importance of achieving big things in life so no-one could ever walk over us. So that remained in my head as I was growing up.

My mother worked as an accountant for a large pharmaceutical company. Monday to Friday she worked from 8.00 am and came home around 1.00 am. My father worked long shifts too, from 8.00 am to 10.00 pm. That's what hard-working families look like in Honduras. It's normal to work such incredibly long hours. It is the only way to survive, to keep a roof over your head and afford the education that we had. So that is how all four of us are bilingual; we were lucky enough to go the bilingual school. The fact that I had been speaking English since I was a little girl, paved the way for my skilled visa requirement in 2019. It is incredibly hard to pay for education and go to University in Honduras. So I was one of the lucky ones, being able to speak English. As my father paid for my University Degree, and my mother for my siblings' university degree, we have been able to progress in life. Due to their sacrifices, I am where I am today, living and loving life in Tasmania.

All I have achieved comes from the beginning, from my parents' support. Then, when I look back further, to my grandmother (who is one of the loves of my life), she was also a hard-working single Mum. She worked hard to support three children through waitressing. If I look at my life in retrospective, I would not be able to live my present life without support and effort, and that dedication, love and commitment to family goes back generations.

## Interview with Diana Flores continued

**How has 'thinking big' shaped your life?:** Already I am a Latin woman, so I have the capacity to 'storm in!' Latin women are like an earthquake! On top of this natural capacity to 'shake people up', I was also taught to 'think big'. So when I was 24 years-old I decided to travel, and I accepted a job teaching Spanish to high-school students in France for a year. When I returned to Honduras, I went to live in a small, remote town and worked there as a Business Development Manager. It is unusual in my country to live on your own. Normally you never live an independent life but I wanted to show I could stand up for myself.

It was while I was there I saw an advertisement in a magazine about a job managing accommodation on a remote island in Australia. I didn't apply for the job but it made me think about Australia for the first time. In Honduras, Australia is not thought of, as it is so far away, there are no political ties, and there's no Australian presence, or embassy. Before travelling I had believed that America was king of the world's countries but then I started to broaden my mind. Around this time I also wanted to meet someone to share my life; someone who would go on adventures with me. Then I met my future husband, who was also working in this remote town as a doctor. I asked him if he wanted to live overseas and when he said yes, I agreed to get married. So in 2013, we started our investigation into moving to this beautiful country.

### **What legacies do you think you will pass on**

**to your son?:** I want to instil in my son the same values and thinking as my parents taught me, that is, the importance of an education, to always 'think big', to always honour women and to help people, to be a kind soul. I think if you are helping people you are feeding your soul. You feel how your heart grows if you've made someone else happy.



Diana pictured with her husband Melvin and baby son, Adrian.

I feel like my son can be 'king of the world' here. He lives in a country brimming with opportunities. I will need to impress on him though that he will need stamina to progress, to strive for what he wants to achieve, and not grow complacent. It is so much easier here in Australia to achieve, but you need stamina and commitment to follow through with your goals. So he should fight for what he believes in, and then he could do anything. In Honduras your choices are limited, for example, although I was lucky enough to go to university, I was unable to choose what I wanted to study. Education pathways are very limited there. So I also want my son to know that here in Australia he has choices.

Another legacy is that my son has two surnames comprising of my husband's name and my name. So that is a strong legacy, it is an inheritance, which ties you to family. We are so proud of being part of the Honduran culture; the music, singing, dancing, food, happy spirit. So he will always possess the legacy of the Honduran culture and know where he is from.

**What do you think your legacy will be for the future?:** Through my work, I feel lucky to be able to feed my altruistic nature; that part of me that constantly thrives on leaving a positive mark on people's lives. I can share my knowledge, sense of positivity, and spirit of kindness, and it is really nourishing for my soul when people say, even years later, "I remember you, you helped me..." When I get feedback like that, it's like my heart expands. I love the thought that I've left a positive imprint on people, that will carry on throughout their lives.

## Legacy Ideas: Food for Thought

### The Tasmanian Giant Kelp Restoration Project

Calling Tassie's divers! This project is contributing to the recovery of one of the State's most productive and iconic marine ecosystems by creating habitat. *The Nature Conservancy* is calling on 'citizen scientists' to help identify where Giant Kelp exists by using the Kelp Tracker app. To see how you can get involved refer: <https://www.natureaustralia.org.au/what-we-do/our-priorities/oceans/ocean-stories/giant-kelp/>



### Community Volunteering

If you have the time and want to get involved, there's a myriad of volunteering opportunities out there! If your community spirit is calling for you to help people respond to emergency situations, then volunteering for the State Emergency Service or becoming an operational firefighter for the Tasmania Fire Service, could be for you. Refer:

<https://www.ses.tas.gov.au/about/contact-us/>  
<https://www.fire.tas.gov.au/volunteering/>

Or perhaps roles within aged care, helping young people, migrants and refugees and people with a disability, sounds more for you. An initiative of Volunteering Australia, GoVolunteer match people with appropriate volunteering options. There are hundreds of options to choose from i.e. various roles at Royal Hobart Hospital and Australian Red Cross, welcome refugees into the community, raise a Guide Dog puppy, help revive wetlands and conservation work, read on radio to support people with print disabilities - the list goes on. For more information refer to: <https://www.volunteeringaustralia.org/get-involved/govolunteer/#/>

### Conservation

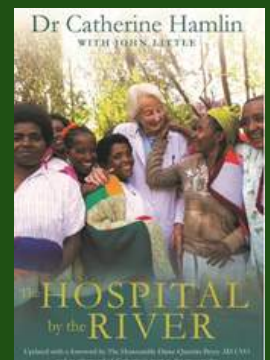
There are many conservation organisations working to protect forests and wildlife in Tasmania. For example, Dr Jennifer Sanger, Forest Ecologist, and her film-maker husband Steve Pearce of The Tree Projects, are working hard to protect Tasmania's giant trees and forests by creating documentaries, facilitating scientific research and advocating policy change. Due to their advocacy efforts, the *Giant Tree Policy* has recently been updated, effectively saving thousands of giant trees in Tasmania. To continue their work, they rely on donations and volunteers to help them as 'citizen scientists' for tree survey work. Their next major project in Tasmania is the 'Big Tree State' which advocates for sustainable and profitable Big Tree Tourism. For more information refer: <https://www.thetreeprojects.com/>

## Building Positive Legacies - Read all about it

### The Hospital by the River

The story of Dr Catherine Hamlin and her husband Reg Hamlin, who worked as pioneering gynaecologists in Ethiopia from 1959. Catherine worked until she was 92 years old, and specialised in the treatment of heart-breaking labour-induced fistulas. She established six fistula hospitals, treated over 60,000 women, built a village to accommodate patients and a midwifery school, and was twice nominated for the Nobel Peace Prize.

<https://store.hamlin.org.au/products/thehospitalbytheriver>



### Amphibious Soul: Finding the Wild in a Tame World by Craig Foster

From the creator of 'My Octopus Teacher', naturalist, adventurer and scientific explorer Craig Foster seeks to reconnect us with the wild and inspire us to "realign our daily practices to help save the global ecosystem". According to Jane Goodall "It is a book that will inspire hope".



To view all 'Healing Hearts' magazines, refer :

<https://www.naturaltherapypages.com.au/connect/reikienergyforlife/e-magazine/healing-consciousness-wellbeing>