

GIRL!

The ultimate
guide to being
YOU

ANNA BARNES

illustrated by

CATHERINE CAMPBELL



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Puffin Books

To Imogen – AB

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GIRL!

The ultimate
guide to being

YOU



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INTRODUCTION

ME AND YOU

Hi, I'm Anna.

When I was eight I wanted to be a pro tennis player. When I was twelve I wanted to be a ballerina, the first marine biologist to be Prime Minister of Australia AND a pro tennis player. When I was fourteen I wanted to be an artist, a supermodel, a hot-shot lawyer, a ballerina, the first marine biologist to be Prime Minister of Australia AND a pro tennis player. When I was sixteen I wanted to be a writer, an Oscar-winning actor, a rockstar, a human-rights aid worker, an artist, a supermodel, a hot-shot lawyer, a ballerina, the first marine biologist to be Prime Minister of Australia AND a pro tennis player.

Growing up is hard to do. Trust me. I'm still trying to figure it all out. It can be tricky trying to get your head around your life and how you want to live it,

especially in this ever-changing world.

Sure, we're always told that we can make a difference and to follow our dreams, but sometimes it's hard to know where to start.

And it doesn't take a genius to realise that there are a lot of things going on in our world that need some attention: **climate change**, **poverty**, your teacher's new haircut, just to name a few. But what are you supposed to do about it when you're not even able to vote, drive or go to the shops by yourself? It's easy to feel a little bit, well, over it. Especially when you have other things on your mind. Sure, **climate change** is causing problems, but what about your little brother? Not to mention the fact that there is a new girl in your group who seems to be getting on with your friends better than you ever have!

So now that I'm a bit older is anything clearer for me? Nope, not really. I still want to do lots of different things. But I have realised that an important part of living your life to the fullest is learning how you can make a difference. And whether it's **poverty** on the other side of the world or a fight with your best friend, it's when you know how you can actually help that you are in control. There are lots of fun things you can do that will benefit the world, your community and of course YOUR LIFE.

'Cos, let's face it, being happy in your own life is super important as well. Feeding the homeless is great, but so is making your best friend laugh. Look after yourself and you will be best set to look after others.

Now I'd be lying if I pretended that I buy sweatshop-free ALL THE TIME (chapter 8 – Your Life), or that I ALWAYS deal with my anger in a responsible and productive way (chapter 5 – Your Life), or that I never ever have a long shower (chapter 20 – Your Planet). Yep, I am far from perfect. But I do try. And that's all this book is about. Trying to make a difference and having fun along the way. I'm never going

to be someone who can keep every secret (WARNING ALL NEW
FRIENDS – I've got a BIG MOUTH) but like on pg 26 or 88, I try to

make sure that I'm not passing on information that would upset others. And while I do have a tendency to snuggle up in front of a fan heater, I'm getting better at grabbing a big jumper first.

I met some amazing girls while writing this book who taught me about the ins and outs of nude lunches, how to convince your parents to let you watch *that* TV show and reminded me just how annoying siblings can be. (The answer: very!) Stories from these girls and heaps more kick-arse people are scattered throughout the book – from my hero Kathleen Hanna, who inspired me to join a band, to activist Mum Shirl, who made me realise how one individual can change an entire system by caring enough not to give up.

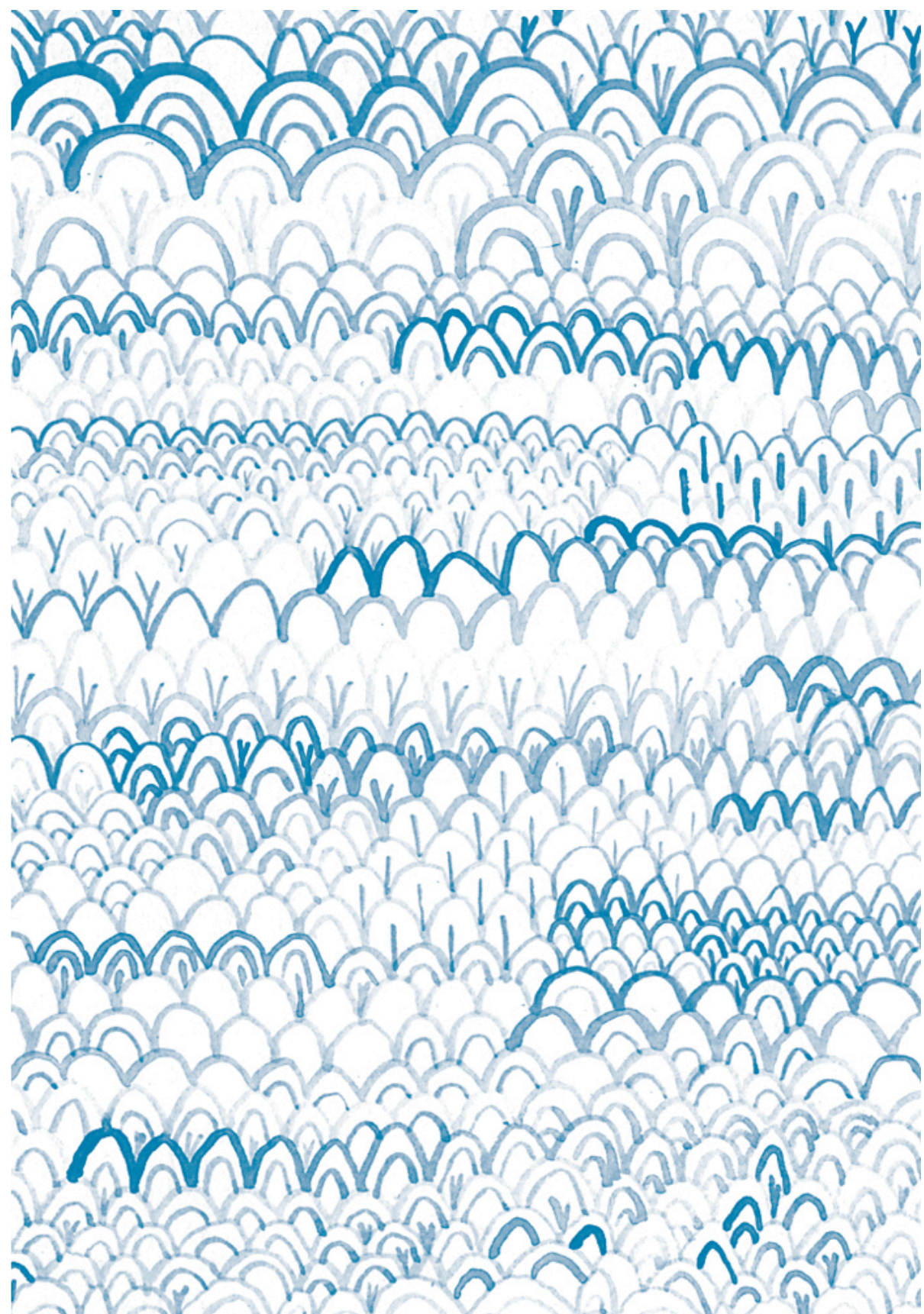
'Twenty years from now you will be more disappointed by the things that you didn't do than by the ones you did do. So throw off the bowlines. Sail away from the safe harbor. Catch the trade winds in your sails. Explore. Dream. Discover.'

Mark Twain, writer

Sooooo . . . when do we start already?

Now. Right now. There are things you can do this very second that will make the world a better place. These steps are simple, fun, but most importantly they work! Sick of waiting for someone else to fix the world and your life? Stop waiting and do something!

NOW.









CHAPTER I

YOU ARE ONE OF A KIND

Think like an alien and feel out of this world!

If (or should I say when?) aliens land on Earth I reckon they'll be pretty impressed. Sure, we may have made some mistakes, but the fact remains that humans are pretty spectacular creatures. Think about it – out of the billions of people living on this planet, there is no one in the world that thinks, talks, walks, looks or sings EXACTLY like you do.

The best thing about this is that there is one thing that everyone in the world can do perfectly: be themselves. Not everyone can win an Olympic medal, or make a blockbuster film, or publish their memoirs at the age of thirteen. But as genius as any Oscar-winning actor is, if they were to play you, you'd still come out on top.

We all have different talents, whether it's the fact that you can crunch your knuckles while doing a cartwheel, or eat the perfect amount of ice cream so that no one can tell any has been taken from the tub. I, for the record, am pretty sure I am the world champion at keeping a balloon off the floor using only my feet. WORLD CHAMPION. Sure, it isn't in the Olympics . . . YET. But I'm ready for Olympics 2034!



'I'm really really good at doing hairstyles.'

Rachel, age 13

★

1.

Make a list of five things you are really good at *

²*Note that being able to wash your hands and dry them before
⁴the toilet finishes flushing is a completely valid (and useful) skill.

5.



Everyone is individual - we all have our own perspectives

Perspective is the way we look/feel/see something. You and I could be standing in front of the same tree yet each have an entirely different perspective on it. A tree is a tree, but if I asked you to describe it, you might talk about its colour and the way the bark feels rough like sandpaper. I, on the other hand, could focus on how tall it is and how I could climb to the top of it. And both of us would be right (except the climbing bit – I suck at climbing trees . . . but you get the picture). Perhaps if I asked you the same question an hour later, you'd talk about the birds that live in it, or your eye would be drawn to the way the branch looks as if it's going to fall and squash you like an ant. There are a gazillion ways of looking at things, and your brain focuses on just a few of these different things each time.

Now stand in front of a mirror. What do you see? (And, yes, I know ME is the obvious answer here. VERY FUNNY . . .) But seriously, what do you see?

A ninja in training? A potential fashion designer? A Scrabble expert? Or do you just focus on how your nose is getting bigger every day? Or how your legs aren't as brown/white/purple as you wish they were?

'Always be a first-rate version of yourself, instead of a second-rate version of somebody else.'

Judy Garland, actor

Unfortunately, we are often not as good at seeing ourselves as objectively as we are at seeing a tree. We focus on the things that we don't like, because to us they stick out like a flashing neon sign. Rather than seeing a true reflection of yourself, you often

ignore everything but the bits you are unhappy with. What sort of a reflection is that?

Always keep in mind, though, that someone else will have a *different* perspective. Imagine, for instance, that you are an alien just landed from Aitkokokkk planet (you don't know it? Google Earth it – it's out there somewhere...) and you happen to see a girl standing in front of a mirror looking at herself. What do you see? Pretty sure an alien who's just got off a twenty-million-year space flight from Aitkokokkk doesn't notice your big nose. Or your frizzy hair.

This alien would see so many other things that you can do differently – they would see someone who can read, write, karate kick, braid hair or play air guitar like a rockstar. An alien can see things you might have ignored – things different and more interesting and amazing to them. Try spending more time seeing yourself as a whole and not just a big nose or wonky eye-lid. 'Cos trust me, an alien (or another human being for that fact) can see the whole of you, not just the bits you don't like...

.....
What else would the alien see?



Make your own documentary

You know those 'day in the life of ...' docos, where someone with a camera follows a rockstar or actor around for the day and we see the star having breakfast, going to the office/studio, and working out? Maybe one of the reasons people love these shows so much is that they prove to us that these stars are just people. Like you and me, they eat, sleep and shower (hopefully). They might have private jets and servants, but, at the end of the day, they still share the same fears, joys and frustrations as we do. It is just that their talent at playing the drums or pretending to be someone else in front of a movie camera means that we want to see the world through their eyes and spend a day walking in their footsteps.

So why not make a documentary of *your* day? Yep, treat yourself like a rockstar for a couple of pages and record your day. You can use stick figures, cut and paste from magazines, paint, stencil, take photos and glue them in, fingerpaint with your sister's make-up, write words or hieroglyphics. The day you choose to record can be today, yesterday or a day in the future – your favourite day that hasn't happened. No rules, no limits – just treat it like it's an important documentary about someone special . . . Oh yes, get ready for the corny bit:

'COS YOU'RE SPECIAL!

Vomit.

Okay, just make it already before
I get sick again.

The following is a day in the life of _____





CHAPTER 2

STORY OF YOUR LIFE

'Oh, so many things bubble up inside me as I lie in bed, having to put up with people I'm fed up with, who always misinterpret my intentions. That's why in the end I always come back to my diary.'

Anne Frank, Holocaust prisoner

Dear Diary,

Keeping a diary isn't simply about writing down what you do each day or making yourself sound like the nicest, most awesome girl in

the world; and it definitely isn't about spelling and grammar. Writing a diary is an all-out, no-holds-barred explosion of you onto the page. The diary is the one place where you can be as weird, girly, mean, sarcastic, happy or romantic as you want. Your diary is like a friend that you can tell anything to without any consequences. Because, let's face it, we can't always express the way we feel in public. Want to complain about your friend's mum? Probably keep that to the diary. Want to plan a slow and painful torture of your little brother? Diary. Want to write a love letter to your sixteen-year-old next-door neighbour? You know where . . . at least the first draft, anyway.

But while a diary allows you to write in it as if no one else is reading, you can often express yourself in a way that then becomes something you **do** want other people to see. Song lyrics, fashion designs, cartoon characters and ridiculously complicated skateboard flips often have their first life as a diary entry.

Keeping a diary can also be really helpful when problems arise in your life. You know how in maths you can sometimes do an equation in your head but generally, if it's hard, it's easier to write it down so you can see how to solve it? It can be the same with writing about life problems. Simply getting it down on paper can help you step away from the situation and see it from

all sides. You don't have to answer every problem in your head on the spot; give yourself the time to write/sketch/fingerpaint it out and see things from a number of different perspectives.

Whether you're someone who writes in your diary every night before you go to bed or someone who draws cartoons in your diary every couple of days, keeping a diary allows you to be yourself truly, for yourself. Scribble, write, rant, sketch, snap photos, cut and paste – there are tons of different ways to keep a diary.

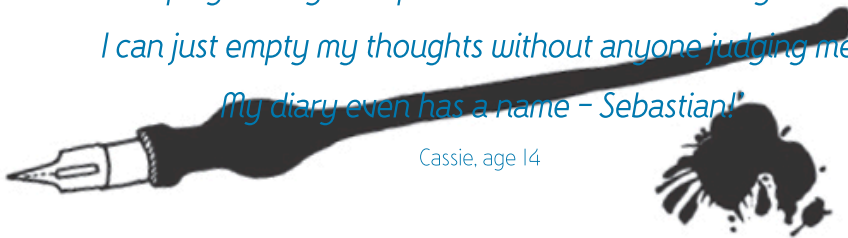
'Painting is just another way of keeping a diary.'

Pablo Picasso, artist

*'Keeping a diary is helpful when I have a lot on my mind.
I can just empty my thoughts without anyone judging me.'*

My diary even has a name – Sebastian!

Cassie, age 14



Famous diarists

In 1942, when Dutch school girl **Anne Frank** was thirteen years old, her life changed forever. Her Jewish family were forced to leave their home and possessions in fear of the Nazi Party. They hid with another family in a small secret hiding spot in an office building, where Anne documented their daily lives in her diary. And what a diary it was! Anne's entries were often funny and biting as she dealt with dramas such as trying to get along with her mother and having her first kiss. After all, Anne was a teenage girl. Her diary was her best friend, allowing her some peace and clarity in the crazy events of her life. Two years after going into hiding, the families were found by authorities and moved into concentration camps. Anne died in a concentration camp in 1945 at the age of sixteen.

Her two-year diary shows us the dreams and feelings of the millions of people who were killed in the Holocaust.

Reverend **Robert Shields**, a minister and high-school English teacher from America, wrote in a diary every five minutes of his waking life. His entries were mostly short reports of his bodily functions, including describing his poos! Yikes, too much information! When he stopped due to poor health in 1997, his diaries' word count was an astounding
total of 37.5 million words!

The artist **Leonardo Da Vinci**, who lived in the 15th century, was a keen diarist and kept many notebooks with drawings and reflections of his life. The diaries contain sketches of some of his most famous artwork today. He also used to write some diary entries back to front, so if a snoop tried to read it they'd have to have a mirror handy . . .



Keeping a diary is good for your health?

Aside from the gazillion positive effects of writing down how you are feeling, from improving your writing to allowing you to reflect on your actions and emotions, researchers are now suggesting that keeping a diary will actually help you ward off the common cold! Yep, echinacea in a notebook! Professor of psychology James W. Pennebaker, M.D. studied the effects of writing about

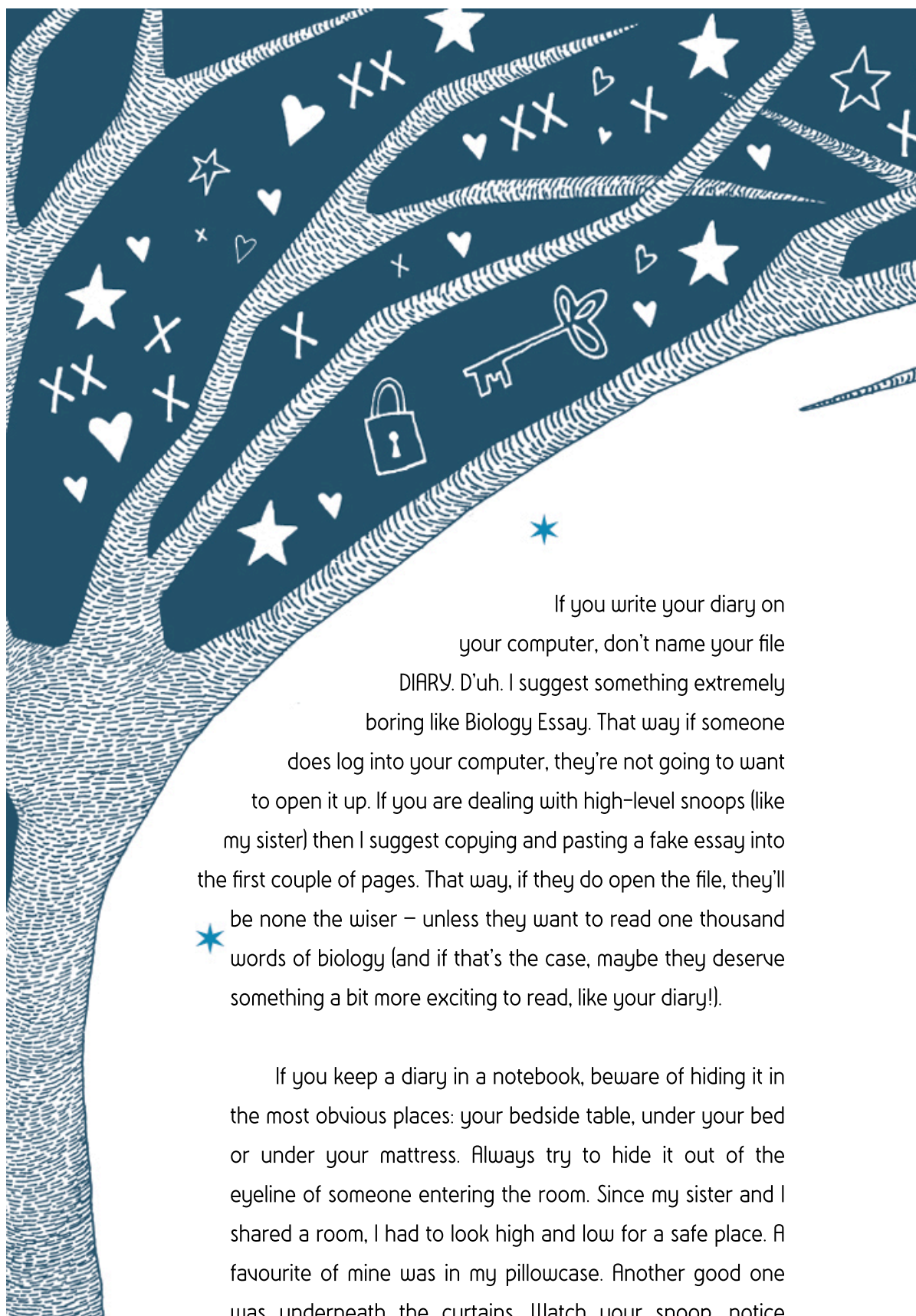
upsetting moments in your everyday life. He found that people who kept diaries had stronger immunity and visited doctors only half as often as those without diaries!



Stop the Snoops

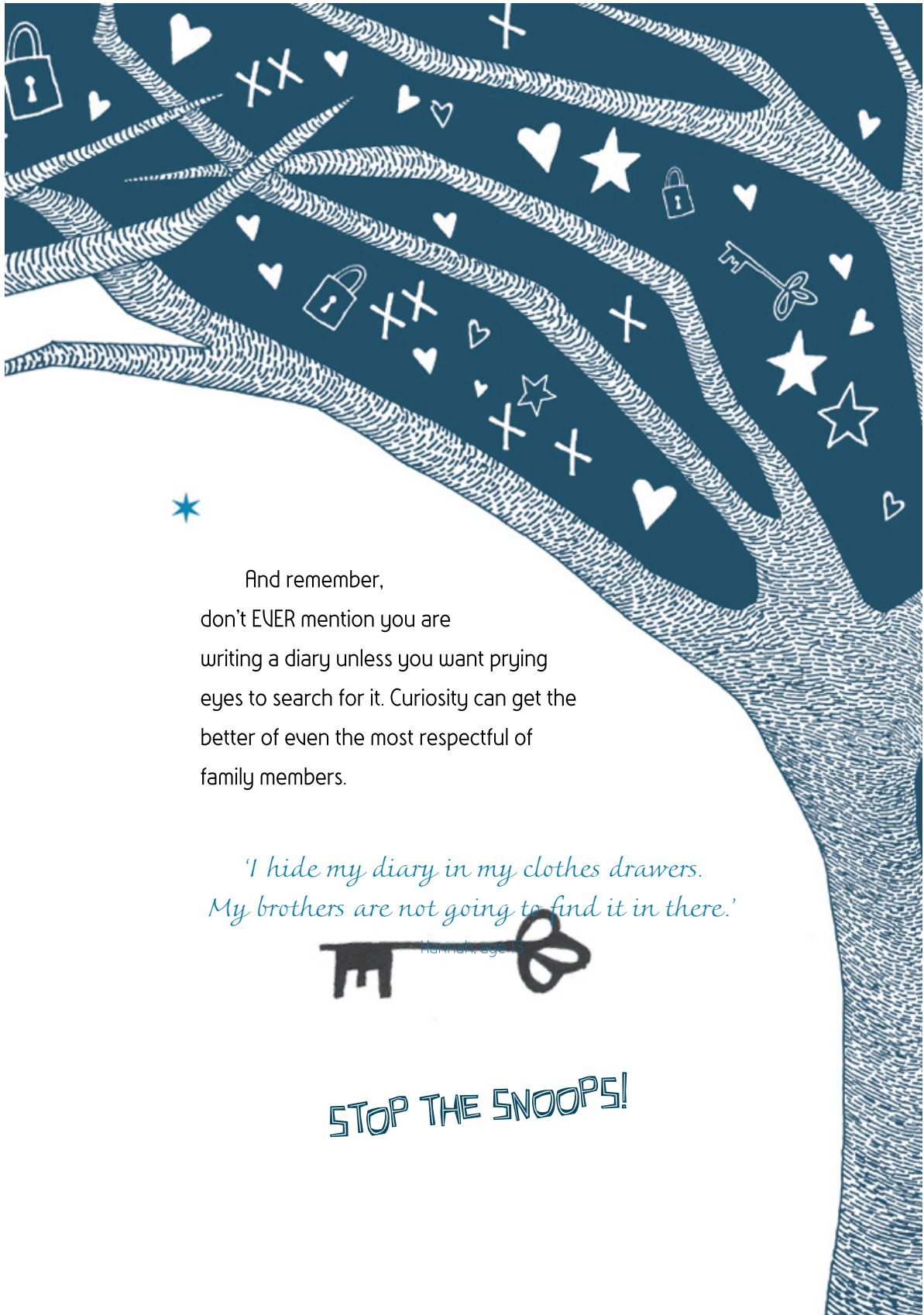
Now, one thing to think about when keeping a diary is security. It is of the utmost importance that you are able to make sure your diary is safe from the prying eyes of brothers, sisters, parents or other such snoopy snoops.

I used to have a security issue with my diary in the form of my older sister, who thought it was hilarious to break into my diaries. Not only would she pick the locks, one time she even ripped the back off the diary just to get inside! Another trick of hers was to add to the entries when she had hacked in. I once had an argument with her about whether I had a crush on a boy in my class: Aaron. She insisted that I did. I told her again and again that I did not. Finally she demanded that I check my diary to see if I'd written anything about him. Of course, when I looked, I found she had scribbled at the bottom of every entry – I love Aaron. Very funny, NOT. So to avoid this sort of invasion of privacy and attempts to rewrite history, try these neat tricks over the page:



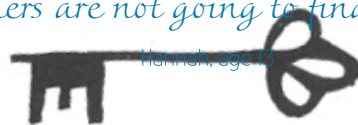
If you write your diary on your computer, don't name your file DIARY. D'uh. I suggest something extremely boring like Biology Essay. That way if someone does log into your computer, they're not going to want to open it up. If you are dealing with high-level snoops (like my sister) then I suggest copying and pasting a fake essay into the first couple of pages. That way, if they do open the file, they'll be none the wiser – unless they want to read one thousand words of biology (and if that's the case, maybe they deserve something a bit more exciting to read, like your diary!).

If you keep a diary in a notebook, beware of hiding it in the most obvious places: your bedside table, under your bed or under your mattress. Always try to hide it out of the eyeline of someone entering the room. Since my sister and I shared a room, I had to look high and low for a safe place. A favourite of mine was in my pillowcase. Another good one was underneath the curtains. Watch your snoop, notice where they do and don't go, and hide it in the latter.



And remember,
don't EVER mention you are
writing a diary unless you want prying
eyes to search for it. Curiosity can get the
better of even the most respectful of
family members.

*'I hide my diary in my clothes drawers.
My brothers are not going to find it in there.'*



STOP THE SNOOPS!



CHAPTER 3

LOL - THE POWER OF THE LAUGH

I have a bad habit I'm trying to break: pessimism. Pessimism is when you always think of the worst-case scenario in any situation.

Yep, it's true. If there is a sad side of things, I will most definitely see it. Why? I don't know. But I do know that pessimism can stop you from doing things in your life.

If a pessimist fails at a sport, they decide they will never master it, and they might even give up. If they walk into a room and see people laughing, they will almost always (and nearly always wrongly) assume the people are

laughing at them. A bummer, huh? And I've started to realise the negative side of being, uh, negative. Pessimism can affect your life and what you want to do.

Positivity (the good-witch cousin of pessimism) is hugely important to the human brain and body. Scientific research has shown that pessimists are more likely to get physically and mentally sick. In fact, one university study found that positive thinkers not only get the average winter cold less often, they have less severe symptoms when they do.

But positivity isn't about putting on a fake smile for the outside world. It's about finding a way to smile from the inside out. So how can we be positive and avoid being pessimistic?

Well, it is actually not as difficult as it sounds. The main thing is to avoid catastrophising when something goes wrong. What?

Catastrophic thinking is when we obsess about the very worst outcome of a situation and lose perspective.¹ For example:

You lose a swimming race in the school carnival and you think: I suck at swimming, so why did I even think I could compete in the race? How embarrassing – everyone at school saw how much I suck, no one is going to like me anymore. I may as well move to China.

Seem ridiculous? Yeah, well I'm pretty sure there's been a time in your life when you have had catastrophic thoughts like this. It's very common. So common, in fact, that doctors everywhere are thinking about ways to help us get beyond these negative thoughts. One of these doctors, Martin E.P. Seligman, claims the trick to avoiding them taking over and making you sad is to check yourself when they occur.

Ask yourself if what you are thinking is a permanent thought, or a temporary thought. Permanent thoughts generally lead to catastrophic thinking.

The permanent thoughts in the swimming race example above are:

- **I suck at swimming.**
- **Everyone at school saw how much I suck.**
- **No one is going to like me anymore.**

Now try and exchange them for temporary thoughts. The trick to temporary thoughts is to make them specific. A temporary thought would be along the lines of:

- **I didn't swim very well today at the carnival.**
- **Some kids from my school saw me. How embarrassing.**

Can you see the difference? The permanent and general terms in the first example are 'everyone' and 'I suck'. The truth is, permanent thoughts are often not very realistic. Did everyone really see your race? Probably not. Will everyone dislike you 'cos you were an epic failure in the pool? I highly doubt it. Does your swimming ability (or lack thereof) make you an all-round sucky individual? Of course not.

Try: Some kids from my school saw me. (Sure, that sounds probable.) Some of them might make fun of me? (That's not the best outcome, but it's hardly the end of the world.)

By really interrogating the thoughts in your head, you can see how temporary these problems are. Nothing lasts forever – there's always going to be someone else after you who falls over, sings out of key or gets caught with their pants down, and everyone will forget your moment of shame.

Remember, other people think way too much about themselves to be chronicling *your* embarrassing moments.

The other upside of temporary thoughts is that they allow you options for creating change, if that's what you want. One obvious plan would be to start swimming regularly and make sure you've improved by next year's swimming carnival. When you have a plan of attack, a problem doesn't seem so big.

So remember: slow down, think temporary and plan.

*'When I'm sad I listen to music.
And meditate or do yoga.'*

Hannah, age 13

But all this talk of positivity doesn't mean you should be happy all the time. That is just impossible. Everybody (including your parents) gets sad every now and then. Also, there is a bright side to being blue – it helps you to experience the fullness of your life and emotions. Being sad allows you to truly appreciate happiness. After all, life would be pretty boring if we were cruising the whole time.²



Happiness List

Sometimes it's good to make a list of what makes you feel good, so if you do get down you can read over it and hopefully make yourself feel better.



Here are some things that make me happy:

1. Freshly baked bagels
2. Getting a mix tape / CD / playlist from a friend
3. Lolcats!
4. Reading a really, really good book
5. Skyping my friends who are living overseas
6. Riding my bike
1. 7. Summer days
2.

So what makes you happy?

4.
5.
6.
7.

haha HA HA haha
haha HAHA
haha HAHA haha

Fake it till you make it

Don't you just hate it when someone tells you to smile when you don't want to? Sometimes it feels as if adults think they have the right to smiles on demand. Interestingly, some scientists now say that if you put a fake smile on your dial you can, in fact, start to feel the effects that usually create the smile in the first place – happiness. Huh?

Well, a number of scientific experiments have researched the role our facial movements can play in how we feel. One of these studies got participants to pull a number of facial expressions: sad, angry or happy. At the end of the face-pulling they were asked how they felt. The person pulling the sad face felt sad. The person pulling an angry face felt angry. And yep, you guessed it, the person pulling a happy face felt happy.³

'My friends make me laugh.'

Sarah, age 13

Another trick is to get a friend to hold a pen clenched between their teeth horizontally. This activates the two major smiling muscles, the risorius and the zygomatic major (what a mouthful!), forcing their face into a quasi-smile. Now tell a joke. Research has shown that people are more likely to laugh when they are in this position, as it induces positive emotions in the brain.⁴

Now, this doesn't mean that if you sit there and smile like a Miss Universe

contestant when your cat has died you're going to start feeling better. But next time you're feeling a bit down and you don't know why, give it a go and see what happens.

Sometimes the best way to cheer yourself up is to cheer someone else up. Think about a time when someone has made your crappy day better by giving *you* a compliment or sharing their chips with you. One small gesture can change the course of someone's day and ultimately the world you live in. From little things, big things grow, after all.

'Make one person happy each day, and in forty years you will have made 14,600 human beings happy for a little time, at least.'

Charley Willey, Medal of Honour winner for heroism

Let's get physical!

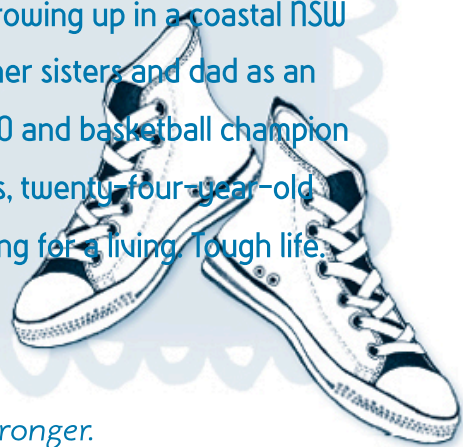
Exercise and happiness have long been linked, but until recently no one knew why. Turns out that exercising makes the body release endorphins (the body's natural feel-good chemical)⁵ and your brain starts to feel happy. Ever gone for a walk in a bad mood and come back feeling better? That would be those helpful endorphins kicking in. Exercising also helps to reduce anxiety, tone muscle, increase concentration and improve your immune system!⁶

And if you hate sports? Well, not everyone is a netballer, just like not everyone enjoys rock climbing. I, for one, have always been a terrible runner. It wasn't until I found swimming that I stopped feeling like a complete unco. Along with swimming, I did all sorts of activities in high school: basketball, tennis, ballet, football. These days I actually do run a couple of times a week (if only my ten-year-old self could see me now!) and ride my bike everywhere.

So get your blood pumping and try to release that endorphin hit at least a couple of times a week.

And if walking is your thing, why not ask your mum if you and a friend can get a paper round? Not only will you get your exercise but you'll be doing it with a friend AND get paid for it. Cha-ching!

World champion surfer Stephanie Gilmore knows a thing or two about the benefits of keeping active. Growing up in a coastal NSW town, Stephanie began surfing with her sisters and dad as an eight-year-old. Counting rocker Karen O and basketball champion LeBron James among her inspirations, twenty-four-year-old Stephanie now travels the world surfing for a living. Tough life.



*'When I dance I feel inspired and stronger.
It helps me relax and de-stress.'*

Ruby, age 13



CHAPTER 4

BFF OR BUST

'If your best friend gets it, that's all that matters.'

Kathleen Hanna, musician

Whether you've got one trusty BFF or five billion Facebook friends, you have to admit that friends make the world go around. Like a hot-water bottle in this sometimes cold, cold world, friends make us feel warm and fuzzy. While it's your parents who bring you into this world, it's your friends who make you feel sane and like you belong.

But friendship can be confusing. We all find ourselves wondering from time to time about what makes a true friend . . .

Does she like me for me or my Wii? Why do we fight so much? Will we still be friends after high school? Why doesn't she like me all the time?

Friends or Foes?

Friends laugh together, play together, sing together and fight together. Yep, it's inevitable and very natural that friends will, at some point, argue. Especially best friends. If you spend every second together like Siamese twins, it's only a matter of time before one of you explodes. But just because you fight doesn't mean you're not friends. It's hard when the people who you need to talk to the most are the same people you are fighting with. So what can you do? Try and fight clean and you'll have years of friendship ahead.

Girl-on-Girl Crimes

Okay, so this is an important one, and a crime that most women alive today have been guilty of. Myself included. As you start to engage with the strange species we call boys, you will notice a change – a group of friends can turn into the starting blocks for the Olympic games. Yep, unfortunately, the fact is, girls compete with other girls for boys. It's unavoidable really. The problem with this is when girls fight dirty. It is too often that you hear of girls selling out other girls to get a boy. In the race for a boyfriend, some girls throw all friendships off the track. Boys, on the other hand, have an unwritten rule between them not to screw another guy over for a girl. In my humble experience, it has come about that boys adhere to this rule. And are happier for it. So if you hear yourself paying out another girl, just to be cool with the guys, think again. Maybe if we girls stuck together, we'd be living in a more supportive and friendlier world.

'Since we started high school, my best friend's changed, always wanting to hang out with the popular people and be like them. It's not her. It's not the person I decided to be best friends with.'

Zoe, age 12

How to fight clean with your BFF

1. Don't bitch about her to your other friends during a fight.

Since you're probably going to make up in a day or so, the last thing you want is for the new peace treaty (or shared Mars bar) to be ruined by one of your friends forwarding a nasty email you'd written about your BFF the night before.

2. Don't use your friendship against her.

You probably know all her dirt – what makes her feel sad, which boy she likes, the colour of her underwear – but don't EVER think of using this against her in a fight. This will break her TRUST. Plus, she probably knows the same kind of stuff about you – so if you spill her beans, don't be surprised if you find everyone in your class calling you that nickname from kindergarten that she promised never to tell . . .

3. Walk away.

Try and approach her about the fight when you've calmed down and had time to think. This will make it less likely you'll both say something you regret.

4. Ask, don't assume!

A lot of fights between friends can come from people assuming something is going on, when actually it isn't. If you think your friend is angry with you and you don't know why, ASK. If you are mad with your friend for doing something, TELL HER. If you are both open and

honest with each other you will never fight. No, only joking. You'll totally fight, but you'll probably fight less and save yourselves a lot of heartache.

Remember, while many friends fight, very few friendships are lost because of it. Usually it just takes a few days/hours/minutes before you've both calmed down and you're back to your usual **BFF** status.

My So-Called Friend

At some point we've all been friends with someone who can act more like an enemy than a bestie.

Your parents might ask you why you'd want to be friends with someone who is mean to you, but deep down we all know why (even your parents): sometimes the meanest people can also be the most outspoken and exciting and, yes, fun. That's reality. But what seems cool and fun at first can quickly end in tears in a bathroom stall at school. If you're lucky, you won't be the one crying. If your so-called friend starts spreading rumours about another girl in the group, you can take it as a warning: If she can do it to her, don't think that she won't do it to you too. (And don't be sucked in to joining in on the bullying, because you'll need those friends when you become the one your so-called friend decides to pick on.)

'I was in a group of four. Madison was the leader and my so-called best friend. I was always too scared to stand up for the girls she picked on.

One day I realised who my real friends were and now

I don't need Madison anymore.'

Dee, age 14

So try to remember that while they can be exciting and fun, these so-called friends are also capable of making you feel sad and lonely. It sometimes helps to write about these frenemies in your diary. Do a pros and cons list and then you can really assess the

friendship and whether it's worth all the pain, or if it's time to kick them to the curb.



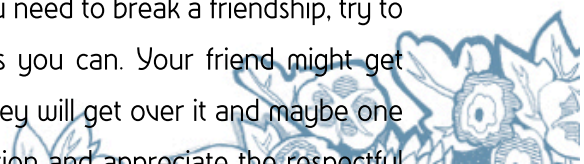
Breaking up is hard to do . . .

There will be a time in everyone's life when they are going to want to break up with a friend. You might have already done it, or been on the receiving end. One day you're sharing your chips together and laughing at your dad's boardshorts, and the next she gets up whenever you sit down near her at lunch. What gives?

The most common reason for friend break-ups is the simple fact that you've grown apart. It doesn't mean you don't like each other. It can just mean that you don't feel like you have anything in common anymore. This can be really confusing for both of you. And it can be really hard if your friend feels like you've grown apart and you don't feel the same way.

If this happens to you, try to work out if your friend is just going through a phase and needs some space, or if she really wants to end the friendship. If she does, remember that there are heaps more people out there that you will be friends with over your lifetime. Unfortunately we can't force people to be friends with us, so don't waste your time. It sucks. But rather than sit around feeling rejected, try and move on and find a new friend who wants to spend time with you. Of course, this isn't the easiest thing in the world, but trust me, it definitely beats feeling sorry for yourself all alone.

If it's you who feels like you need to break a friendship, try to be as fair and cool-headed as you can. Your friend might get angry at you, but eventually they will get over it and maybe one day they'll be in a similar situation and appreciate the respectful way that you did it.



'Once, when I broke up with a friend, I tried to make it comical. That didn't exactly work out . . . I felt like I should have put myself in her shoes.'

Eve, age 12

A true Friend's checklist For breaking up

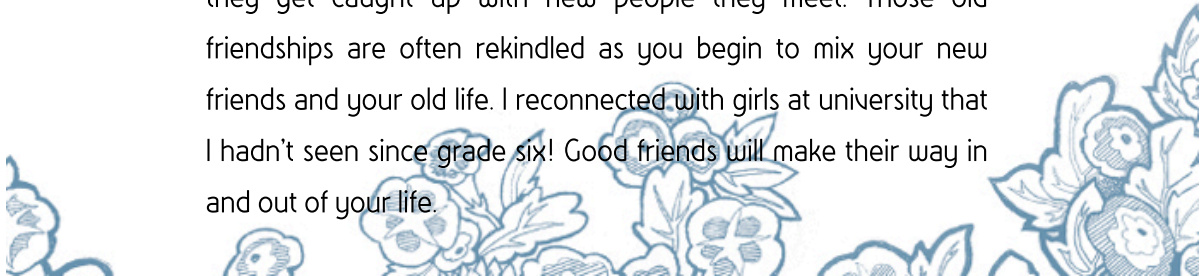
1. Be honest.

It may seem easier to ice them out and then pretend you don't know what they're talking about when they ask you what's wrong. We've all done it at some point, and it sucks. Not only are you being dishonest, you're also making them feel helpless because they don't know what they did wrong. While telling them straight up might be scary, it'll be better for both of you in the end.

2. Give clear messages.

Don't tell them you don't want to hang out as much anymore at school and then act like a BFF when you're alone with them. If you don't feel like you can be friends with someone, that's it. No playing with their feelings and calling them up to hang out when you're just bored or lonely.

And remember, you can grow apart but you can also grow back together, so don't burn your bridges. Often when people move from primary school to secondary school, they can lose contact as they get caught up with new people they meet. Those old friendships are often rekindled as you begin to mix your new friends and your old life. I reconnected with girls at university that I hadn't seen since grade six! Good friends will make their way in and out of your life.



See ya online

These days it's crazy to talk about friendships without mentioning the Internet. The Internet has given us a heap of different ways to engage with

others, so you will probably spend a lot of time connecting with your friends online. This might not be happening now, but as you get older, I don't doubt that you will Email, Facebook and Skype each other. My friends and I do. I even have friends that I stay in contact with exclusively through the Internet. That's one of the best things about the Internet – it makes it so easy to connect with people who are in different states and even different continents!

But don't ever share your password with your BFF. It might be seen as a way of proving your friendship or a way that you guys can be even closer, but it's not a good idea.

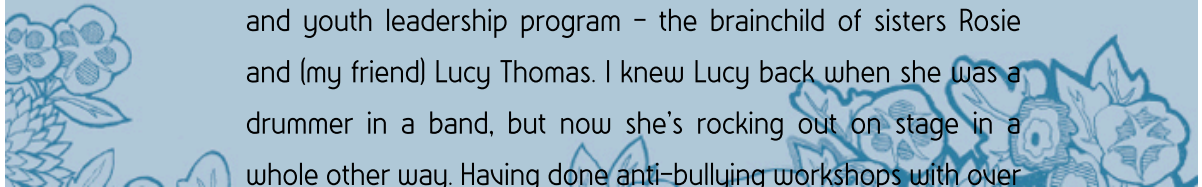
Bullying IRL, Bullying Online

Bullying is something that you will be witness to in your life. From the school-yard, to the dance studio, Facebook or the kitchen table, bullying can rear its ugly head where you least expect it. And bullying hurts.

Whether it is having friends and schoolmates spread rumours about you on the Internet or being punched in the face, bullying leaves scars that people carry into their adult life.

So we all know bullying is bad, duh. But what actually *is* bullying? How do you tell the difference between having a disagreement and bullying?

Well, when in doubt go to the experts, right? Lucky for me, a friend of mine happens to know a whole lot about bullying and runs Project Rokit. Project Rokit is an interactive anti-bullying and youth leadership program – the brainchild of sisters Rosie and (my friend) Lucy Thomas. I knew Lucy back when she was a drummer in a band, but now she's rocking out on stage in a whole other way. Having done anti-bullying workshops with over 15,000 students, these two know what they are talking about. The sisters have won a swag of awards for their work in bullying



and leadership in schools, from *Girlfriend* magazine's 'Role Model of the Month' to being named *Anthill* magazine's '30 under 30' young entrepreneur. Yowza.

I bribed Lucy and her sister Rosie with hot drinks and got them to break down this whole bullying thing for me.



Anna: So what exactly is classified as bullying?

LUCY: For Project Rockit, when we're trying to tell if a situation is or isn't bullying we use a mental checklist. The checklist has three parts (or boxes) to it. For a situation to be considered bullying, you have to be able to tick all three boxes. They are:

- **Repeated.** Bullying isn't a one-off. It has to happen more than once. So an argument between friends = not bullying. But if this nasty stuff happens again and again or occurs over a period of time, then you can tick this box.
- **On purpose.** People often use the excuse that it's just an 'accident' or just a 'joke', but you can't accidentally bully someone. Often when friendships naturally drift apart or misunderstandings happen, these things are mislabelled bullying. But bullying is something that happens deliberately, with the intention of actually causing hurt.
- **Unfair power.** Basically the person who is on the receiving end has less power than the person causing the damage. There are a few common forms of power that are often used by those who bully: being in a large group (versus a single person), popularity (being in a small exclusive group), or being bigger, stronger or older. Also being different (the odd one out) can mean you have less power. This might mean you come from a different country, learn differently or you might just be into different stuff.

Anna: So what is the whole 'bystander' thing people keep on about?

ROSIE: Everyone always talks about the 1 in 4 people in Aussie schools that are bullied each week. Well, if 1 in 4 people are bullied, then there are probably another three people who heard about it or even saw it happen. These people are the bystanders. We reckon bystanders have a lot of power – to make

A decorative border surrounds the central text area. It features a repeating pattern of stylized owls perched on branches with small flowers. The owls are drawn in a detailed, woodcut-like style. The background of the entire page is a light blue color with a subtle pattern of small white dots.

things better for those who are bullied, or make things worse. The question we're putting out there when it comes to bullying is, 'Are you going to be part of the problem, or part of the solution?' There is a massive difference between standing up to bullying and standing by and letting it happen. We know that both of these positions are tough. Sometimes we worry that if we stand up, people will laugh at us, judge us, or worse—we might get targeted ourselves. But anyone who has stood up to bullying before will tell you that it's worth it. Plus, most people who see bullying happen think it's not okay, not cool. If you show that you disagree with it, you'll soon find that others will too.

Anna: Any hot tips to help stop the bullying?

Lucy:

- **Be prepared.** Sometimes you want to stand up to bullying but don't know what to say, or can't think of anything on the spot. There's nothing wrong with having a comeback prepared. The key with comebacks is that they don't put the other person down or make things worse. You simply take what they've said, spin it round and come out sounding really funny and awesome (they won't even know you've practised).
- **Use the power of a group (for good).** For example, rally your friends together to show they disagree when they see bullying by not laughing, giving a dirty look, shaking their heads etc.

If you're not confident to publicly stand up and support someone in the moment, give your support afterwards by showing that you care and that you think it's not cool for them to be treated so badly. This will make a huge difference.

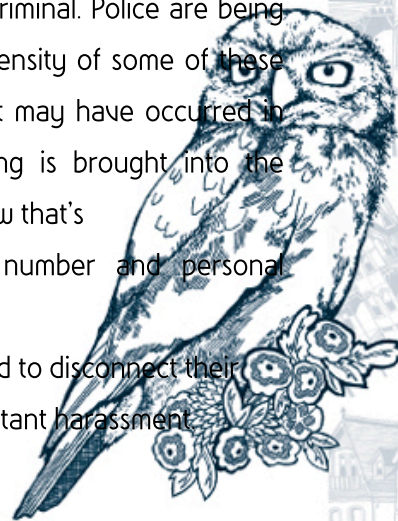
Check out more tips at

www.projectrockit.com.au



Cyber Bullying

Cyber bullying is harassment via email, messenger, social networking sites or text message. It can involve spreading photos of the victim, threatening the victim online or even sending nasty messages to people on websites pretending to be the victim! Cyber bullying often happens between groups of friends or schoolmates, and what starts off as a joke can quickly snowball into a criminal offence. Yes, that's right: criminal. Police are being brought into schools to deal with the intensity of some of these situations. Unlike bullying in the past that may have occurred in school or at a sports club, cyberbullying is brought into the victim's home through the technology. Now that's scary! Sometimes the victim's phone number and personal address are published online and people are forced to disconnect their phones and even move home due to constant harassment.



*'I don't add people I don't know.
It's too risky!'*

Rachel, age 13

In 2006, the Australian Federal Government launched a brand new Internet filter that would enable Australian parents to block websites from their kids. The filter cost a cool 84 million dollars and was launched in the press with much publicity. However, soon that publicity turned negative when a sixteen-year-old boy, Tom Wood, managed to get around the filter in only minutes! Now he helps with the cyber safety policy. He writes a technology column

for *Girlfriend* magazine and a blog all about cyber safety for teens and kids.

Tom says that if you are being bullied online, you should follow five simple steps:

1. **Don't respond to the bully.**
2. **Make sure you keep evidence of the bullying, whether it is text, images or websites.**
3. **Block and Delete the bully.**
4. **Report the bullying to the Admins of the website.**
5. **Tell someone you trust about the bullying, whether it's your parents, teacher or an older sibling. You might need to contact the police, if necessary, as bullying is a criminal offence.**

Tom has detailed advice about these steps and other issues relating to cyber safety on his blog. Check it out here:

<http://thewoodverdict.blogspot.com>

Bullies or ex-friends who are now bullying you aren't going to see reason. Don't even try to talk to them, just Block, Delete and report. The faster you are able to do this, the less these bullies can get to you.

'On the Internet, people don't have to use their real name or photo. I think that gives them the power to say things to you that they wouldn't say to your face.'

Cassie, age 14

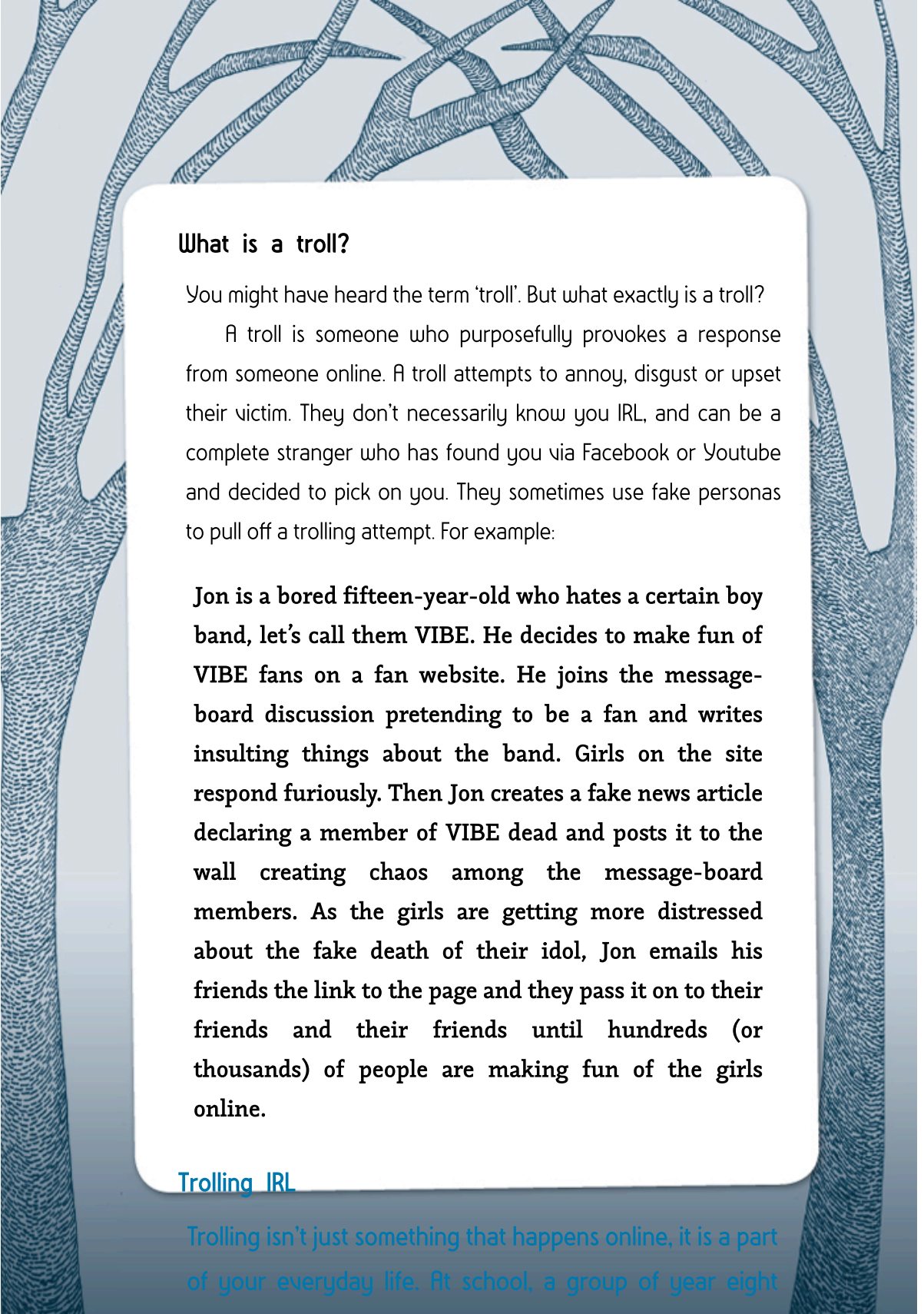
Dear Olivia . . .

Californian teenager Olivia Gardner knows about bullying first-hand. When she was in grade six, a cycle of bullying began at her school that was so bad that teenagers across the USA stood up and took notice. It all started when Olivia had an epileptic fit in her class. Some of her classmates began calling her 'retard'. To avoid the bullies, some of whom Olivia had considered friends only days earlier, she would hide in toilet stalls or in the school canteen at lunchtime and between classes. The bullies even wore friendship bands they had made that read: *die Olivia die*.

When her mum found out about the bullying she moved Olivia to a nearby school. Unfortunately, by this time the bullying had gone online with the creation of an 'Olivia haters' page on the Internet. Olivia suffered anxiety and depression as a result of the bullying, and was eventually withdrawn from school and homeschooled.

When two teenage sisters, Emily and Sarah Budd, from a nearby town heard about Olivia's story they were horrified and decided to reach out to her. They created a letter-writing campaign for kids from their schools and around the country to write letters of support to Olivia so she would know that she was not alone. The campaign took off and Olivia received letters in the thousands. People from across the country of all different age groups wrote letters,

from those who were bullied to those who had stood by as others were bullied and even those who were bullies. These letters have now been published in a book created by Olivia and the Budd sisters called *The Olivia Letters*.



What is a troll?

You might have heard the term 'troll'. But what exactly is a troll?

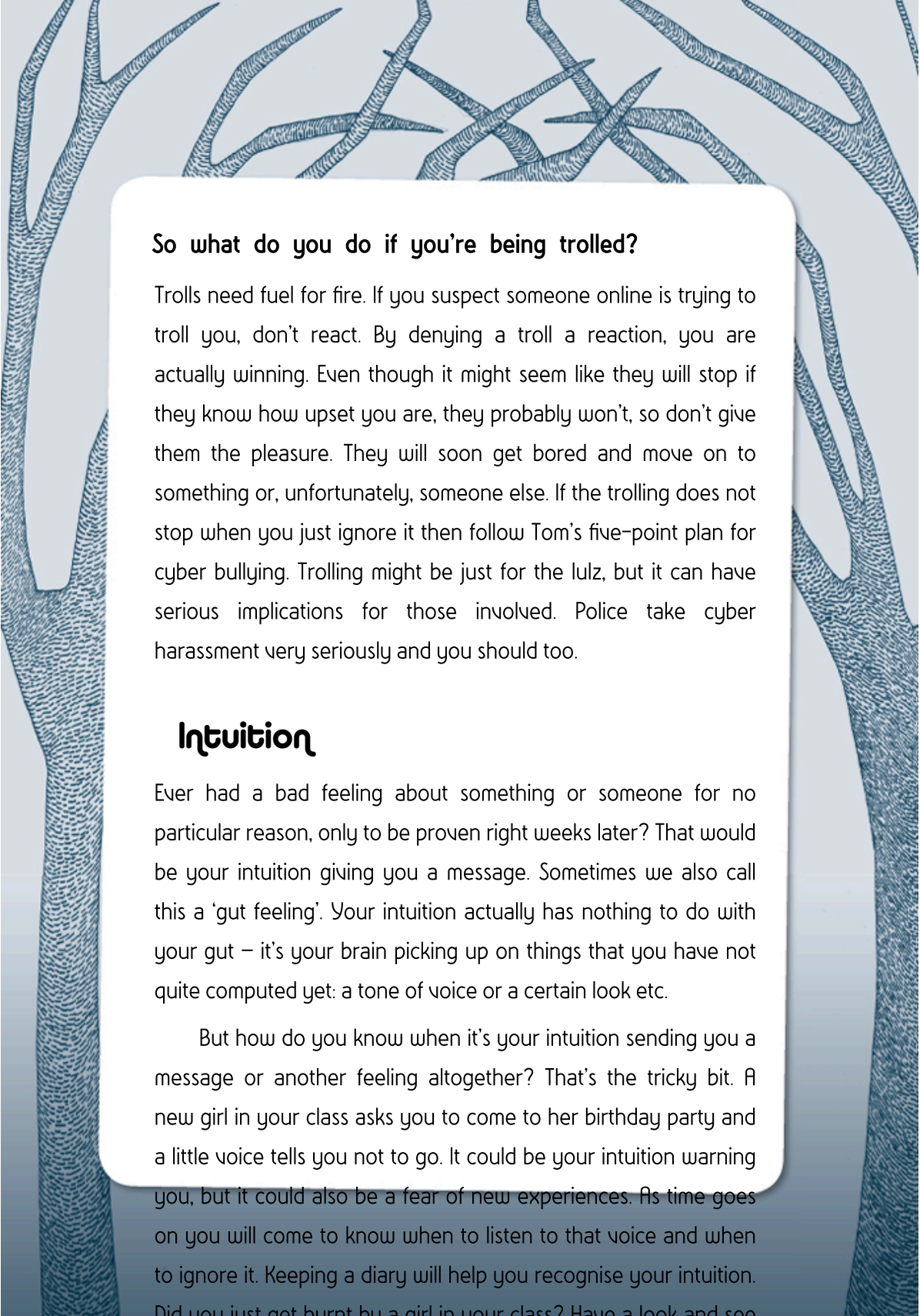
A troll is someone who purposefully provokes a response from someone online. A troll attempts to annoy, disgust or upset their victim. They don't necessarily know you IRL, and can be a complete stranger who has found you via Facebook or Youtube and decided to pick on you. They sometimes use fake personas to pull off a trolling attempt. For example:

Jon is a bored fifteen-year-old who hates a certain boy band, let's call them VIBE. He decides to make fun of VIBE fans on a fan website. He joins the message-board discussion pretending to be a fan and writes insulting things about the band. Girls on the site respond furiously. Then Jon creates a fake news article declaring a member of VIBE dead and posts it to the wall creating chaos among the message-board members. As the girls are getting more distressed about the fake death of their idol, Jon emails his friends the link to the page and they pass it on to their friends and their friends until hundreds (or thousands) of people are making fun of the girls online.

Trolling IRL

Trolling isn't just something that happens online, it is a part of your everyday life. At school, a group of year eight boys used to troll me by saying really racist or sexist things. I'd take the bait and get really mad at them. They

would then all sit back and laugh. Finally I realised that it was my reaction that encouraged them and I was able to stop it. I simply rolled my eyes when they said something racist or dumb to bait me and they got bored and annoyed someone else.



So what do you do if you're being trolled?

Trolls need fuel for fire. If you suspect someone online is trying to troll you, don't react. By denying a troll a reaction, you are actually winning. Even though it might seem like they will stop if they know how upset you are, they probably won't, so don't give them the pleasure. They will soon get bored and move on to something or, unfortunately, someone else. If the trolling does not stop when you just ignore it then follow Tom's five-point plan for cyber bullying. Trolling might be just for the lulz, but it can have serious implications for those involved. Police take cyber harassment very seriously and you should too.

Intuition

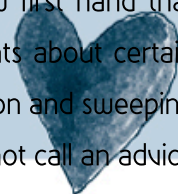
Ever had a bad feeling about something or someone for no particular reason, only to be proven right weeks later? That would be your intuition giving you a message. Sometimes we also call this a 'gut feeling'. Your intuition actually has nothing to do with your gut – it's your brain picking up on things that you have not quite computed yet: a tone of voice or a certain look etc.

But how do you know when it's your intuition sending you a message or another feeling altogether? That's the tricky bit. A new girl in your class asks you to come to her birthday party and a little voice tells you not to go. It could be your intuition warning you, but it could also be a fear of new experiences. As time goes on you will come to know when to listen to that voice and when to ignore it. Keeping a diary will help you recognise your intuition. Did you just get burnt by a girl in your class? Have a look and see if you expressed any worry about her when you first met her. If

you did, try and remember how you felt and why. Maybe next time you'll be able to listen to your intuition and avoid the drama.

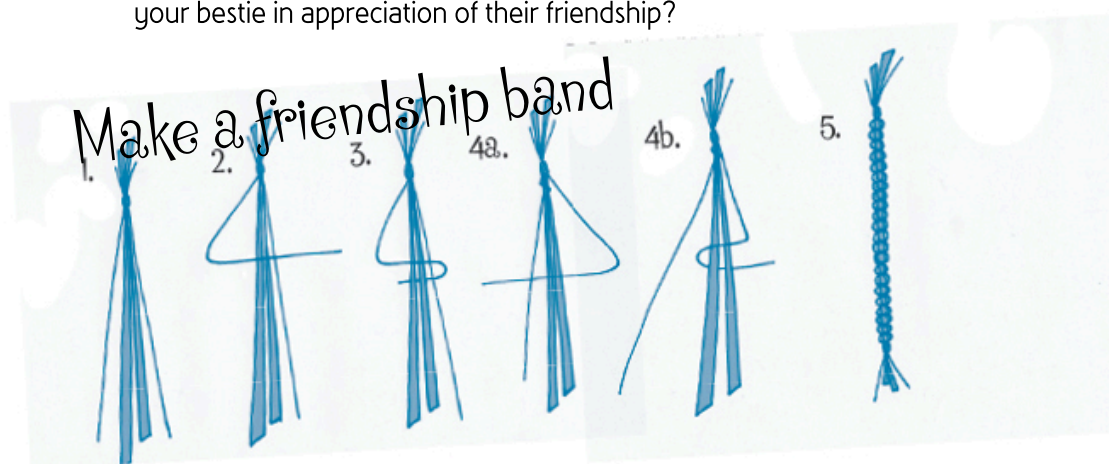
Friends in need

The other day my friend and I were talking about the things we had done when we were young that we regret. And trust me, it definitely wasn't hanging out with friends. In fact, both of us admitted that our biggest regrets were times that we weren't able to be there for a friend when they reached out to us. When a friend comes to you with a stubbed toe or a broken heart, yeah you can fix that. A bit of chocolate, some compliments and a good soundtrack helps the healing. But when a friend comes to you with something as full on as being sexually abused by her uncle or being raped by your brother's friend, well how the hell are you supposed to deal with that? Unfortunately, my friend and I didn't deal with it. We pretended like it never happened. And we both regret that decision now more than fifteen years later. But we admitted that even as adults those situations are difficult. This is not a TV show and often really big decisions about people you love result in even bigger repercussions. And even as girls, we knew that. People sometimes underestimate how much young people understand (you might have realised that already). I'm not saying it's all hunky dory when someone you love tells you about something that is going on in their life that is upsetting. 'Cos I can't lie to you, it's not. But you should talk to someone about it, preferably an adult that you trust. Now, I know first hand that sometimes it feels like you can't tell your parents about certain things, but rather than pretend nothing is going on and sweeping it under the rug like me and my friend did, why not call an advice line? Kids helpline is totally anonymous and free and is available 24 hours a day, 7 days a week. Explaining a situation to someone who doesn't know you or your friend can help you work out how you are feeling and in what ways you can support your friend.



Kids Helpline: 1800 55 1800

Okay, enough about the gloom and doom 'cos the reality is, most of the time, friends are forever, through good times and bad. And it's nice to show a friend how much you care from time to time. Why not try making one of these fantastic bracelets to give to your bestie in appreciation of their friendship?



Instructions !

1. Cut two pieces of ribbon - 60cm in length, and two pieces of string or embroidery thread - 60 cm in length. Tie them together in a knot 6-7 cm from the end. Secure this knot to a fl at surface with some tape. Lay out your strands so that the ribbons are in the centre and the thread on the outsides.
2. Cross the thread on the left-hand side over the other threads (to make it look like the number 4).
3. Loop this thread under one of your centre ribbons and gently pull to the top.
- 4a and 4b. Repeat this process on the other side.
5. Continue till you reach the end and secure all loose threads with one last knot, making sure you have left enough thread again to tie your bracelet to your friend's wrist.

Voilà!

A handmade gift for somebody special.

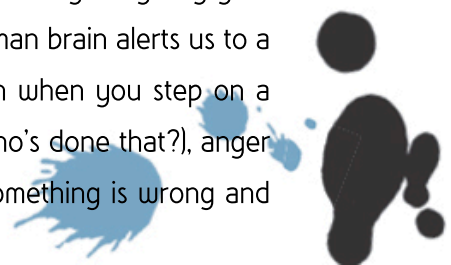


CHAPTER 5

TEMPER, TEMPER!

Ever been told that good girls don't get angry? Or that it's ugly for girls to yell? These myths have been around for years and have done nothing but make girls feel crappy about feeling . . . well, crappy.

NEWS FLASH: There is nothing wrong with getting angry. In fact, it is one of the amazing ways the human brain alerts us to a potential problem. Like how you feel pain when you step on a campfire (oh right, like I'm the only one who's done that?), anger is a way for your brain to tell you that something is wrong and needs attention.



There are lots of things going on in this world that are worth getting angry about. However, flying off the handle and throwing your dinner against the wall is not very helpful. The key is to **HANDLE** your anger.

A lot of the time when you get angry your brain is identifying that there is something unfair going on or letting you know that you feel insecure about something.

So . . . how do we still get angry but not so angry that we have steam coming out of our ears and make people step away from us slowly with their hands in front of their eyes?

The first step to controlling yourself before you jump off the deep end is to understand *what* is making you angry. Often just by understanding *why* you are angry, you are able to react in a way that is helpful to yourself and the situation, (rather than just making a scene).

For example:

My friend Alia invites our other friend Eliza to go out to the movies with her in front of me, without inviting me. I walk away, throwing my milkshake at their feet as I go. (Well, maybe I just walk away angrily, but you get the picture.) Not only have I alienated myself from my two friends by walking away in a huff but I've also lost a perfectly good milkshake.

And bottling up the anger and pretending I don't care is, unfortunately, not the best option either, because anger generally finds a way of escaping. And walking away and being nasty about Eliza and Alia to another friend also wouldn't make me a good friend!

It will probably make the situation just as bad, if not worse, than if I walked off in a huff!

So what's an angry girl to do?

Well, firstly . . . **think**. Yep, that old chestnut.

If I had stopped to think clearly about the interaction with Alia and Eliza, I would have been able to engage with the reasons behind my anger.

The initial feeling I have is that I'm angry that I haven't been invited to the movie. But if I can cool down enough to understand why I'm so angry about it, I realise it has nothing to do with the movie. I am angry for a number of reasons:

1. I feel **left out** of the plans.
2. I feel that it was **rude** of them to discuss the event in front of me and not invite me.
3. I feel that maybe I'm not as close to Alia as Eliza is, and I feel **jealous** of their friendship.

Perhaps I could have asked them if I could go. It is entirely probable that Alia has simply not thought to ask me, assuming I would be going, or thought I had already seen the movie. If this is the case, I could have saved myself a lot of energy (and sorry to mention it again, but the milkshake!) by not reacting so angrily.

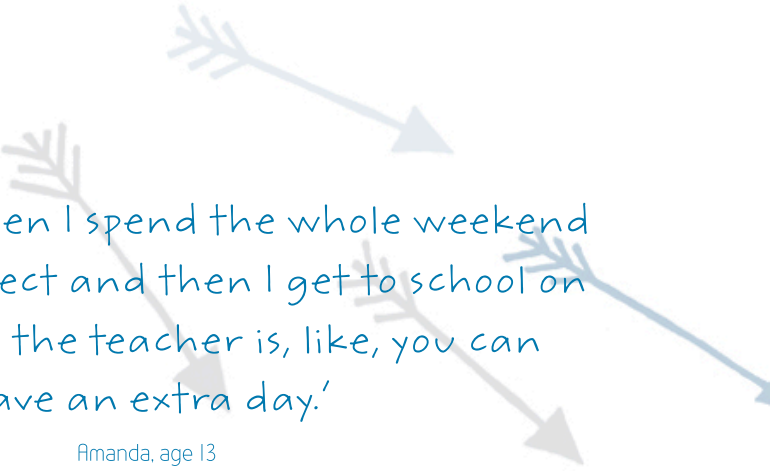
Of course, she could have been doing it to make me angry. But if I'd been able to ask her about it calmly, not only would I have avoided giving her the satisfaction of watching the hissy fit she wanted to see (and perhaps expected?) but I could have shown her that it made me feel uncomfortable and she would have been embarrassed for being rude.



'I gave some advice to a friend and she took it the wrong way and was very rude and horrible. I was very frustrated and taken aback and I replied back bitchily.'

Soledad, age 13

What makes you angry?



'I get angry when I spend the whole weekend finishing a project and then I get to school on Monday and the teacher is, like, you can have an extra day.'

Amanda, age 13

Angerific

Now, all this thinking business is good, but it also sometimes helps to channel your angry energy into something more constructive than a spilt milkshake. Rather than sitting by yourself stewing about the situation, try these more helpful anger outlets:

ANGRY DRUMS

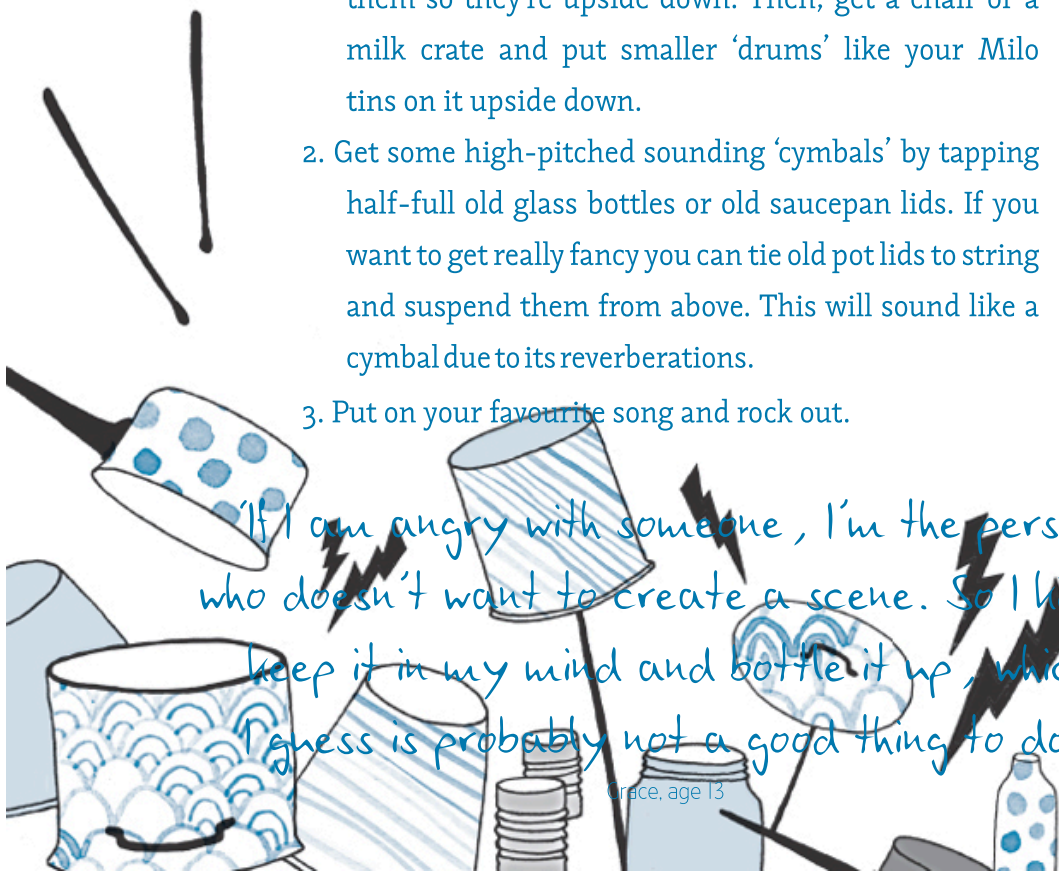
Beat the anger away.

Now, unless you have super-cool parents or an older sibling in a band, you probably don't have a drum kit. No stress, there is a simple do-it-yourself drum-kit solution that allows you to play the mini outdoor anger drum kit!

Things You'll Need:

- Buckets, Milo tins, post tubes, tape, string, scissors, pot lids, bowls, glass bottles, empty paint tins

1. Okay, so first get your buckets and paint tins and flip them so they're upside down. Then, get a chair or a milk crate and put smaller 'drums' like your Milo tins on it upside down.
2. Get some high-pitched sounding 'cymbals' by tapping half-full old glass bottles or old saucepan lids. If you want to get really fancy you can tie old pot lids to string and suspend them from above. This will sound like a cymbal due to its reverberations.
3. Put on your favourite song and rock out.



'If I am angry with someone, I'm the person who doesn't want to create a scene. So I kinda keep it in my mind and bottle it up, which I guess is probably not a good thing to do.'

Grace, age 13



Count to 10 in your head

This is what the experts say. (Surprisingly, the Angry Drums don't seem too popular with the doctors!) The idea is that when someone has done something to make you angry, you STOP and count in your head to ten, slowly. By the time you have done this, you will be in a better position to react to the situation without throwing a tantrum.

Paint

Ever seen Jackson Pollack's painting *Blue Poles*? Or Picasso's *Guernica*? Check them out on the Internet. You can tell that both of those paintings were made by an angry artist! If you have enough protective clothing and newspaper on the floor you can always take your anger out on a canvas. Who knows, you might end up making millions for your angry painting titled: *Why was I not allowed to go to Lucia's sleepover?!!!*

Your own methods

List some of your favourite things to do. So next time you wanna jump up and down you can open this book and find a productive way to channel the anger into something constructive and not just destructive.



The Rage-O-Meter Quiz:

How Red is Your Rage?



1. A friend is running ten minutes late for a shopping date.

You ...

- a) Walk off. She can shop without you
- b) Sit and wait patiently. She'll be there soon
- c) Message her and tell her you are waiting

2. Your parents won't let you go to the movies with your friends.

You ...

- a) Try to reason and beg
- b) Accept their decision and find something else to do
- c) Chuck a full-blown wobbly, screaming at them about how unfair they are

3. You eagerly open a paper bag to begin tucking into your lunch order, only to discover you have been given the wrong sandwich. You ...

- a) Give it to a friend in a huff
- b) Munch away anyway – it looks pretty tasty, whatever it is
- c) Storm into the café and let the cashier know in no uncertain terms that he/she stuffed up the order

4. You're in the middle of a school assignment when your PC crashes, deleting all files including your project. And you didn't back up. You ...

- a) Take the keyboard, throw it on the floor and jump up and down in a rage
- b) Take a deep breath before trying to decide what to do next
- c) Swear and shout at the computer

5. Somebody pushes in front of you in a queue. You ...

- a) Do nothing. They must be in a real hurry
- b) Tap them on the shoulder and explain in a calm voice that you were next
- c) Yell abuse at them

6. You go to put on your favourite T-shirt, only to discover that your sister/friend, who you kindly lent it to last week, has left a big stain on the front. You ...

- a) Calmly pop it in the wash and choose something else to wear
- b) Go to your sister's/friend's wardrobe, take out their favourite item of clothing and chop it up with a pair of scissors
- c) Yell at your friend/sister for being so inconsiderate and demand that they wash the shirt

7. You miss your fave TV show due to a network rescheduling. You ...

- a) Do something else
- b) Channel surf with gritted teeth
- c) Throw the TV remote across the room

8. Which colour best describes your usual mood?

- a) Red
- b) Blue

c) Yellow

Answers:

1. a) 3 b) 1 c) 2
2. a) 2 b) 1 c) 3
3. a) 2 b) 1 c) 3
4. a) 3 b) 1 c) 2
5. a) 1 b) 2 c) 3
6. a) 1 b) 3 c) 2
7. a) 1 b) 2 c) 3
8. a) 3 b) 1 c) 2

Results:

8.12

You are a pretty relaxed and chilled type of person. Nothing fazes you much. You are at the very low end of the Rage-0-Meter scale.

13.8

You have the ability to explode, but you manage to keep your anger in check a little. Try to take a deep breath before you act in anger. You are in the middle of the Rage-0-Meter scale.

19.24

Whoa there! Perhaps you need to find something to calm that fiery nature of yours! The Rage-0-Meter scale has been tipped!

*'When people don't listen to me I get frustrated.
I go outside and play with my rabbits to calm
myself down'*

Mei, age 13





CHAPTER 6

HOME IS WHERE THE ♥ IS

When I was fourteen years old, my dream was to move out of home. I wanted to get my own flat away from my parents and my older sister. But I found out that moving out at such a young age is not very easy (or legal!). Even if you LOVE living at home, it's natural to want your own space.

But like me you are probably going to have to stick it out for years yet.

This chapter is all about how to make living with your parents and brother/sister from MARS bearable, and how to make your room feel like YOUR space.



Oh Brother/Oh Sister!

My sister is two-and-a-half years older than me. When we were young kids, we got along but were completely different. She was small and blonde, I was dark and tall. She sang in the choir, I played basketball. She could do the splits, I couldn't even touch my toes. We even supported different football teams! The fact we were opposites didn't really bother us all that much. Well, that was until we started getting older.

As we entered our teens we began to fight. Our arguments became constant and weren't helped by the fact that we shared a room! Once we even tried dividing our room down the middle, like in the movies, until I realised I was stranded in the room forever since she had sneakily claimed the doorway! (She was older and smarter, after all.)

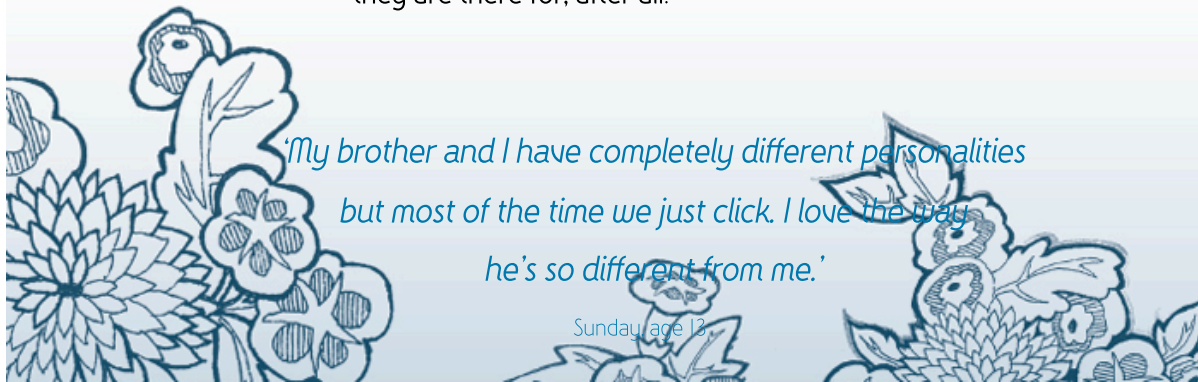
So yeah, I know a thing or two about not getting on with your brother or sister.

The good news is it doesn't last forever. My sister and I are very close now. Often siblings fight because they are actually quite similar, even if it doesn't seem like that at the time.



How to deal with aliens (or your siblings)

1. Stop and breathe. Is the fight important? Try to slow down and work out if the front seat in the car, for instance, is really worth all the yelling. Sometimes it's better to let your sibling act out. Your parents will notice if you are the peacemaker and you can cash in these brownie points for something you really want.
2. If they are being really mean to you, try to understand what is going on from their perspective. Are they acting out on you because they are jealous? Are they having a hard time at school? Just because they are having a hard time doesn't mean they can be nasty to you, but once you know why they are being horrible, you can talk to your parents about it and try to resolve it with your sibling.
3. Try to find things that you have in common. Your sibling might make you feel like you were definitely adopted, but I am sure there is at least something you can enjoy together. Whether it's your love for stupid knock-knock jokes, a band, a sport, or an activity like dancing or reading, there will be something you share. At least you can always laugh at your parents together. That's what they are there for, after all.



'My brother and I have completely different personalities but most of the time we just click. I love the way he's so different from me.'

Sunday, age 12



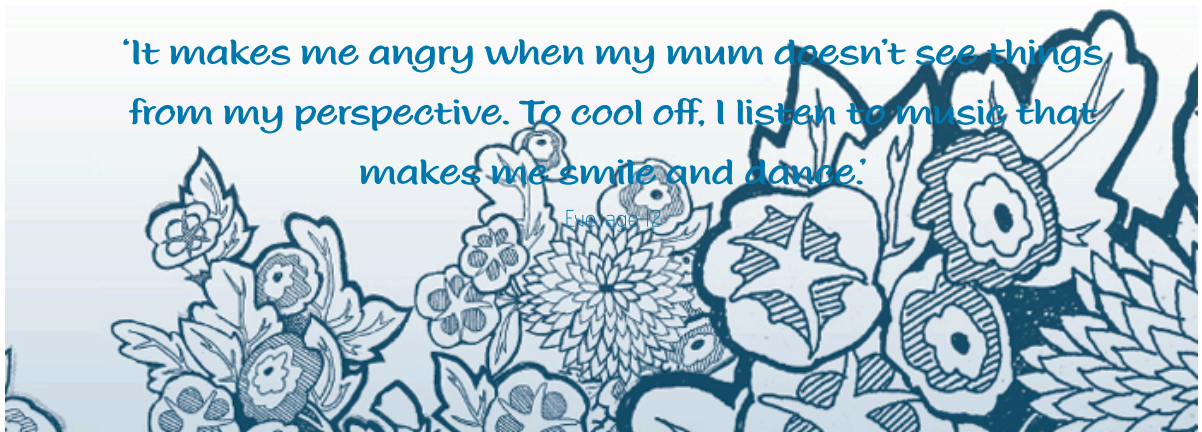
Parental Unit

Parents come in all different combinations. From Mum and Dad, to Mum and weekend Dad, to Dad and weekend Mum, to Dad and puppy, to Grandma and Grandpa, to Mum and Mum, to just Dad, there is no right or wrong combination to a family.

The one thing all parental units have in common is that they are your legal guardians. This means they can rule your life until you're eighteen. They make the rules, you follow them. And, as most of you know, parents can be some of the most unfair rule-makers in history. Unfortunately, unlike politicians, you don't get to elect them. So until you can get that dream home with no rules, learn the art of negotiation with the tips over the page, and you will have a better chance of success with getting your own way.

'It makes me angry when my mum doesn't see things from my perspective. To cool off, I listen to music that makes me smile and dance.'

— Eve 100%



Deal-Breaker/Deal-Maker

Say you want to go to your friend's sleepover and you need to get permission from your parents (which, unfortunately until you move out of home, you do).

1. Pick your moment. Don't ask your mum or dad for a favour when they look grumpy, have just come home from work and haven't even put their bag down yet, or are in the middle of cooking dinner. This is a sure-fire way to fail. They are more likely to consider your request if you ask them when they are relaxed and have time to think about it.
2. Write in your diary what you think their perspective is for not letting you do something. Are they worried about your safety? Is money a problem? Are they concerned you do too much out of school? When you start to think like your parents (a scary idea), you can start to brainstorm potential deal-makers.

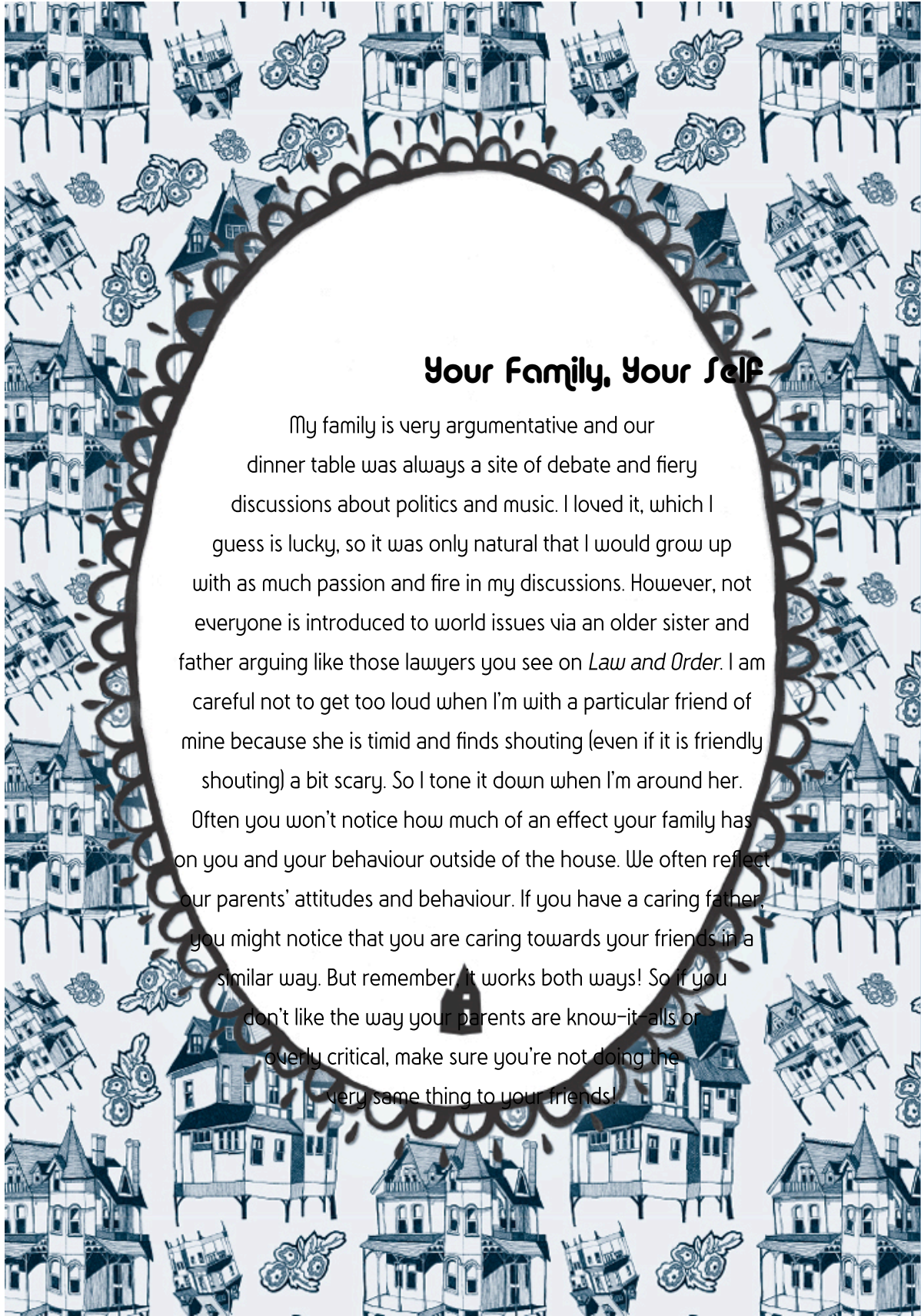
e.g. If they don't want you to go to Carrie's sleepover because they don't know Carrie, an introduction to Carrie's mum might be all they need to reassure them.



3. Try to be calm and reasonable when you talk to them. Running to your room screaming will not encourage them to think of you as mature and ready to enter the world. If they say no, try to explain why you think their decision is unfair in a clear and balanced tone. Make them feel like you understand their perspective. e.g. I understand that you are worried I am doing too many after-school activities, and that the sleepover will only add to time not allocated to homework, but I think I can do this and keep up with my schoolwork.
4. Accept their answer, for now. Sometimes you just have to take the defeat. It can suck when it happens, but rather than sabotage all future chances of freedom, sometimes it's best to wait for next time.
5. Stick to your word. If you promise to get back from the sleepover at 11am then be back by 11am. The more you are able to show them you are trustworthy, the more trust (and freedom) they will give you.

'You have to suck up to get your way. I do it discreetly 'cos my mum can tell when I'm sucking up. I ask her if she needs any help around the house or something. And then I wait for about half an hour after she's satisfied with what I've done and then I ask her. And it works. I have to make sure she's in a good mood. I wouldn't even try and ask if she's a bit grumpy.'

Rachel, age 13



Your Family, Your Self

My family is very argumentative and our dinner table was always a site of debate and fiery discussions about politics and music. I loved it, which I guess is lucky, so it was only natural that I would grow up with as much passion and fire in my discussions. However, not everyone is introduced to world issues via an older sister and father arguing like those lawyers you see on *Law and Order*. I am careful not to get too loud when I'm with a particular friend of mine because she is timid and finds shouting (even if it is friendly shouting) a bit scary. So I tone it down when I'm around her.

Often you won't notice how much of an effect your family has on you and your behaviour outside of the house. We often reflect our parents' attitudes and behaviour. If you have a caring father, you might notice that you are caring towards your friends in a similar way. But remember, it works both ways! So if you don't like the way your parents are know-it-alls or overly critical, make sure you're not doing the very same thing to your friends!

Your Room, Your Life

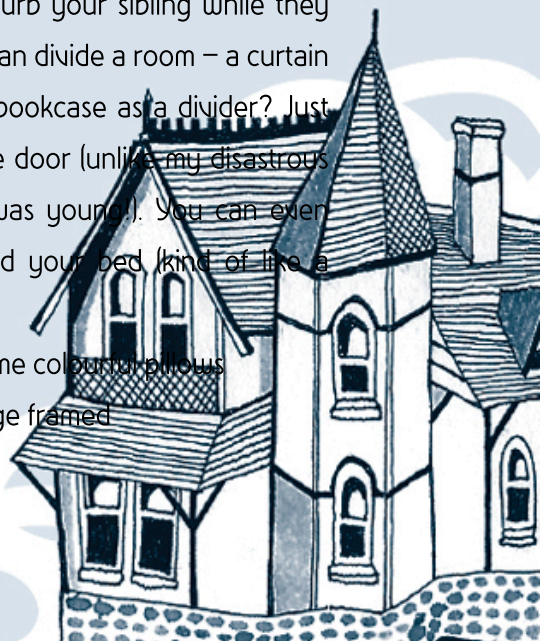
A girl's bedroom should be somewhere that she can hang out and feel at home. I know it can be hard when you're sharing a room (trust me on this one) because you might have little say over what's in your space. But you can take control of your room. Whether it's the entire room or just a bedside table, you must have a space to relax, recollect and recharge.

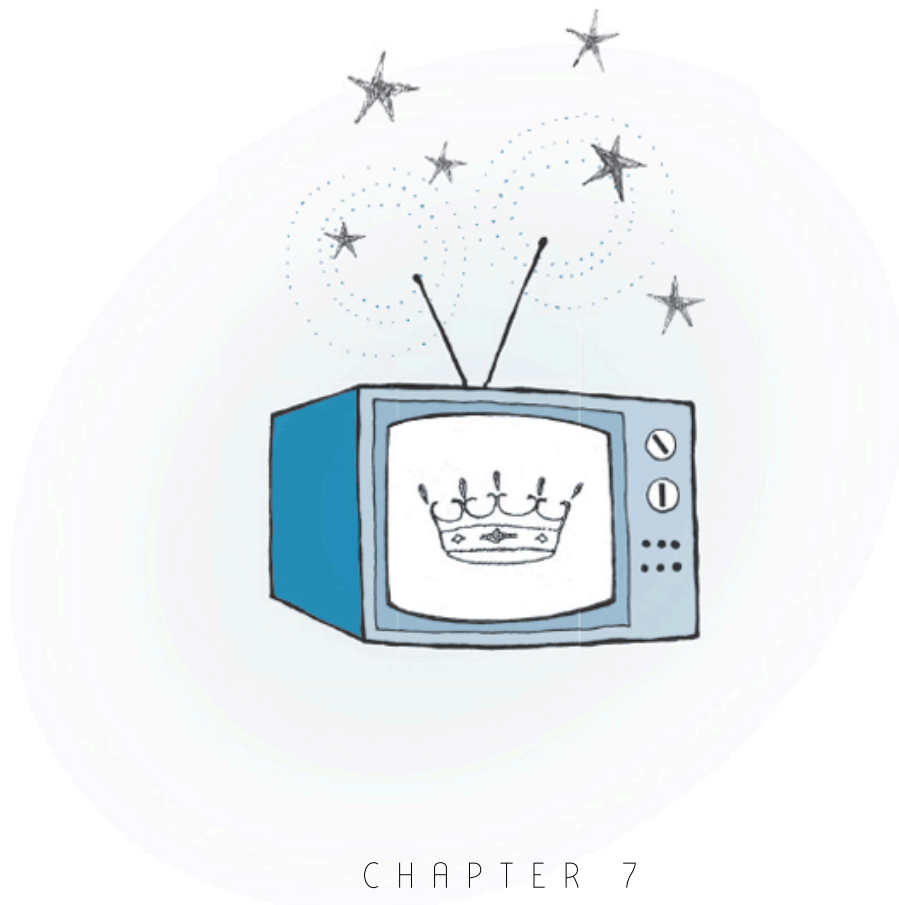
'I love my room. It's my area where no one is allowed.'

Hannah, age 13

It doesn't have to cost a fortune to give your room the makeover it needs to fit you and your life. Simple things can make a huge difference – such as a wall-attached lamp with a bendable arm for night-time reading that won't disturb your sibling while they sleep. And there are many ways you can divide a room – a curtain is the perfect solution. Or perhaps a bookcase as a divider? Just make sure both of you can get to the door (unlike my disastrous attempt to divide my room when I was young!). You can even create a curtain that just goes round your bed (kind of like a mosquito net). Very French!

And get decorating. Throw some colourful throws on your bed and try hanging a large framed blackboard to write messages and reminders.





CHAPTER 7

SCREEN QUEEN

*'When will I learn? The answers to life's problems aren't
at the bottom of a bottle, they're on TV!'*

Homer Simpson, animation character

I am a self-confessed media junkie. I spend hours on my favourite blogs, reading magazines and watching TV. But whether I'm watching a meat pie advertisement or my favourite trashy reality TV show, it's important I'm aware that all products of the media – magazines, TV shows, blogs, movies, bill-boards (and onwards to infinity) – are created to present a certain message.

Behind every product there is an individual or even a team of people working to make us feel a certain way – so we fall in love with a certain

character, or want a certain product, or both. Some stories are written to inform us, others to convince us. It's good to understand that this is what is happening so we can make informed choices about what we like/need and how we want to think.

Advertising

We all know what ads are. Those pesky things that come on just when your TV show is getting good. They also sit in the sidebar of your Email account and appear at the bottom of Youtube videos. They grace billboards above the train station, and can even be on your train ticket. The average number of advertisements a kid in America sees a year is 40,000.⁷ Australia might not be that far behind.

Few forms of media tell stories as well as advertising. Advertisers are often some of the best storytellers around. Think about it – their job is to try to get people who are watching TV or surfing the Net to pay attention to an ad. Eeek! And as if that's not enough, they also have to try and get people to go out and buy the product they are advertising.

One of the most effective tactics for getting our attention is humour. If an ad is funny, people will stop and watch. If the ad is *really* funny they might then talk about it later at the breakfast table or at school with their friends. Humour is used to make people remember the ad and, ultimately, what it is selling. Remember the gorilla from the Cadbury ad? Yep. Me too.

Another popular tactic is star power. Yep, celebrities make big money putting their face and name to products. Think of the make-up ads with actors, the face-wash ads with singers and the clothes ads with sports stars. Seeing someone we know and like is a good way to make us sit up and take notice of the ad. It might

even create a sense of trust for the product. For example, if *she* likes it, it must be good.

*'I want to get Proactiv because Justin Bieber uses it.
I want it and I don't even need it!'*

Hannah, age 13

These are the obvious types of advertising. But there are others that you might not be aware of.

Product placement

Product placement is when a company or individual has paid for their product to be showcased in a TV show or film without informing the viewer of this. For example, if a character is drinking a certain soft drink on a TV show, you can assume that the soft-drink company is paying for their brand to be featured. In 2010, Lady Gaga's video for her hit single *Telephone* got people talking about her unique ability to rock a mean eye-patch, but it also set tongues wagging due to the blatant product placement. From mobile phones, computers and headphones to sandwich spread, there were numerous paid product placements in the video, leading people to question the need for so many advertisements hidden within the clip!

But it's not just about *products* appearing in the video, sometimes companies pay to be in the lyrics of pop songs!!! In 2008, pop singer Chris Brown was paid by the chewing gum company Wrigleys to write and perform a remake of their 1960 jingle. The references to the product were hidden within the lyrics of his single *Forever*. The single was a top ten billboard hit before people even realised the link between the song and the company.



And if that wasn't sneaky enough, this product placement can even be found in the virtual world. Yep, you know those billboards and advertisements in video games like *Second Life* or *Sim City*? A company paid for them, too. Millions of dollars are spent annually by companies for in-game advertising. But is it worth it? Apparently so. A study done in 2010 found that in-game ads for a sports drink in sports computer games increased the average household dollars spent on that beverage by 24 per cent.⁸

In fact, product placements are now so sneaky that celebrities can be paid simply to hold a product in their free time, even if they hate the product! If they are snapped by the paparazzi with a certain brand of juice while coming out of their house, they can get paid tens of thousands of dollars. Wowza. So why would an actress get paid that much money for simply sipping a drink? Because product placement works. Yep, even though it might seem silly, the photo of a certain teen actress holding a bottle of juice will boost the sales of that juice. If you want to buy a product that your idol is carrying, that's fine, but be aware that they might just dump the juice when they pick up their cheque.

Advertising focused at girls like you has skyrocketed in the past fifty years from TV show franchises to pop idol heart throbs. Do you have a magazine handy? Count how many advertisements you can find. A lot, huh?

Check out:

<http://pbskids.org/dontbuyit/>



BODY IMAGE

Ever looked at a magazine cover model and thought, she's just too perfect to be real? Well, you're probably right. A lot of work goes into making a covergirl look like a covergirl, and it isn't all lights and make-up. Photoshop and digital manipulation can stretch out legs, smooth skin, remove moles and increase bra size in a matter of seconds. And this is common practice in teen and women's magazines.

'I don't like it when they stretch you out and make you all long and skinny. It makes you look like a Barbie. Who the hell looks like that?'

Emily Blunt, actress

Go online and check out photoshop videos on Youtube. You can see how easy it is to manipulate images.

'I wish I looked like Cindy Crawford.'

Cindy Crawford, model, commenting on the amount of work that goes into her fashion shoots



In the 90s, model Magali Amadei graced the pages of *Vogue*, *Cosmopolitan* and *Harper's Bazaar*. She explains that photoshop manipulation was commonplace, making even the covergirls feel like they were inadequate. When she was on the cover of *Cosmopolitan*, which is supposed to appeal more to the average young woman, the photoshop technicians retouched her teeth, enlarged her breasts, and even photoshopped her face!

'Sometimes I compare myself to models in magazines. I know I shouldn't but I can't help looking at them and wanting to look that way too.'

Dee, age 14

Magali decided to speak out against these practices that create impossible standards of beauty for women and girls. Working with writer Claire Mysko, she runs a website called Inside Beauty that encourages girls to feel good about themselves just as they are. The website talks about the unrealistic beauty standards created by the fashion industry and gives girls tips on how to stay body positive.

Check it out:

<http://www.insidebeauty.org/>

*'I like that I can laugh at most things and I am happy
with the way I look.'*

Veronica, age 12

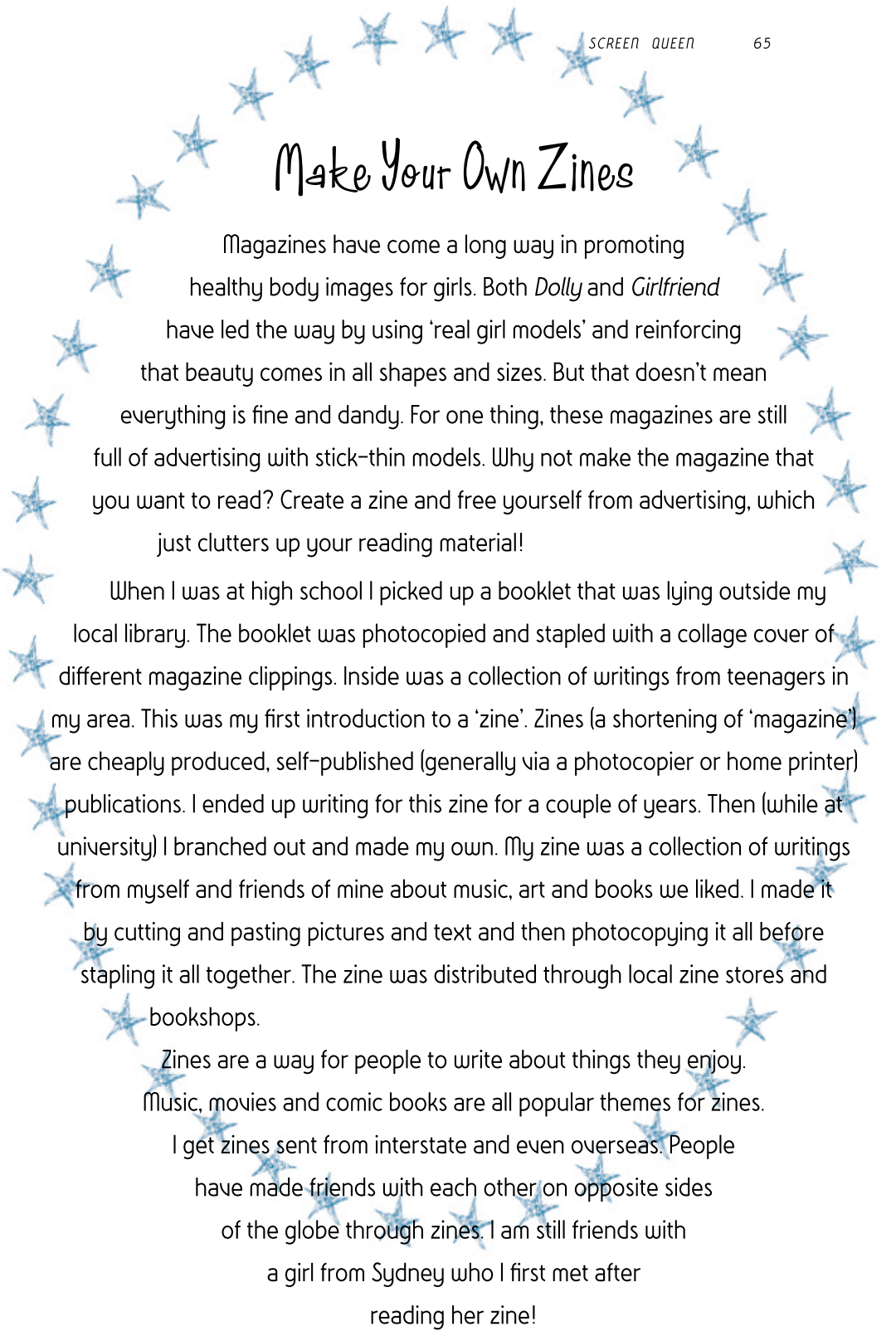
*'I can't tell you how many covers of magazines I've been on when
my eyes were blue. I don't have blue eyes. I have green eyes.'*

Kate Hudson, actress

FALSE ADVERTISING

In July of 2011, a series of cosmetic advertisements featuring actor Julia Roberts and model Christy Turlington were banned. The advertisements, which focused on their faces, were so airbrushed that authorities decided it was fake advertising for the beauty products they were promoting. No product can give you the perfect glow of a computer photoshop tool. 'Pictures of flawless skin and super-slim bodies are all around, but they don't reflect reality,' said English politician MP Jo Swinson.

So when you open a magazine and see a girl with impossibly long legs and perfect skin, stop. Before you start to notice your own shortcomings (or short legs) remember that those legs have probably been stretched by photoshop, the skin has been retouched and it has taken hours to make this girl look so perfect. And if she's holding a can of a soft drink, know that she's probably being paid to do it!



Make Your Own Zines

Magazines have come a long way in promoting healthy body images for girls. Both *Dolly* and *Girlfriend* have led the way by using 'real girl models' and reinforcing that beauty comes in all shapes and sizes. But that doesn't mean everything is fine and dandy. For one thing, these magazines are still full of advertising with stick-thin models. Why not make the magazine that you want to read? Create a zine and free yourself from advertising, which just clutters up your reading material!

When I was at high school I picked up a booklet that was lying outside my local library. The booklet was photocopied and stapled with a collage cover of different magazine clippings. Inside was a collection of writings from teenagers in my area. This was my first introduction to a 'zine'. Zines (a shortening of 'magazine') are cheaply produced, self-published (generally via a photocopier or home printer) publications. I ended up writing for this zine for a couple of years. Then (while at university) I branched out and made my own. My zine was a collection of writings from myself and friends of mine about music, art and books we liked. I made it by cutting and pasting pictures and text and then photocopying it all before stapling it all together. The zine was distributed through local zine stores and bookshops.

Zines are a way for people to write about things they enjoy. Music, movies and comic books are all popular themes for zines. I get zines sent from interstate and even overseas. People have made friends with each other on opposite sides of the globe through zines. I am still friends with a girl from Sydney who I first met after reading her zine!

Here are some popular zine types:

- **Fanzine:** This is a zine that is dedicated entirely to a band, singer, movie, actor etc.

- **Political zine:** This is a zine based on discussing political issues. While it may sound boring, there are some great political zines out there. A lot of feminist zines came out of the 1990's punk scene. There are also a lot of animal rights zines, too.

- **Perzine:** This is a personal zine. Based on someone's personal experience, it is similar to a diary entry.

- **Artzine:** This is a zine that showcases someone's art. Usually collage, photos or comic books. A lot of famous comic books began as zines. You would be surprised how awesome line drawings come up when you photocopy them.

These days, blogging has taken over the role zines played for many people. Despite this, people still love to make zines. A lot of libraries even have a zine section!

There is something very satisfying about making your own zine. I don't know if it's because you are using your hands to make something (very rare these days) or if it's simply the fact that at the end of a couple of hours of cutting and pasting you can have a publication in your hand. It is definitely a feel-good end to a day.

The fashion blogger Taxi (who, by the way, is in my Hall of Fame on pg.219) loves zines. She recently had a story in the international zine *First Kiss*. This zine was compiled by writers Elizabeth Spiridakis and Marisa Meltzer, who got bloggers and writers from around the world to submit their stories and ramblings about their first kiss. Très cute!

So why not get some friends together and have a zine-making day? Or visit a specialist zine store and create your own masterpiece.

For more info go to:

www.stickyinstitute.com

Here are some suggestions for a theme to get you going:

- **My favourite things**
- **What I'm thinking of when I'm not thinking**
- **My friends rule**



- Dear Person-I-haven't-met-yet...



CHAPTER 8

FIND YOUR OWN SUPERMODEL SUPERGIRL STYLE

Even before Facebook, mobile phones or Email existed (aka the stone age), clothes were a way for us to creatively express our personality. Whether you dress to stand out, or dress to fit in (usually it's a bit of both) clothes can be a whole lot of fun.

One thing that hasn't changed is that clothes cost money. Yep. Unfortunately, we are yet to live in a world where you can download your next

outfit online for free. Clothes cost cold hard cash, and sometimes lots of it. But it doesn't have to be this way. Yes, yes, I get it, it can suck when your parents won't buy you that top/sneakers/diamond-studded tutu you want, but instead of sitting around feeling sorry for yourself, try to see what fun things you can do within your budget.

Feeling comfortable and having fun in your clothes is the key to being stylish.

There is nothing worse than when someone is uncomfortable in what they are wearing. It is immediately obvious and it can seem like the clothes are actually wearing them, not the other way around!



Learn to sew

Why spend money on clothes from stores when you can make your own kick-arse outfits? Not only can you be sure that no one will turn up to the party wearing the same thing as you, but you get to choose the colours, material and cut. Many local community centres offer 'how to sew' classes. Maybe you can even do a course through your school. If you can't do it IRL, then do it online. There are heaps of websites with sewing tutorials and tips for the novice tailor. There are also a lot of good sewing manuals at libraries.

70 GIRL! *OpShop Princess*

Some of the most amazing outfits can be found in opshops (they are not called opportunity shops for nothing!), however sometimes you have to rummage through a lot of clothes to find the best pieces. This is part of the experience of the opshop – the hunt for the diamond in the rough can be almost as fun as trying the clothes on. And not only do the proceeds go to charity, but by buying clothes that are recycled you are reducing your carbon footprint dramatically. Stylish *and* green!

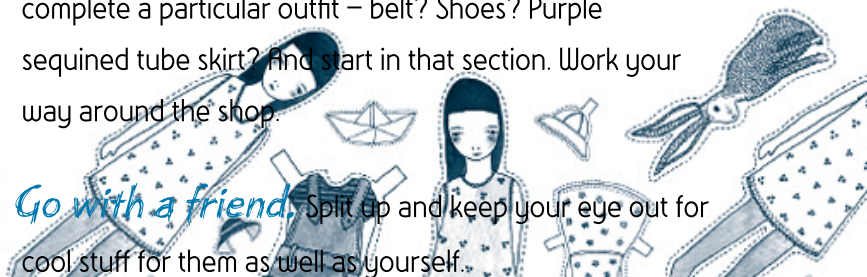
Opshop, or opportunity shop, is a term for a charity-run second-hand shop.

But if you're like me and can't sew to save your life (or wardrobe), don't despair! You can still score an awesome outfit for next to nothing. Why not raid the opshops or markets in your area for classic one-off vintage finds? Here are some tips for unearthing some sweet finds at your local opshop:

1. Take your time. Don't be disappointed if you don't see anything you like straight away. Opshops aren't set out like regular clothes stores with all the clothes conveniently displayed in sizes and styles. But digging through the chaos for that one amazing item is half the fun!

2. Be systematic. Think about what you need to complete a particular outfit – belt? Shoes? Purple sequined tube skirt? And start in that section. Work your way around the shop.

3. Go with a friend. Split up and keep your eye out for cool stuff for them as well as yourself.



4. Think creatively. Don't be put off if you like the fabric but not the style — you can always cut it up and turn it into something else.

If you want to find opshops in your area have a look online.

This website is a good start:

http://opshop.org/opshop_index.php

There are also some fantastic markets out there with fabulous vintage finds. You can search for markets in your area

by going to: www.whitehat.com.au

Next time you're on a boring family holiday in [insert remote country town somewhere], check out the local opshop. The items are less likely to have been picked over as in larger city/suburban stores.

And after you've got your haul of goodies, don't forget to ...

- **Wash the clothes before you wear them.** While most charity stores have this policy in place, it's better to be safe than itchy.

- **Continue the opshop cycle by donating old clothes you don't wear anymore to your favourite opshop.**

What goes around comes around, so make sure they are clean and wearable.



Don't be afraid to personalise clothes you've found to make them fit/look better. Why don't you buy some cheap T-shirts from the bargain bin at the opshop and decorate them with some stencils?

HOW TO STENCIL T-SHIRTS!

Stuff you'll need:

- a washed shirt (preferably an old second-hand one to begin with, no point ruining your favourite top on your first go!)
- fabric paint from the craft store. You can't just use ordinary paint because it'll come out when you wash it
- paintbrush or sponge
- some cardboard

1. First you have to pick a shape or word/s to make into a stencil. You can draw it yourself, copy it from a book or print it off the Internet. Trace the image onto the cardboard and cut the image out. A good way to do this is to pierce the cardboard in the middle of the image (the bit you're cutting out) and then cut from there.

2. Now get a whole lotta newspaper (preferably do this outside or somewhere that it doesn't matter if you make a mess) and put the T-shirt on top of the paper. Don't forget to put enough newspaper in between the T-shirt so the paint doesn't soak through when you paint the stencil on.

Now sticky-tape the stencil into position (that's important for a steady stencil) and paint it in. It's that easy! Leave it to dry and, Bam! New T-shirt. Nice!

HINT: At first it might be easier to start with a simple shape for your stencil – a heart or a star – before

designing something tricky.



Does that T-shirt cost the Earth?

In terms of its impact on the environment, the clothing, shoe and textile industry is the second-worst offender against Planet Earth (after the agricultural industry). The Australian Conservation Foundation breaks it down:

For every new T-shirt you buy, about 1.5 kilograms of pesticides and fertilisers have been used to manufacture it. The amount of water used in the production and transport of clothes bought by an average household each year is 150,000 litres! Do you really need that new T-shirt when you can recycle one? Makes you think, doesn't it?

'I don't really like the main shops much, I like to go to markets.
And sometimes on the weekend me and my friends do an opshop tour.'

Molly, age 13

Fashionista, humanista!

Whether you la la love clothes or just wear them 'cos you have to (and yes, trust me on that one, you do have to), it is worth considering where your clothes are being made and how.

Over the years, the clothing industry has been involved in some pretty dodgy business overseas and on our shores. Some major brands have been found to use sweatshop labour (cramped and inhumane working conditions) and even child labour! Ugh.

Sweatshops are often found in developing countries in places such as South East Asia. The workers put in long hours for very little money. Some people argue that the low pay is because it costs so little to live in these countries as opposed to a developed country like Australia. But studies have continually proved that many of these sweatshops pay their workers so badly, they are unable to provide for their families despite the low living costs. Besides the money factor, sweatshops allow the workers very few rights (like being allowed to go to the toilet when they need to!!!) and make the lives of the workers extremely uncomfortable.

Thankfully, in the nineties, a lot of these practices were uncovered by individuals who believed that people had the right to know how their clothes were being made. Many companies now make sure they protect the rights and conditions of the workers who make their clothes.

Check out the label of your favourite top and do your best detective work to find out what the working conditions of the

employees are.

Often clothing brands will have a policy on working conditions of their employees on their website, but if not, don't be afraid to email the company and ask.

Tips on ways to write to companies can be found on pg. 141 – in Human Writes.

TIP : Check out these websites. They have a lot of information about the issue, as well as a list of Australian companies that follow the sweatshop free policies.

<http://www.fairwear.org.au>

<http://www.ethicalclothingaustralia.org.au/>

What if my favourite brand is not sweatshop free?

That is a perfect situation where you can start a campaign with some friends to get them to adhere to a sweatfree policy.

Fashion is a fun way that we can express who we are as individuals. Whether that be going casual, or by always having elaborate outfits from head to toe (or a mix of both). Clothes do not make the person, but a person definitely makes the clothes. So whether you wear hoodies and trackies 24/7 or the latest brands, don't let what you're going to wear become a stressful part of your day. It's not what you're

wearing that matters but how you wear it.

Style Quiz:

What's Your Personal Style?

1. You would describe yourself as:
 - a) chilled out and down to earth
 - b) sporty and full of energy
 - c) arty and a daydreamer
 - d) neat and organised
2. Your closet is full of which colours?
 - a) soft colours like white, blue, lavender and pink
 - b) black
 - c) deep, rich colours like red, brown and orange
 - d) silvers, golds and metallics
3. What are your favourite textures?
 - a) soft silks and satins
 - b) natural cotton
 - c) wools and weaves
 - d) leather and lycra
4. Which of the following would most closely resemble your favourite item of clothing?
 - a) a comfy cardigan
 - b) a gorgeous dress with a classic cut
 - c) trackies
 - d) a sequinned hoodie dress

5. Which accessory would you choose from the following list?
 - a) a pair of silver-trimmed old-school trainers
 - b) a vintage brooch
 - c) a designer clutch purse
 - d) Birkenstocks

6. Which of the following people's closets would you raid?
 - a) Taylor Swift
 - b) Steph Gilmore
 - c) Lady Gaga
 - d) Kristin Stewart

7. You pick up a boring white tee at an opshop and you ...
 - a) get creative with the scissors – a few snips here and there and you have yourself a cute little off-the-shoulder white tank top
 - b) stencil your favourite basketball player's number on the back. It's now your own special baller jersey – a fraction of the price and not for sale on ebay. Slam dunk!
 - c) get some dye from the shop and soak the tee in a nice rich dark dye. Bam! – your own customised dyed T-shirt
 - d) get out the puff paints and the sequin glue. Time to bling this tee into eternity!

8. What kind of fashion animal are you?
 - a) zebra – black-and-white stripes never go out of fashion
 - b) grizzly bear – make a statement wearing fur head to toe! (But it's ethical 'cos it's your own!)

- c) snake – slick, fast, and when you're bored with your outfit,
no worries – you just shed it
d) cat – sleeping all day in a comfy coat

Results:

1. a) 1 b) 2 c) 4 d) 3
2. a) 2 b) 3 c) 1 d) 4
3. a) 1 b) 2 c) 3 d) 4
4. a) 1 b) 3 c) 2 d) 4
5. a) 2 b) 4 c) 3 d) 1
6. a) 3 b) 2 c) 4 d) 1
7. a) 3 b) 2 c) 1 d) 4
8. a) 3 b) 4 c) 2 d) 1

8 - 15 Chilled-out Earthy Queen

Your style reflects your laid-back attitude. Whether you're kicking it by the beach campfire or chilling out on your best friend's bedroom floor, you keep it relaxed and funky.

16 - 21 Sporty Chic

While fashion is not as important as your PB, you know how to pull it together when you've got an important athletes meet or team awards night. Mobility, stretch and the capacity to run a sprint in your clothes are as important to you as the brand or the look.

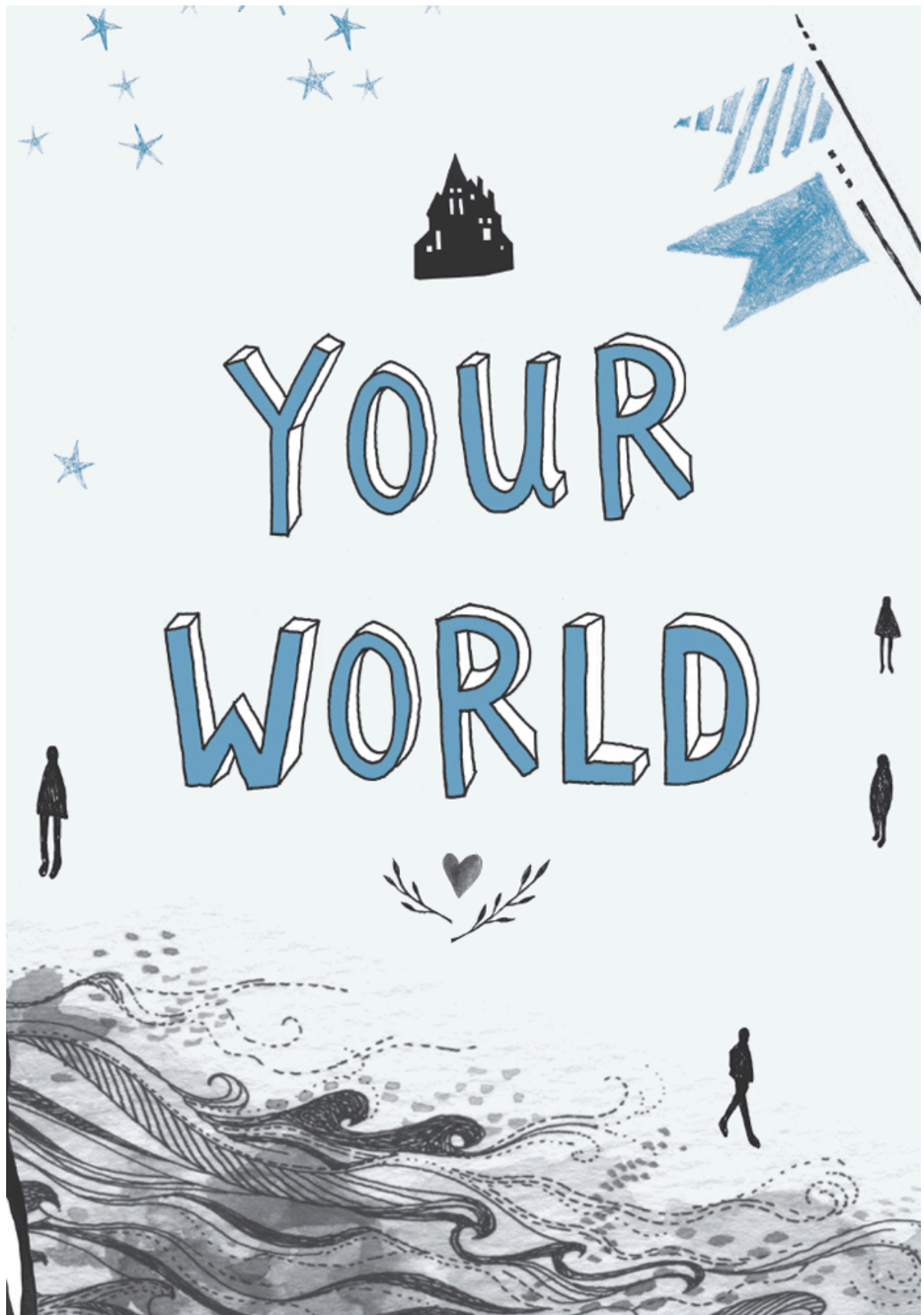
22 - 27 Classic Cool

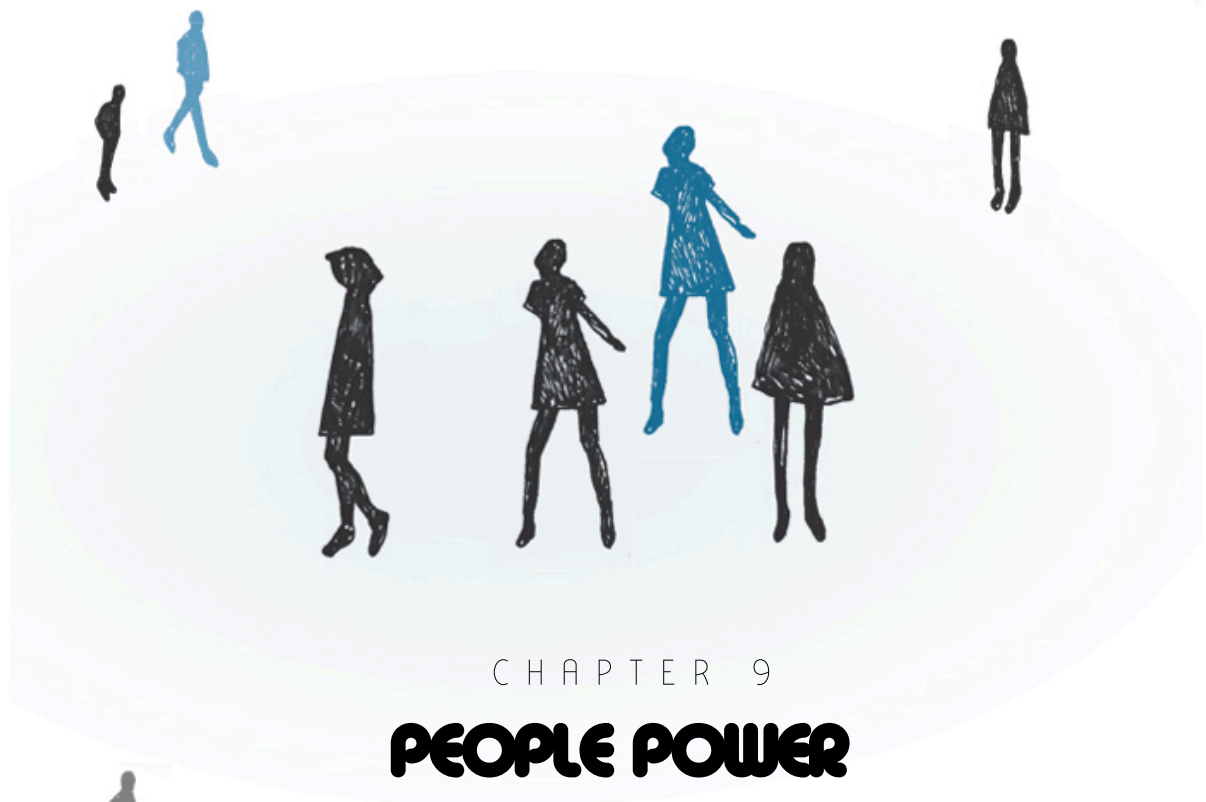
You don't chase the latest fashion trends, instead you stick with your classic favourites. Good cuts and nice fabric will win you over every time. While your wardrobe doesn't change all that much, neither does your ability to look sharp and fashionable whenever you walk into a room.

27 - 32 Whacktionista Fashionista

You are not afraid to make a statement with your clothes. Whether it be a fluoro jumpsuit or a sparkly headband made out of your old tap-dancing costume, you are able to cut a fine shape whatever the occasion.







CHAPTER 9

PEOPLE POWER

Ways to change the world before your 18th birthday:

- 1. Cure cancer?*
- 2. Sail around the world solo while standing on your head?*
- 3. Win an Oscar and adopt an entire African village?*

Teachers and adults often say, 'You can change the world.' I always found this a rather daunting concept considering I couldn't even convince my parents to let me get my ears pierced! But I found out much later that I was already changing the world without even knowing it. How? Well, just by existing you are having an impact on the world; an impact on everyone you meet and in everything you do.



‘If you think
you’re too small to
make a difference,
you’ve obviously never
been in bed with
a mosquito.’

Michelle Walker



But saving the world is supposed to be about flying through the air and wearing lycra, right? Wrong. Modern girls are able to make real change without leaving the ground (or wearing a daggy cape). In this book we'll look at how everyday things like what you eat, how you get to school and the length of your shower can really affect the lives of people living all the way across the globe. The real power lies in knowing what to do – how to use your brain and your creativity to make huge changes in the world.

Huge changes? Yes. It's easy to forget that all social progress that has been made in the history of humanity began with individuals like you and me sitting on a couch talking about it. Such as:

- **The abolition of slavery**
- **The admission of women to university**
- **The banning of the cane in public schools**
- **The vote for Indigenous Australians**
- **Australia signing the Kyoto Protocol**
- **The apology to the Stolen Generation**
- **Airbrush-free body-image-friendly models in magazines**

All of these important changes in society began as snowballs that grew into an avalanche.

Danny Seo knows a thing or two about avalanches. When Danny was twelve years old he started an environmental organisation called Earth 2000. After watching a television show on the environment, Danny and his friends became inspired to do small projects within their neighbourhood, from planting trees to organising recycling drives. Within seven years, Earth 2000 had 25,000 teenagers as members. Danny became an international spokesperson about the environment before his eighteenth birthday! Pretty spectacular, huh? But Danny insists he wasn't a particularly spectacular kid. He explains that he wasn't good at sports, school or music. But, as it turned out, he was good at running a charity organisation. Now Danny is an adult who spends his time writing books that help individuals and companies become eco-friendly.

P.S. When he was in year seven, despite his complaints, Danny Seo was forced by a teacher to dissect a frog in a science class. A couple of years later, he launched a campaign at his school to give kids the option to refuse to dissect animals. After his school board rejected his request, he took it to local government. He was not taken seriously at first, but he continued the fight, gathering students' signatures for a huge petition, contacting the media and giving interviews to newspapers, TV and radio. Eventually a bill was passed and the school was forced by law to give students the option not to take part in animal dissection. All because one student stood up for what he truly believed in!

***'Young people are not afraid of change.
You are often the first to take up new ideas
and to spread them. You aren't afraid to challenge
old habits, to be creative, to dream up better ways of
doing things. Young people know that it's possible
to make the world a better place.'***

Al Gore, *Our Choice*⁹



Gossip Girls

Now, while the power of one is incredible, it's going to take more than one person to get rid of child starvation or rising water levels. Luckily, you don't need to do it by yourself. Instead, with small actions we can all have a HUGE impact on the world.

How? Teamwork. Activists like Danny Seo might be individuals, but their strength is in convincing other people to join in.

. . .

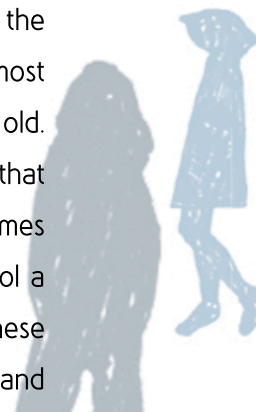
Picture this : if you recycle an aluminium can you have saved enough energy to power a television for three hours. Great job. But if you get ten of your friends to do it, too, that's enough energy to run the telly for just over thirty hours. Greater job. And then if they get ten of their friends to do it, too, that's enough energy to power that TV for three hundred hours straight. Then if ten of their friends do it . . . You do the maths. Spreading the message is the quickest and often most effective way to make real change.

**Work smarter,
not harder.**

But how are girls going to pass this message on more effectively than government ads or corporations with millions of dollars? Girls are the experts in a certain form of communication that travels faster than a fire in a match factory . . . **gossip**. You've probably passed on a juicy bit of gossip to someone at some point in your life, or perhaps been at the receiving end of some nasty gossip yourself. Either way, I'm sure you've seen how quickly an entire school can know that you fell over in class and what colour your underwear is. So why not use these networks for a *good* cause?

Even some smart governments are waking up to the power of gossip in making the world a better place. In Baltimore, in the mid 1990s, government health officials engaged the help of hairdressers to pass on important information regarding infectious diseases. Why? Because they needed someone to explain the details of the diseases and how to avoid catching them in a way that people would listen to. Think about it – ever met a hairdresser who doesn't love to chat? The plan was a roaring success and the city saw a dramatic drop in cases of infectious diseases. All due to the work of some gossipy hairdressers! Who said all gossip was bad?!!

But we should also briefly discuss how gossip's used for the not-so-good. Let's be realistic here: gossiping is part of most social environments. Both male and female, young and old. Anyone who suggests it's just a girl thing is delusional. But that doesn't mean that there aren't some serious girl-on-girl crimes being committed in the world of gossip. When I was at school a rumour could travel as quickly as a cold in a call centre. But these days, with the Internet and texting, gossip travels further and further afield. This can merely increase the embarrassment or pain caused by the gossip.



I am definitely guilty of this crime. Gossiping can be exciting and it can feel like it brings people together. It doesn't. If you need to talk trash about someone else to have a good conversation with someone, it's not worth talking to them.



As I've got older I've noticed less of what is being said and more of what wasn't being said and by whom. Next time there is a massive bitch session happening in your group, look for who isn't contributing. Those girls who hold back and don't encourage the verbal frenzy will leave that table feeling better about themselves. They will also be noticing who's doing the talking. While everyone might laugh at the biting remark you make about so-and-so's shoes, don't think they are not noticing that you're being nasty. Everyone loves someone who will say the things they don't want to say at that moment, but they don't forget it either. Gossiping can be hazardous to your friendships.

ARGHHH!
Things that make you go

Do you ever hear about something going on in the world and think ARGHHH! Or to be more exact: gosh it's so bad, but it'll never change. It's important to remember in those times of arghhh-ness that major changes **can** and **do** happen in lifetimes. Even if sometimes it doesn't feel like it. Take Girl Power, for example.

At the beginning of the 1900s, women in Australia were seen as the legal property of their husbands, were unable to vote, and couldn't hold some jobs after they married or automatically retain custody of their children if their husband died.

Females in Australia and the developed world now enjoy freedom and opportunity. In fact, the women's movement was so successful in the 19th century that it is deemed by historians to be

one of the most effective civil rights movements of our time. Within
one hundred and ten years, Australian women

went from having few legal rights and no right to vote to seeing a female Prime Minister elected in 2010. *Sha-zam!* That's how it's done, people.

The power to make change

So now we know that we already have the power and are making a difference in the world without even trying . . . Why not focus that power to make real changes you can see in the world?

First things first – in order to start an avalanche like Danny Seo, you need to work out what your passion is. Thankfully, we don't all have the same interests. What a boring world we would live in if that were the case!

Write down some issues that you and your friends are interested in and then try the quiz over the page to help you discover what tickles your fancy, and how to stretch that passion into something that might help others. I've added a few links to give you some more information on how to make real change, or just learn more about your own interests.

'I do art classes after school. I like it because I can express myself through art.'

Sarah, age 13

Issues of Interest



What's Your Passion Quiz:

1. Your favourite subject at school is:
 - a) Maths and sciences
 - b) History
 - c) Art
2. When you're older you wanna be:
 - a) Park ranger, botanist, vet
 - b) Politician, teacher
 - c) Doctor, aid worker, nurse
3. Your brother throws out half a hamburger you think:
 - a) Ewww, an animal died for nothing!
 - b) Thank God, I'm starving! Waste not, want not
 - c) What a waste of food when people in Africa are starving
4. You win a thousand dollars in a raffle and decide to give half of it to charity. You give it to:
 - a) An animal shelter
 - b) The local soup kitchen
 - c) An international hunger bank
5. If you were a meal you'd be:
 - a) A smoked tofu salad – organic of course!
 - b) A hearty pumpkin soup with toasties
 - c) A lentil curry with a side of injera

6. You are made school captain, and to help make your acceptance speech unforgettable you use a quote from:
- a) Al Gore
 - b) Malcom X
 - c) Aung San Suu Kyi
7. Your house at school decides to raise money to send to a school in Cambodia. You are given the option on what to put the money to. You choose:
- a) A green energy makeover for the school, to help cut down their reliance on electricity
 - b) Instruments so the kids can make music and be creative like any school kid can in Australia
 - c) A scholarship fund so the brightest students can get the opportunity to attend university



Results::

Mostly As

You are an environmental queen! You probably spend a lot of your time concerned with this little ol' thing called climate change. There are a heap of issues that you are passionate about beyond that, though, like the declining numbers of plant species across the world, and whaling. Check out these websites for more information on causes that are happening right now:

<http://www.worldwatch.org>



92

GIRL!



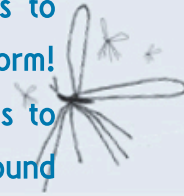
<http://www.millenniumkids.com.au>

<http://www.epa.gov/kids/>

<http://www.environment.gov.au/biodiversity/threatened/publications/kids.html>

Mostly Bs

You are a community-minded chickadee! You care about a range of issues occurring in your community, from pollution to homelessness to the fact you have to wear a school uniform! You are an open-minded person who likes to question the rules and what's going on around you. Check out some of these websites to find causes that tickle your fancy:



<http://theoaktree.org>

<http://www.salvationarmy.org.au>

<http://www.redcross.org.au>

Mostly Cs

You're a worldly warrior. You are not just content in sorting out your own backyard, you also want to help people in lands far away. Debt, starvation and lack of medical supplies all get your goat and you want to travel the world and be an aid worker when you grow up.



Check out these websites for some inspiration:

<https://www.oxfam.org.au>

<http://www.amnesty.org.au>

<http://www.savethechildren.org.au>

Do it your way

Everybody has different interests and different ways that they engage with

those interests. Just because you care about the environment doesn't mean you are going to be a climate scientist. Maybe you want to be a fashion designer who has an eco-friendly fashion line? Or a stay-at-home mum who recycles and precycles like a master?

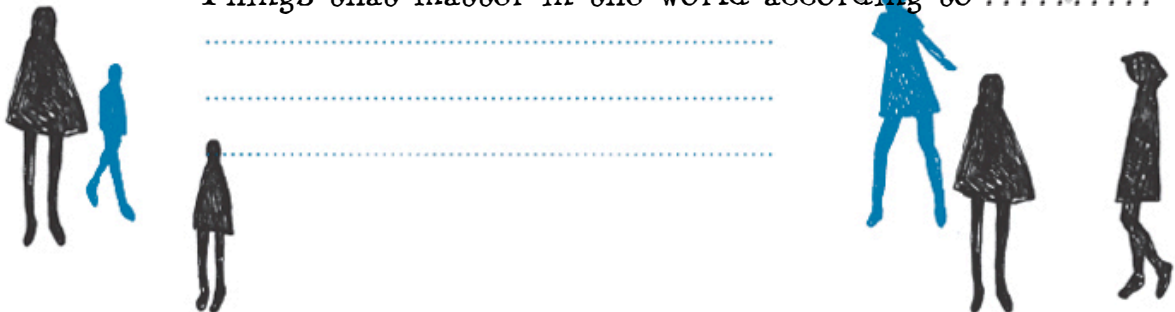
I was concerned about cruelty to animals when I was twelve, so I became a vegetarian. My friend Sam also shares this interest and she volunteers at a lost dogs' shelter on the weekend. Both of these actions are ways that we engage with our shared passion for animal welfare. Follow your passion in your own way and you'll be on the right track.

Why not list some issues you are passionate about. They can be as varied as the preservation of the rainforests in Brazil to the quality of food available at the school canteen. And don't stress if you can't think of any right now! Feel free to come back to this page and list issues that have peaked your interest as you read on!

'Never doubt that a small group of thoughtful, committed citizens can change the world. Indeed, it is the only thing that ever has.'

..... Margaret Mead, US anthropologist

Things that matter in the world according to





CHAPTER 10

HUMAN RIGHTS

BAD HAIR DAY

Imagine one day you get to school and your principal tells you to go home. The Australian government has passed a new law banning people with your hair colour to be educated. Score! But when you get home your mum tells you that people with your hair colour are also not allowed to watch TV, play sport, go on the net or read books anymore. Hmmm... You just have to sit inside and wait for the day to pass. It's not long before you begin to miss your

friends and even, you have to admit, school. Who would have thought?!

After a couple of weeks of complete boredom and misery, you and your friends decide that you are not taking this new law lying down. You all agree that just because you have a certain hair colour doesn't mean you shouldn't be allowed to do the same things as other kids. You organise a protest outside the school gates and ask your principal to let you and others with your hair colour back into school. Kids from across age and friendship groups join the protest, all of you outraged by the new unfair laws. The school calls the police, and when they arrive they tell you and your friends to go away. But you remain peacefully holding signs and chanting. Things begin to get ugly when the police demand that you all stop the protest, and they begin to push some of your friends away from the school. Most of your friends run away to safety but some of you are arrested and put in prison. Your parents have no idea where you are and you are not allowed to speak to them or anyone else as you sit alone in a jail cell. And all because of your hair colour!

All human beings are born free and equal
in dignity and rights. They are endowed
with reason and conscience and should
act towards one another in
a spirit of brotherhood.

Article 1 of the UN – Universal Declaration of Human Rights

Since the recent changes in the laws exclude people of your hair colour from basic Australian society, the police and the school are not doing anything illegal. So that makes it okay then? Nope. What they are violating is you and your friends' basic **human rights**.

Human rights are exactly what they sound like: a set of rights and freedoms given to every human being. D'uh. No matter what your nationality or where you live, no matter what race or religion, you have claim to these basic rights. They include, among many others, the right to freedom, the right to education, and the right to protest. All of these have been violated in the above example.

P.S. This example might seem pretty ridiculous to you, but if you exchange hair colour for gender or race, you are close to situations that have happened all across the world.

Rights and Wrongs

The idea of a set of rights for all humans has been around since ancient Greece and Rome and was developed during the revolutions of America and France.

But it wasn't until 1948 that these ideas were formally written down and made official by the international organisation, United Nations (UN). The United Nations consists of representatives of 192 countries (that's nearly every country in the world) that all agree on issues of world importance, such as international law, and every beauty queen's favourite: world peace. After World War II, when many Jewish people were killed simply because they were jews, they created the **Universal Declaration of Human Rights**.

This declaration was an amazing step forward for many nations because it included the right to be considered equal and ~~free no matter what race or gender, the right to freedom of~~ speech and the right to choose your own husband or wife. Uh, thank goodness for that! Joking aside, the declaration worked to create a sense of unity and equality between all humans. Sweet.

Of course, it is not entirely perfect. A product of its time, it holds the prejudice of the period. The pronoun 'he' is continually used (so us 'she's are not humans, huh? Pfftt!) and the right of indigenous peoples to their land is not included.

Despite this, the document stands as one of the most influential to this day, with organisations, governments and law-makers still referring to it more than fifty years later!

Check it out on the UN website here:

<http://www.un.org/en/documents/udhr/>

Unfortunately, some leaders still violate the rights of their citizens. Ugh. And since the UN does not have the power to prosecute them, it can be really hard to stop these injustices.

Sometimes other countries avoid trading with these nations. Basically they're saying that until you clean up your act, we're not having anything to do with you. Yep, an international Mean Girls freeze out that can really affect the money that country can make. In fact, Australia is currently one of many countries that will not trade with Zimbabwe because of the human rights abuses of the president, Robert Mugabe, who has tortured and detained many who protested against his government.

Thankfully, this global pressure on countries that abuse their citizens is becoming increasingly powerful. The release from detention of the leader of the Burmese democracy movement and winner of the 1991 Nobel Peace Prize, Aung San Suu Kyi, in Burma (Myanmar) in 2010 is a good example. Leading the pro-democracy movement in repressive Burma has meant that Aung San Suu Kyi has spent fifteen of her twenty-one years in politics under house arrest. Eeek!

In 2010, Australia's leaders and other world leaders including the then Prime Minister of the UK, Gordon Brown, and President of the USA, Barack Obama, personally urged the Prime Minister of Burma to release Aung San Suu Kyi. Finally, after a lot of international pressure, she was given her freedom!

human rights are rights
that any person has
as a human being.

WE are ALL human beings;

We are all deserving of
human rights.

One cannot be true
without the other.

It's not just governments that show their support for the UDHR. Go online and check out some clips made by famous musicians and artists in response to the UN UDHR on Youtube through: <http://www.artforamnesty.org/>

INDIGENOUS PEOPLE AND HUMAN RIGHTS

There are about 350 million indigenous people in more than seventy countries around the world. Indigenous people are the original inhabitants of a country before it was invaded and/or settled by other nationalities – in Australia that is the Aboriginal Australians and Torres Strait Islanders. Over the past five hundred years Indigenous people from all around the world have had their basic human rights violated by the new arrivals showing up on their homeland. These rights include freedom from enslavement, the right to live on their land and basic control over their lives.

Well known human-rights lawyer Julian Burnside has pointed out that while Australia helped create the UDHR in 1948, Australian Aboriginal children were being taken away from their families.¹⁰

So, our country was pushing for human rights on a global scale while Australian Aboriginal children were being forced from their families – clearly a blatant human rights violation! Imagine coming home from school one day to find out you're being shipped off to a foster family across the state just because of your skin colour. Ugh! Families were destroyed by this law, which was first made in 1869, and the victims are now known as 'The Stolen Generation'.

*“Sorry Day” was an amazing experience for Australia.
I am positive that everyone regrets the treatment
of the indigenous people.’*

Ruby, age 13

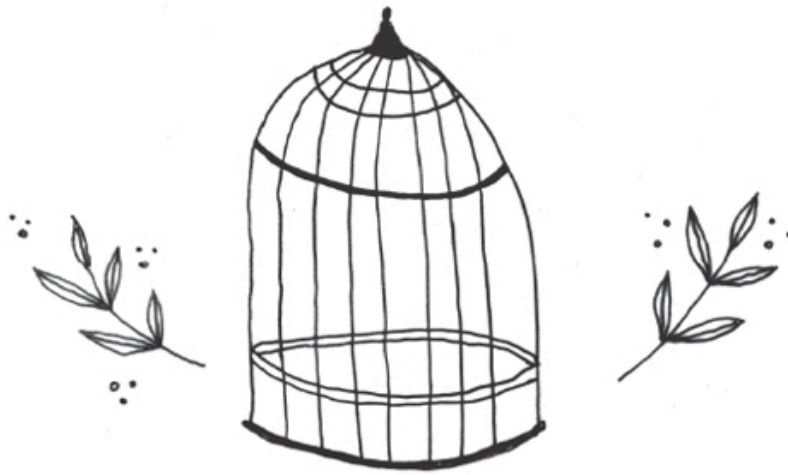
Charlie Perkins and the Freedom Riders

In 1965, a group of Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal university students from Sydney decided to drive a bus around regional NSW towns to raise awareness of discrimination against Aboriginal people. The group visited town swimming pools, cinemas, restaurants and a range of different venues where Aboriginal people were not permitted entry. Yes, that's right, they were actually not ALLOWED to enter these places due to their race! While some locals came out in support of the students, they faced many hostile people while on their trip. Someone even rammed the bus, forcing it off the road! The students filmed and recorded some of these encounters with angry crowds and sent the footage to the media. Newspapers ran the story on front pages and the group got many media requests. Many Australians were shocked to see the racism in their own country.

Two years later, in 1967, Australia voted on whether to include Aboriginal people in the Australian census – officially recognising their existence as people. Over 90 per cent of Australians voted in favour of this change. A lot of people credit the students on the Freedom Ride for raising everyone's awareness of the issue and increasing public support for an end to racism against Aboriginal people.

So who were these freedom fighters?

The president of the student group was Charlie Perkins. Charlie went on to become one of the first Aboriginal university graduates in Australia. He had a long and successful career fighting for the rights of his people both within and outside of the government. He passed away in 2000 and was given a state funeral for his services to Australian society.



CHILDREN

No one shall be held in slavery or servitude; slavery and the slave trade shall be prohibited in all their forms.

Article 4 of the UN Universal Declaration of Human Rights

With so many adults making all the decisions in this world, children are often overlooked. Young people don't get to vote so they don't often get to have a say in who makes the rules. In 1957, the UN created a very special declaration, specifically of the rights of children. This declaration includes the right to attend school and the right to be brought up in a world of peace and friendship. In 2004, aid agencies estimated that there were 218 million children working in child labour. This doesn't just mean a paper round or doing the dishes for Mum and Dad; these jobs are often strenuous and very dangerous. Ugh. Over 126 million kids aged 5–17 are believed to be engaged in hazardous work across the globe.¹¹ Check out the declaration online here:

<http://www.cirp.org/library/ethics/UN-declaration/>



RUN for Human Rights

In 1968 the world's attention turned to Mexico for the Olympics. But sport wasn't the only thing on people's minds. These games were occurring in the midst of political upheaval in the United States of America: the civil rights movement. Protests were popping up across the USA as people demanded equal rights for African American citizens.



The Olympic committee warned the American team that no protest would be tolerated at the Olympics. So, when two of the most outspoken African American sprinters won gold and bronze in the 200-metre sprint, the world held its breath as it waited to find out what they would do. Would they risk their careers and their safety to make a stand and show support for the civil rights movement back home? And who, by the way, was that unassuming Australian who had surprised everyone in the athletics world with an amazing National Record of 20.6 seconds to win the silver medal? Peter Norman. Stuck in the middle of one of the most poignant scenes of the civil rights movement was one of Australia's greatest sprinters.

The two African American sprinters, Johnny Carlos and Tommie Smith, decided to do the Black Power salute on the podium. This was a symbolic hand gesture where you hold your hand in a fist above your head, and it had tremendous political importance to the civil rights movement. It was a very brave move for the sprinters and both later admitted that they were scared

for their lives as they had been told there were snipers in the audience ready to shoot anyone who made a political statement! Yikes! When they told Peter Norman of their plan, Johnny Carlos remembers the Aussie replied, 'I'll stand with you.' Delighted and surprised, they gave their new friend Peter a human rights badge to wear.

When the two men raised their fists in silent salute while on the podium, the crowd stopped cheering and the stadium was silent in shock. The man singing the American national anthem even stopped singing altogether!

The two American sprinters were sent home by the Olympic committee. And while Peter was allowed to stay, the media began to badger him about his support for the cause. This only got worse when he started talking about the horrible treatment of Aboriginal Australians back home. Some papers even called him a traitor!

When he got home from the Olympics, he was banned from competing for two years. And despite the fact that his silver-medal-winning time in 1968 still holds the Australian record, he was never selected to race at the Olympics again. In fact, his time would have got him a gold medal in the 2000 Sydney Olympics! Zomg!

Peter stayed in contact with Tommie and Johnny, who describe him as a 'brother'. When Peter passed away in 2006, they flew to Australia to be pallbearers at his funeral. In fact, the US Track and Field Federation was so moved by Peter's tribute to the sport and human rights that day on the podium they proclaimed the date of his funeral, October 9, 2006, as Peter Norman Day.

Peter Norman was a brave man who stood up for what he believed in. And he was a crazy fast runner. Go for a run on October 9th and think about all the people who stand up for what they believe in despite fear or condemnation.



CHAPTER 11

POOR WORLD, RICH WORLD

If you live in Australia, you are pretty lucky. Why? Well, while your life might not be perfect (you still have the maths test tomorrow) compared to most humans, you're off to a good start in life. Odds are you have access to clean water, shelter and basic healthcare. You do not have an army dropping bombs on your street and there is no major infectious disease epidemic. Australia has a strong economy and higher levels of education and employment than many other countries.

Some countries aren't this lucky. In many other parts of the world, things we take for granted like electricity, sewerage and running water are not common. These countries are often referred to as *developing* nations.

The United Nations estimates that one in seven human beings alive today are starving. One in seven! Yet this fact barely crosses our radar in our daily lives. You see few characters on your favourite TV show or movie struggling to find food for their family.

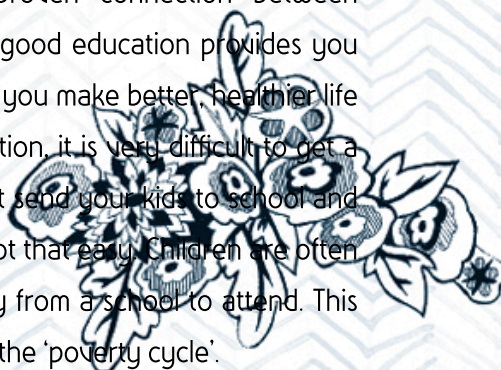
'I'm lucky to live in Australia. We have clean water and healthy food.'

Marla, age 13

So what is **poverty**, who suffers from it and how did it come about?

Poverty is a lack of the basic requirements that human beings need to live. Things like: drinking water that isn't contaminated, a roof over your head, enough food to eat. Around three billion people in the world are living in absolute poverty.¹² Most live in Africa and Asia and around 70 per cent are female.¹³

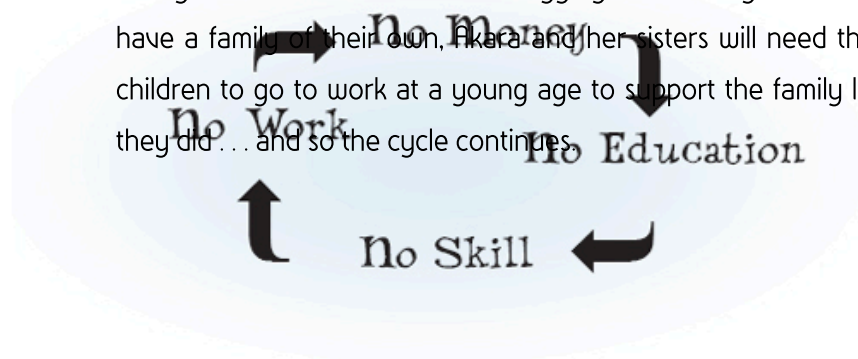
Oddly enough, there is a proven connection between poverty and school attendance! A good education provides you with information and skills that help you make better, healthier life choices. And without a basic education, it is very difficult to get a reasonably paid job. Sooooo . . . just send your kids to school and you'll be okay? Unfortunately it is not that easy. Children are often forced to work, or live too far away from a school to attend. This creates something that is known as the 'poverty cycle'.



What is the poverty cycle?

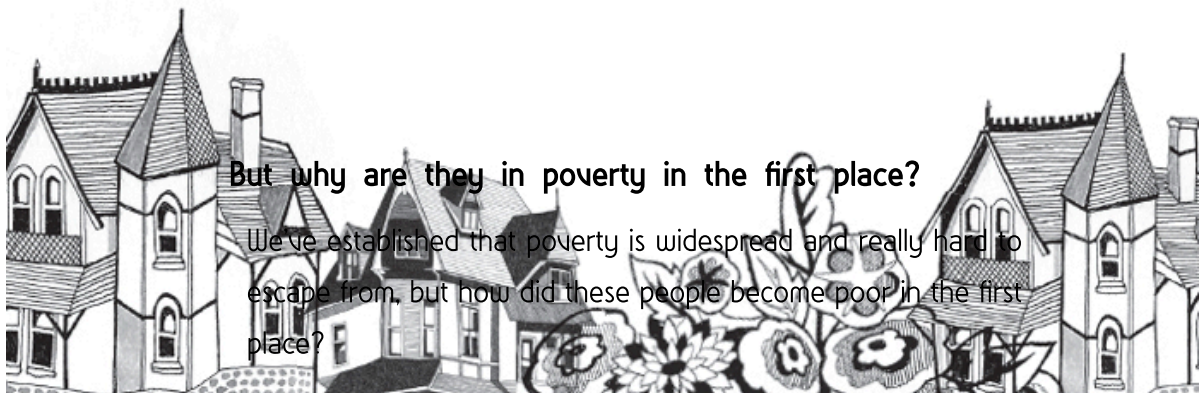
The poverty cycle is when a family is too poor to stop being poor.

For example: Akara is seven years old and lives with her family in rural Cambodia. Her father recently lost his job at a factory and now the family is struggling to put food on the table. In order to feed themselves, Akara and her three sisters have been forced to leave school to go to work. The tiny amounts of money they make help their family with the food and shelter they need to survive, but it means that Akara and her sisters do not get an education past grade three. This will make it harder for them to get a job when they're older. As adults they'll be forced to continue to do the low-paid work they did as kids, such as selling trinkets on the street or begging. When they eventually have a family of their own, Akara and her sisters will need their children to go to work at a young age to support the family like they did . . . and so the cycle continues.



But why are they in poverty in the first place?

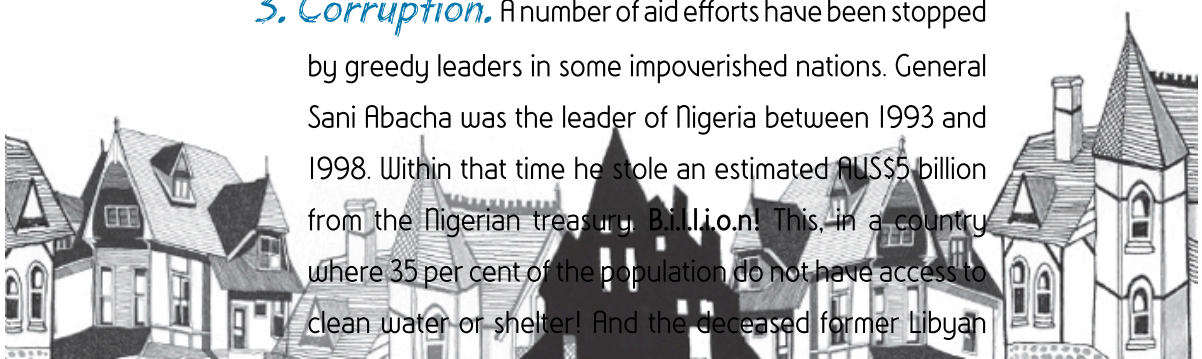
We've established that poverty is widespread and really hard to escape from, but how did these people become poor in the first place?



1. *Bad agricultural season.* When a country that relies heavily on agricultural crops for food and money suffers a drought, it can have a devastating effect on that nation. The potato famines of Ireland in 1845 and 1852 turned the country upside down. Over one million people lost their lives and another million were forced to migrate to other countries. More recently, the African country of Niger suffered the Sahel famine, after the Sahel region's crops were affected by heavy and sudden rains in 2009/2010.

2. *War.* Everyone knows that war is devastating for a country and its people. Schools and hospitals, roads, bridges and transport are destroyed and the loss of life affects the country's ability to rebuild. Food is often scarce due to destruction or because the people that usually look after the crops have to fight. Think of the wars in Iraq and Afghanistan and the number of innocent people whose lives have been devastated. War is also a major cause for migration (which we'll talk about next chapter).

3. *Corruption.* A number of aid efforts have been stopped by greedy leaders in some impoverished nations. General Sani Abacha was the leader of Nigeria between 1993 and 1998. Within that time he stole an estimated AU\$5 billion from the Nigerian treasury. **B.i.l.l.i.o.n!** This, in a country where 35 per cent of the population do not have access to clean water or shelter! And the deceased former Libyan leader Muammar Gaddafi stole billions of dollars from the profits of oil sales despite a third of his country's population living in poverty.



4. Exploitation. Remember when we talked about the sweatshops in chapter eight of *Your World?* Well, getting paid slave wages doesn't help people out of poverty. Worse still – many of the companies that pay these wages are from developed countries such as Australia and the USA. They are happy to put laws in place for minimum wages and workers rights in their own countries, but turn a blind eye when it comes to others.



Click a Link and Feed a Person

A new charity initiative has been taking the world by storm. Charity organisations such as The Hunger Site and Care2 have created websites that encourage users to click on a button. Simply by doing this, sponsors and advertisers of the site pay for a cup of food to be donated to a hungry person. The Hunger Site is probably the most famous of these websites. Started in 1999, it has been a huge success. Within its first five years of operation, 200 million people visited the website and clicked, resulting in more than 300 million cups of food being distributed to those in need.

www.thehungersite.com

'Our family sponsors a child. I feel very good about this.'

Sarah, age 13



Poor Girls

Why are 70 per cent of people living in poverty women and girls?

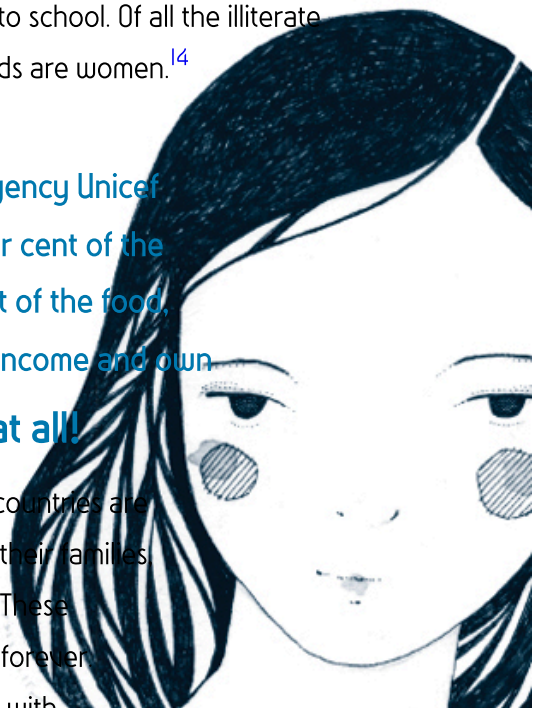
Good question! And like most good questions, it's not an easy one to answer, as there are lots of different factors that contribute to keeping women impoverished. Many developing nations have laws or customs that prevent women from owning land, attending school, working or starting businesses, or even having a bank account! This leaves them extremely vulnerable to poverty, as they are forced to rely on males in their life for all of their money and support. The fact that women have babies adds to their vulnerability, as they are forced to stay at home to look after the children. Add to this the fact that boy children are favoured by families because they earn more than girls and women. (This unfortunately is true of Australia as well as developing nations – as you'll read next chapter.) So families make sure males are the ones that get to go to school. Of all the illiterate adults in the world, more than two-thirds are women.¹⁴

A recent study by development agency Unicef found that while women do 66 per cent of the world's work, produce 50 per cent of the food, they only earn 10 per cent of the income and own 1 per cent of the property.

Not fair, not fair at all!

Young girls and women in developing countries are often left to do heavy physical jobs for their families such as collecting firewood and water. These tasks can be physically tough and take forever.

Some are forced to walk for hours with heavy jugs on their heads just to get clean drinking water. This is a huge responsibility



and doesn't allow them the time
to play or attend school.



Sure, sometimes we all think not having to go to school would be pretty awesome, but without an education these girls are forced to remain in the poverty cycle. Also, carry a heavy jug of water on your head for five minutes and you'll be begging to be let back into the science class, trust me.

Some aid charities try to help by delivering aid to women and girls through education, short-term loans and helpful resources. This is a proven method to help fight poverty, as women are more likely to invest financial rewards in their families and community. There's a common saying used by organisations such as the UNWomen, CARE and Oxfam: Help one woman out of poverty and she'll bring four others with her. That's pretty good odds, if you ask me.

Girl Effect is an organisation that focuses entirely on how empowering girls in developing countries can benefit their entire community (and the world!) Win!

Check out their clever videos on their website:

www.girleffect.org



Walk For Girls

CARE is another international aid organisation that focuses on helping women and girls fight global poverty. You can get involved by joining the 'Walk in Her Shoes' challenge. This is a walkathon that allows you to experience walking the long distances that impoverished women and children do every day of their lives. But unlike these girls, you will not be walking for clean water or firewood but instead for the girls and their families. The money raised goes to help the communities and the girls by installing water pumps in the villages, therefore cutting down the distances they have to walk.

How does it work?

Simply get a group of friends together or get your class involved and register for the event. Then commit to walking a certain amount of steps

(remember the average distance a female in Africa or Asia walks to get fresh water is six kilometres) and then get family and friends to sponsor you. When you've registered as a team or an individual, CARE will send you a welcome pack that includes a CARE pedometer to help count the steps you've walked!

School groups are encouraged to do a one-day or week-long event. If you are not doing it with school, why not get your mum or dad to walk with you? It provides a good chance to catch up after school or work. Not only will you help other girls around the world by giving them an opportunity to go to school instead of spend hours walking to fetch water, you will also improve your fitness and, hopefully, have some fun.

<http://www.care.org.au>

[http://www.everydayhero.com.au/event/
walkinhershoes](http://www.everydayhero.com.au/event/walkinhershoes)

The Price of Good Health

Being poor is bad for your health. Huh? Yep, living in poverty and in impoverished nations makes you more vulnerable to disease. This is because you are living without basic things that make good health possible, from Band-aids and soap to plumbing and sewerage systems. And while you might not be a doctor, you actually know quite a bit about your health compared to those living in poverty. You probably know that cleanliness is important to avoid gastro and other icky illnesses, and I bet you would know the difference between a cold and a major infection and know when to see a doctor. Not knowing this basic stuff can be dangerous if you ignore the warning signs of something serious.

Plus, if you are malnourished because you can't afford enough food, your immune system is probably down and you have less chance of fighting



off an illness. Malnutrition contributes to approximately 50 per cent of childhood deaths in poor countries.¹⁵

'I did the 40 Hour Famine so I could help kids in other places to have a healthy life.'

Emma, age 12

Housing is another major factor in the spread of illnesses within impoverished communities. People in poor housing and shelter often live very close to their neighbours, and without adequate sanitation or plumbing systems. This causes the spread of infectious diseases to skyrocket. Within slum conditions or refugee camps, an illness that could be stopped with a simple antibiotic in Australia can kill millions of people. This is the case for both tuberculosis (TB), an illness that is spread via coughing, and malaria, which is spread by mosquitoes. Over 98 per cent of cases of TB are found within developing nations.¹⁶

These diseases are so common in developing nations that they are often called 'diseases of poverty'. A disease of poverty can exist in a developed nation like Australia, but we are usually able to stop it spreading. An example of this is the outbreak of cholera in Haiti after the earthquake in 2010. Due to the disaster, the nation's infrastructure for clean water and sanitation was destroyed. Desperate to survive, people were forced to drink infected water, and cholera quickly spread.

Diseases of poverty are serious business. They cause the deaths of more than 14 million people each year.¹⁷

This contrast of living standards between the developed and the developing world was summed up by environmental scientist Donella Meadows in her 'State of the Village Report'. In 1990 Donella worked out some worldwide percentages using an imaginary village of just one hundred people. I remember receiving this report

as an email years ago. Unfortunately, while the figures now would be a bit different, the contrasts have not changed and many have actually become more extreme. **Here's the report:**

IF THE WORLD WERE A VILLAGE OF

ONLY 100 PEOPLE,

there would be:

- 60 Asians,
- 14 Africans,
- 12 Europeans,
- 8 people from Central and South America, Mexico and the Caribbean,
- 5 from the USA and Canada, and
- 1 person from Australia or New Zealand.

MIXED ETHNICITY...

The people of the village would have considerable **difficulty communicating**:

- 14 people would speak Mandarin,
- 8 people would speak Hindi/Urdu,
- 8 English,
- 7 Spanish,
- 4 Russian,
- 4 Arabic.

MANY LANGUAGES!

The others would speak one of **more than 200 other languages**, including Bengali, Portuguese, Indonesian, Japanese, German and French.

In the village there would be:

- 33 Christians,
- 22 Moslems,
- 15 Hindus,
- 14 Nonreligious, Agnostics, or Atheists,
- 6 Buddhists,
- 10 all other religions.

DIFFERENT RELIGIONS !

In this 100-person community:

- 80 would live in substandard housing
- 67 adults would live in a village; and half of them would be illiterate
- 50 would suffer from malnutrition
- 33 would not have access to clean, safe drinking water
- 24 people would not have any electricity
- Of the 76 that do have electricity, most would use it only for light at night
- 7 people would own an automobile (some of them more than one)
- The poorest one-third of the people would receive only 3 per cent of the income of the village.

LIVING CONDITIONS

The following is also something to ponder . .

•

If you have never experienced the danger of battle, the fear and loneliness of imprisonment, the agony of torture, or the pain of starvation . . . you are better off than 500 million people in the world.

If you have food in the refrigerator, clothes on your back, a roof overhead and a place to sleep . . . you are more comfortable than 75 per cent of the people in this world.

If you can read this, you are more blessed than over two billion people in the world who cannot read at all.



What about in Australia?

Unfortunately, there are also people living in poverty in our own country. In 2010 it was estimated that approximately two million Australians were living in poverty.¹⁸ That's one in ten people in our nation. That is too much!

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people are far more likely to be living in poverty than any other group of Australians: they have the lowest levels of education, the worst housing conditions, highest unemployment and a life expectancy that is seventeen years less than other Australians.¹⁹ In fact, health and economic experts refer to the living standards of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people as being the same as those of a developing nation. What gives?

It is important to remember the discrimination our indigenous communities have faced over the past 200 years. In fact, up until 1972, Australian Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children were often barred from schools if a white parent didn't want them there.²⁰ Umm, what?!

Aboriginal people also tend to live in rural and regional areas of Australia, where they are hours away from the nearest hospital, or even clean water, and this can have deadly consequences.

*'Indigenous people have the same rights as us.
We are all human beings.'*

Emma, age 12

CLOSE THE GAP **Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Health**

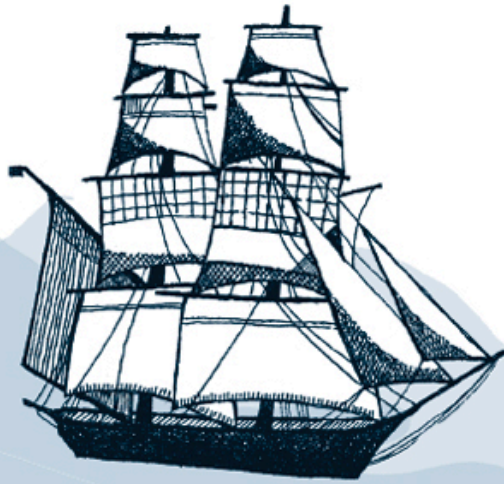
The fact that the life expectancy of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people is so much lower than other Australians still shocks me. I mean, it's even lower than for people who live in some developing countries! UGH! Thankfully, it shocks a lot of Australians and in 2008 the Close the Gap campaign was launched to improve the health of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people. The campaign calls for Australian governments and organisations to work together with communities to close the life-expectancy gap between Indigenous and non-Indigenous people within a generation.

Actors, community leaders, sports people, musicians and political leaders have all got behind the campaign and demanded that Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people have the same access to healthcare as other Australians.

The 22nd of March is the national Close the Gap day. To find out more about the campaign, check out:

www.closesthegap.com.au





CHAPTER 12

PEOPLE MOVING, MOVING PEOPLE

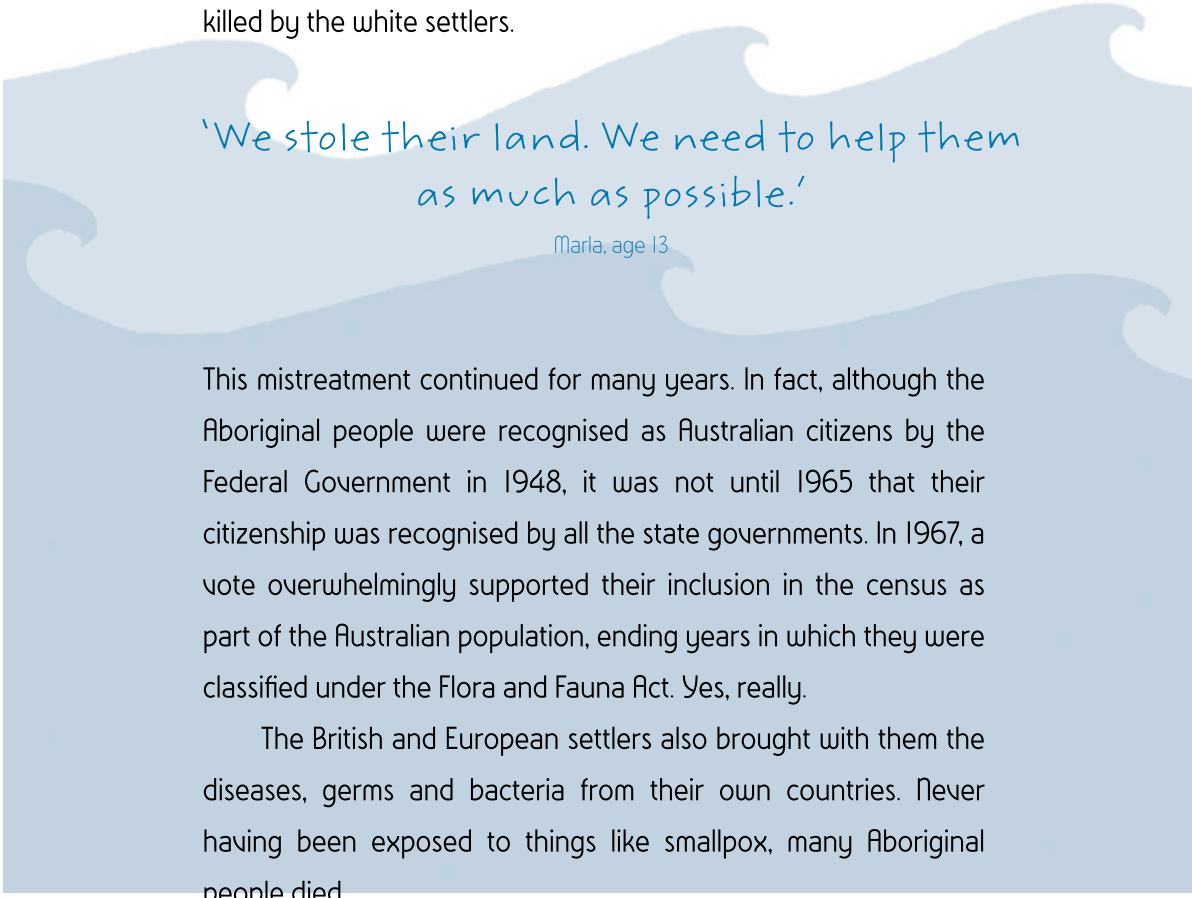
Over 50,000 years ago, the Aboriginal people arrived in Australia. Some historians believe they made their way from the South East Asian and Oceanic region via a land bridge. Others think they came on rafts and canoes. Either way, they were the first humans to set foot on the land we now call Australia.

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people are one of the oldest, if not *the* oldest, civilisations of human kind. There used to be around 500 Aboriginal nations within Australia. They had their own leaders, languages, religions and traditions. These nations traded, communicated and fought with each

other over thousands of years, from the tip of what we now know as Cape York to the most southern regions of the island we call Tasmania.

All of this was changed forever when eleven tall ships sailed into Botany Bay in 1788 carrying hundreds of prisoners from British jails to be off-loaded into Australia. These ships were the First Fleet, and the beginning of the colonisation of Australia by Britain.

The new arrivals denied Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islanders their basic human rights. They were rounded up and forced onto missions, far from their original homelands, where they had to follow the rules and customs of the white settlers. Many were killed by the white settlers.



'We stole their land. We need to help them
as much as possible.'

Marla, age 13

This mistreatment continued for many years. In fact, although the Aboriginal people were recognised as Australian citizens by the Federal Government in 1948, it was not until 1965 that their citizenship was recognised by all the state governments. In 1967, a vote overwhelmingly supported their inclusion in the census as part of the Australian population, ending years in which they were classified under the Flora and Fauna Act. Yes, really.

The British and European settlers also brought with them the diseases, germs and bacteria from their own countries. Never having been exposed to things like smallpox, many Aboriginal people died.

To bolster the population of the 'new' country known as Australia, the government encouraged people from Europe to

migrate. They even promised land and other incentives to these potential migrants. It was the booming wool market in the early 1800s and the jobs it brought with it that encouraged many people to make the trip from Britain to Australia.



**Today's ten most common countries
that Australian migrants used to call home:**

1. New Zealand

2. China

3. United Kingdom

4. India

5. The Philippines

6. South Africa

7. Vietnam

8. Sri Lanka

9. Iraq

10. Malaysia

In the mid 1800s gold was discovered here, and more and more people travelled from Asia and Europe to try to make their fortune in the Australian Gold Rush. However, many white Australians felt threatened by this growing community and Asian immigration was restricted. In order to do this the government began to demand non-European migrants pay a large immigration tax to settle in Australia. Unfair much?! This made it very difficult for Asian (and all non-Europeans) to emigrate. This was the beginning of the White Australia policy, which dominated



Australian immigration procedure for the better part of the 20th century.

In 1901, emigrating to Australia was made even *more* difficult when custom officials were allowed to just blatantly refuse non-Europeans entry to Australia. Ugh. This was clearly not a good look to the rest of the world and, after some pressure, the government gave in and threw the rule out. So did the restrictive policy change? Umm . . . not quite. Instead, a fifty-word dictation test was introduced for people trying to migrate to Australia. The catch? The test could be done in any European language the official wanted. Multiple times. Japanese immigrants could be forced to do the test in Polish, while Maltese could be forced to do it in Swedish. There is an infamous case of Czech activist Egon Erwin Kisch – fluent in numerous languages – who, after passing the test in multiple (!!) different languages, finally failed after he could not complete it in Scottish Gaelic. Holy moly.



The test was so difficult that most people already living in Australia would struggle to complete it in English, let alone another language. So it's not surprising that between 1904 and 1909, only six out of 554 people passed. Not great odds, huh? And after that? None. Yep, from 1909 to when the test was finally abolished in 1958 there was not a single person who passed the dictation test.

In 1973, the White Australia policy was finally abolished. Mega relief!

Modern Immigration

Thank goodness things have improved. These days, migration plays a major part in Australia's population growth and

strengthens our economy and workforce. In 2009 – 2010, a quarter of Australia's total population was born overseas.^{[21](#)}

Some of the main reasons people migrate:

- a) They are persecuted in their own country for their beliefs, ethnicity or customs.
- b) Their home country is suffering a natural disaster.
- c) They have family or friends who have migrated and they want to join them.
- d) A war breaks out in their home country.
- e) They are seeking better employment or education in another country.

Those who seek to migrate due to serious threats to their safety (as is often the case with a), b) or d) are classified as refugees or asylum seekers.

Refugees and asylum seekers

Ever had a teacher who seems to pick on you for every little thing you do, even when other people are doing way worse things? Well, imagine if your teacher was the government and you could be arrested, imprisoned or killed.



just for what you believe in. Ugh. When you, or a group you belong to, are picked on for something – whether it is due to your race, religion, political beliefs or just simply something that you believe in – we call it persecution. People escaping persecution are called **refugees**.

Like a refugee, an **asylum seeker** is also a person escaping persecution from their home country. The difference between the two is that the refugee has already been granted refugee status **before** they arrive in Australia. Often this will happen in a refugee camp run by an international organisation like the UN, or at an embassy within their home country.

An asylum seeker is someone who arrives in Australia without their refugee status being approved because it's just not possible to get it beforehand. This is quite common because it is very difficult to apply for refugee status in many regions around the world. When there is a war going on, there are not a whole lot of people working in the immigration offices down the street. And for those escaping their home country due to persecution by the government, you can imagine how difficult it would be to apply for refugee status without facing further bad treatment. Yup, it would be like having to complain about your teacher being a bully to, uh, your teacher – that's not going to end well. Another reason people become asylum seekers is that some nations within troubled regions don't even have the ability to grant refugee status. Tricky.

An asylum seeker can arrive on a plane with a student or tourist visa, or on a boat without any papers. If they can prove to the Australian authorities that they are being persecuted in their homeland and are unable to return, they will be given a permanent protection visa.

Internally Displaced Persons (IDP) are people who are forced to flee their homes to another part of the country, but do not

cross national borders. They are not considered refugees, even though they might face similar struggles, such as finding shelter, food or jobs. IDP might be escaping war, famine or natural disasters.

Unfortunately, the number of internally displaced persons (IDP), refugees and asylum seekers worldwide is getting bigger and bigger. Around 43.7 million people were considered refugees, asylum seekers or IDP in 2010. This is the highest figure in fifteen years!²² Most of these people, however, seek refuge within their own or neighbouring countries. Only 7 per cent of refugees arrive in developed nations such as Australia, USA or England.²³ Of these refugees, very few come to Australia. Being an island in the Southern Hemisphere, Australia is one of the few developed nations that is very hard to reach. And, as not many refugees can afford to travel by plane to get here, they make the long and treacherous journey by boat. We share no borders with these troubled countries.

We have one of the smallest intakes of refugees in the developed world. In Britain, there is one refugee for every 530 Britons. In Australia, there is one refugee for every 1583 Australians.²⁴

Boat People

Politicians and other adults sometimes like to argue that immigrants arriving by boat to claim asylum are just trying to illegally obtain citizenship. They say these people are 'jumping the queue' and they try to scare us with images of people crushed into boats, arriving on our shores as 'illegal immigrants'. But the reality is much different. The government's official figures claim that actually 84 per cent of these 'boat people' that arrived between 1998 and 2008 were legitimate refugees fleeing human rights abuses in their own countries.²⁵ And of the 1254 claims assessed on Christmas Island between 1 July 2009 and 31 January 2010, 91 per cent were classified as legitimate.

And as opposed to only 16 per cent of boat arrivals back in 2008–2009, 56 per cent of people seeking refugee status now arrive by boat.²⁶

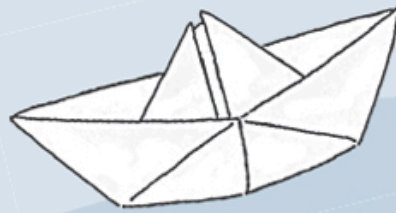
Most illegal immigrants are ACTUALLY people who have overstayed their visas and are from other developed countries such as the UK, USA or Europe!²⁷ In Australia, at any given time, there are approximately 50,000 people who have stayed after their visa has expired. That's a lot of people compared to the 433 that arrived by boat to claim asylum in 2009.

As one of the 146 countries that signed the United Nations 1951 Convention and/or 1967 Protocol relating to the Status of Refugees, Australia is obliged to provide protection to those escaping persecution if they apply for asylum while in Australia.

It is **never** illegal to enter Australia in order to seek asylum (protection) whether by airplane or by boat.

*'My friend's mum came here on a boat from Vietnam when she was 19.
They couldn't bring anything with them. Not even their pets.
I can't imagine having to do that. They had to start a new life.'*

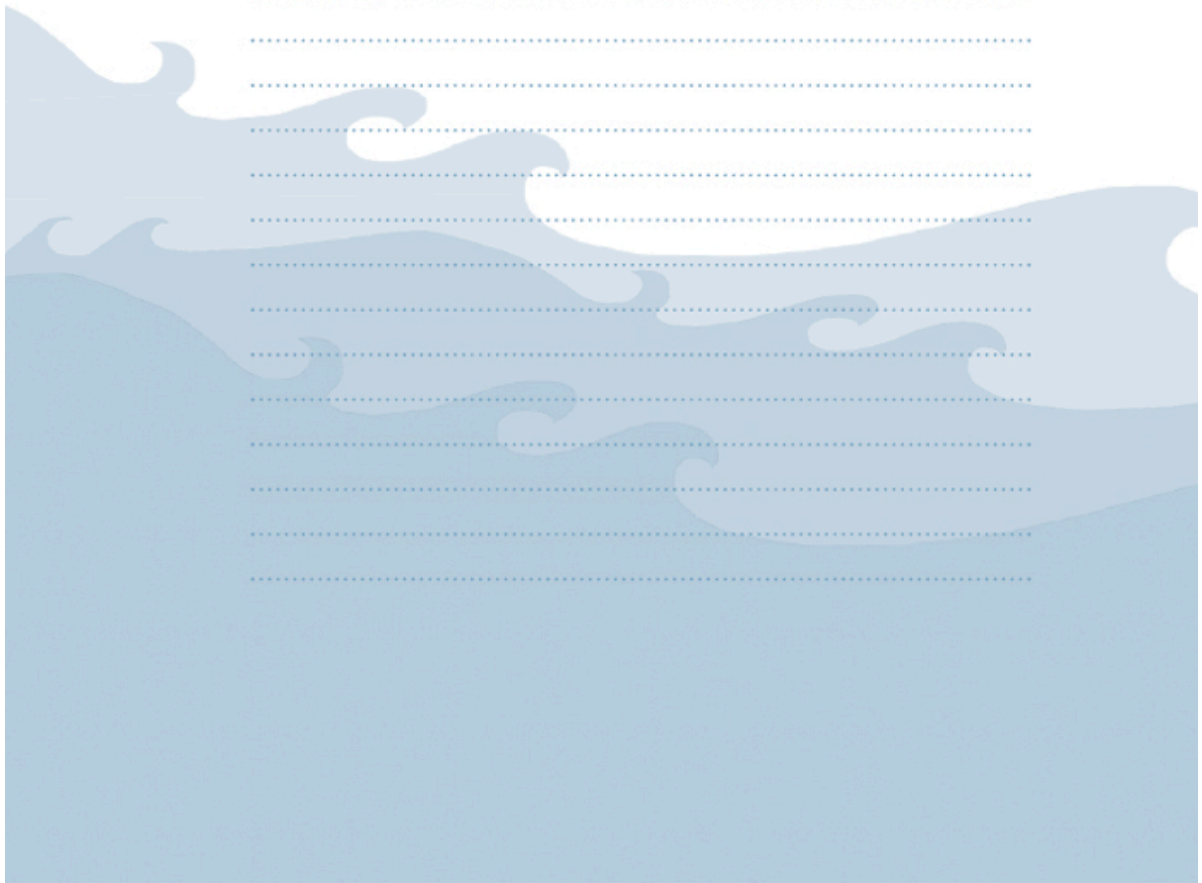
Sunday, age 13



What was your family's journey to Australia?

Of my family, the first to come to Australia were my great-great-grandparents, who arrived in the 1850s. They were forced off the land they farmed in the Scottish highlands by rich land owners during the potato famine that ravaged both Ireland and Scotland. They took up the British Government's offer of a new start to life in this 'new' country in order to escape poverty and hardship in their homeland Scotland.

When did your family arrive in Australia?



*'My dad's mum and dad came here after World War II.
She was from Czechoslovakia and he was from Poland.
In the war he was put in a concentration camp
and she was in a labour camp.'*

Rachel, age 13

Here are the most common languages other than English spoken in Australia.

Say hello!

Italian: Ciao (Chow)

Greek: Yahsu (Yar-sue)

Cantonese: Lei ho (Lay-hoe)

Arabic: Marhaban (Mar-ha-ban)

Mandarin: ni hao (Nee-how)

Vietnamese: Zinch o (Sin-djow)

Spanish: Hola (Hol-lar)

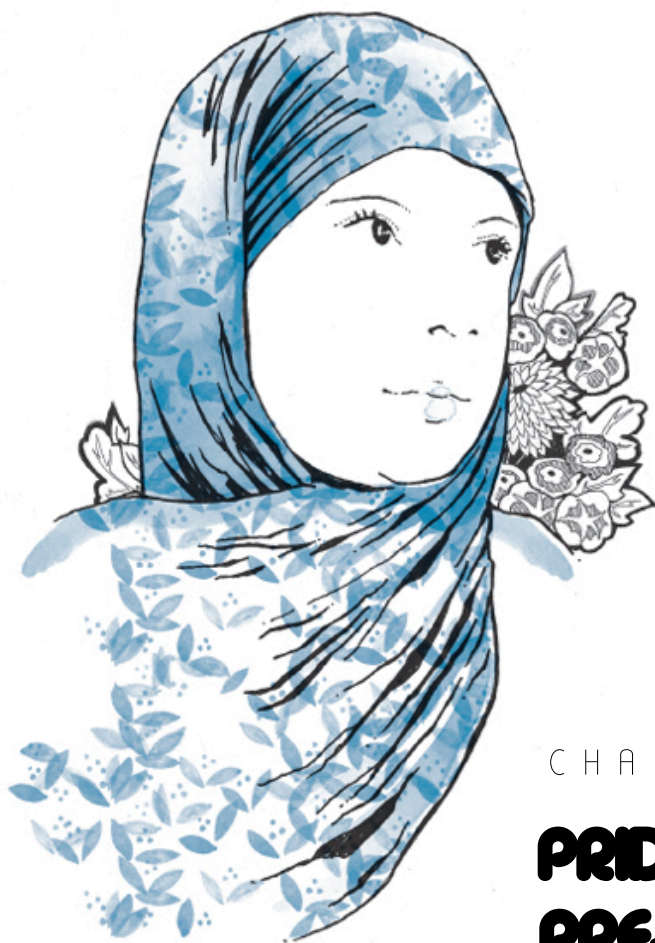
Filipino Tagalog: Kamusta (Car-moo-star)

German: Guten Tag (Goot-en-targ)

Hindi: Namaste (Na-ma-stay)

**'I think it's amazing living in a multicultural city.
You get to experience new things all the time.'**

Eve, age 12



CHAPTER 13

PRIDE AND PREJUDICE

When I was at high school, Dana was one of my best friends. Dana was (and still is, I might add) a really gorgeous girl and everyone in our year loved her. She was even made school captain with her boyfriend. And Dana was Muslim.

This wasn't a really big deal. No one really knew much about the Muslim religion except that one month a year Dana and her family didn't eat or drink during the day. This was called the month of Ramadan, and they would fast through the day and pig out in the evening. I stayed at her house a bit so I got to experience the joy of being rewarded when the sun went down with all the yummy food your stomach could handle after being hungry all day.

Then, when we were coming to the end of our final year of high school,

the terrorist attacks on the New York Twin Towers occurred and everything changed. All of a sudden, being a Muslim at my school was not so simple. It was: A. Kinda. Big. Deal.

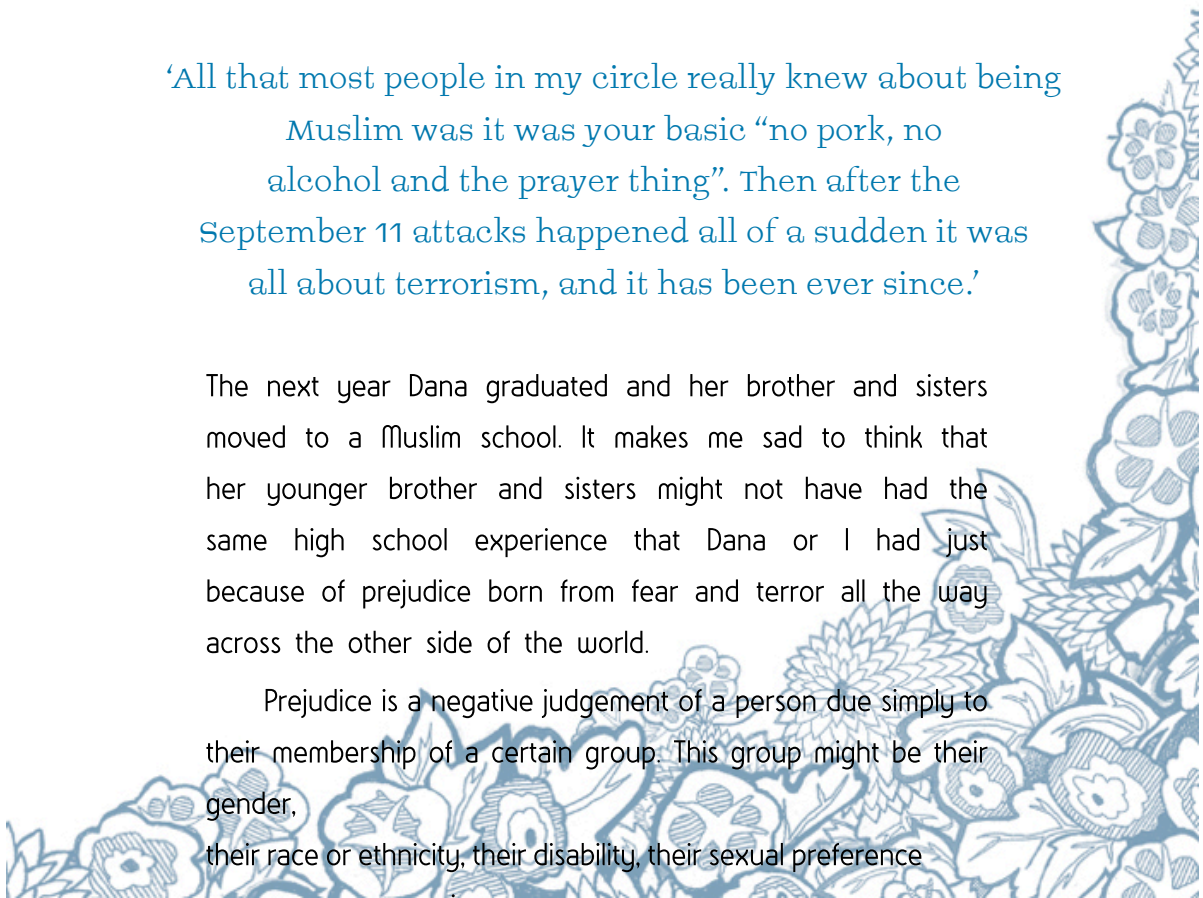
Dana hadn't changed, nor had anyone else at the school, but the world definitely had. All of a sudden everyone was talking about Muslims on the news, Internet chat sites and at the dinner table. Some people were saying that Muslims were evil, that they were 'not like us', they were to be feared. Girls who had worn the veil at our school for years without any problem were suddenly being spat on, or having their veils pulled off their heads by boys.

September 11 changed the world, and, in its own little way, it changed the students at my high school. As Dana remembers,

'All that most people in my circle really knew about being Muslim was it was your basic "no pork, no alcohol and the prayer thing". Then after the September 11 attacks happened all of a sudden it was all about terrorism, and it has been ever since.'

The next year Dana graduated and her brother and sisters moved to a Muslim school. It makes me sad to think that her younger brother and sisters might not have had the same high school experience that Dana or I had just because of prejudice born from fear and terror all the way across the other side of the world.

Prejudice is a negative judgement of a person due simply to their membership of a certain group. This group might be their gender, their race or ethnicity, their disability, their sexual preference or many more groupings.



Prejudice isn't always as extreme as pulling the veils off girls' heads. Prejudice can be subtle – some people will inconvenience themselves due to their prejudice, such as not going to the local milk bar because of the race of its owners. Prejudice does not only affect the lives of the victims of prejudice but also those that are prejudiced themselves.

'I'm really proud of my Indian background. One of my uncles got spat at and told to go back to where he came from. It upset me but I know not everyone is like those people.'

Sakthi, age 12

Moving Beyond the Stereotype

So you know how we talked about being yourself and how complex that can be in *Your Life*? Well, that stuff can be applied to everyone else, too. Yep, not only are you more interesting than what grade you get or what sport you play, so is EVERYONE else around you. This seems like an obvious statement but it's very easy to reduce people to simple labels. This is called stereotyping. Stereotyping is when you label a group of people as being the same. Like prejudice, this labelling can be as random as your body size or your ethnicity.

A stereotype is not necessarily false. In fact, stereotyping can happen as a result of an obvious common behaviour in a group of people. But don't let that dull down this colourful world. Sure, a teenage girl can be giggly (we know that, right?) but that doesn't mean that ALL teenage girls are giggly, or are giggly ALL the time. A boy might like sport and fast cars, but not ALL boys like these things. But the idea that all people of a certain body shape behave a certain way (larger girls are nerdy?) or if you are in a

certain class you share certain characteristics (every girl in year 8b is a bitch?) is completely ridiculous.

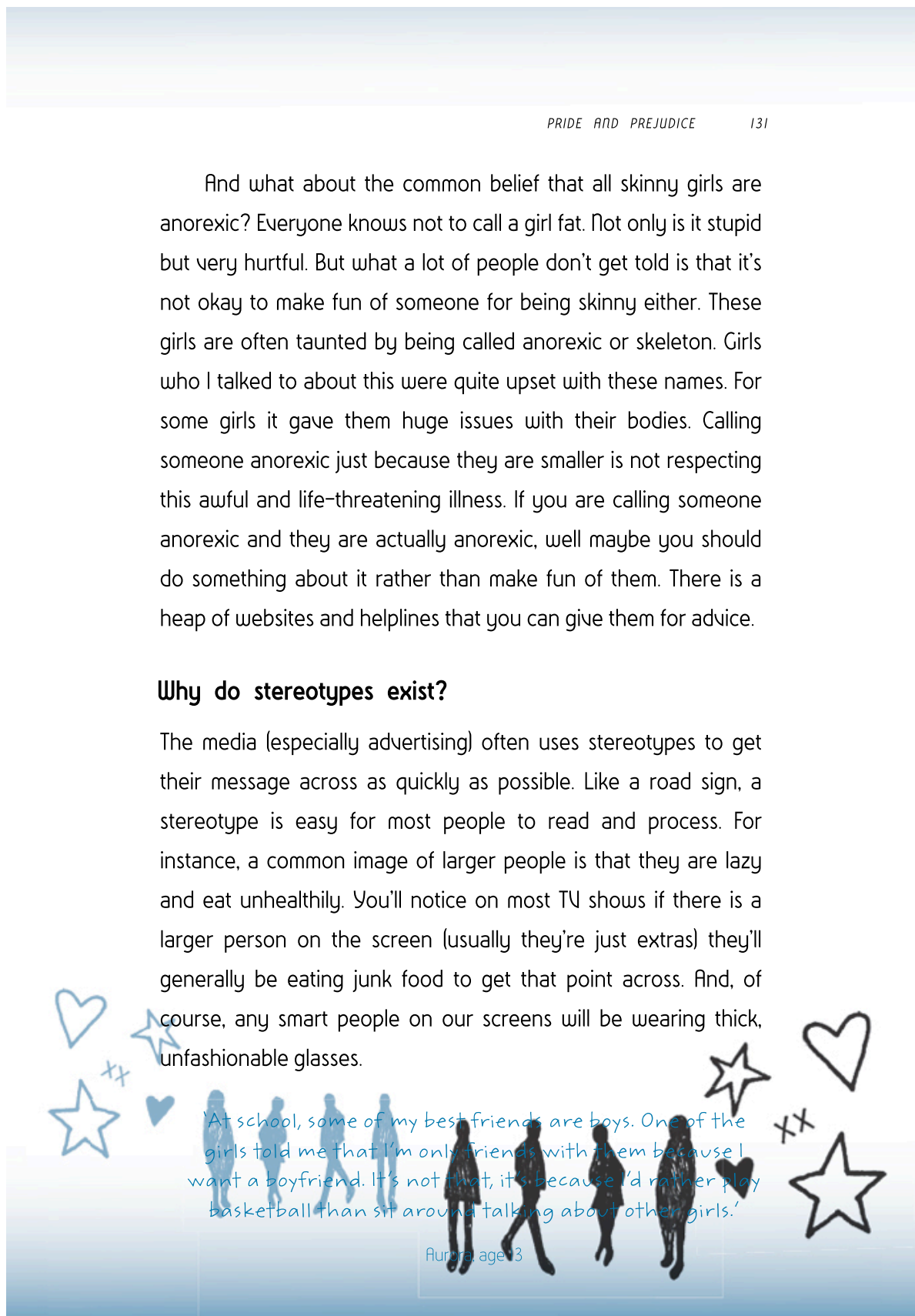
And what about the common belief that all skinny girls are anorexic? Everyone knows not to call a girl fat. Not only is it stupid but very hurtful. But what a lot of people don't get told is that it's not okay to make fun of someone for being skinny either. These girls are often taunted by being called anorexic or skeleton. Girls who I talked to about this were quite upset with these names. For some girls it gave them huge issues with their bodies. Calling someone anorexic just because they are smaller is not respecting this awful and life-threatening illness. If you are calling someone anorexic and they are actually anorexic, well maybe you should do something about it rather than make fun of them. There is a heap of websites and helplines that you can give them for advice.

Why do stereotypes exist?

The media (especially advertising) often uses stereotypes to get their message across as quickly as possible. Like a road sign, a stereotype is easy for most people to read and process. For instance, a common image of larger people is that they are lazy and eat unhealthily. You'll notice on most TV shows if there is a larger person on the screen (usually they're just extras) they'll generally be eating junk food to get that point across. And, of course, any smart people on our screens will be wearing thick, unfashionable glasses.

'At school, some of my best friends are boys. One of the girls told me that I'm only friends with them because I want a boyfriend. It's not that, it's because I'd rather play basketball than sit around talking about other girls.'

Aurora, age 13



So, why are stereotypes dangerous?

Stereotypes are dangerous because they reduce complex humans to a label. Instead of seeing an individual with many different sides, we simply see a word. Blonde. Emo. Nerd. Hipster. Indie. Goth. Geek. Get the picture? People often make assumptions about groups of people based on these stereotypes. And despite the fact that they are usually ridiculously exaggerated, stereotypes are often seen as fact, affecting the way they engage with others.

Stereotypes can also play a part in prejudice towards certain groups in our society. People can use them to justify their unfair and violent behaviour towards that group. For example: a boy steals money from a homeless person's begging cup on the street but reassures himself, 'doesn't matter, 'cos he was just going to spend it on drugs and alcohol anyway.'

Throughout history, prejudicial thinking about groups of people has allowed some of the worst crimes against humanity to be committed. Leading up to World War II, the Nazi Party (which was in power in Germany in the first half of the 20th century) stereotyped Jewish people as mean, venal, evil and dangerous. This organisation was so successful in convincing their fellow countrymen that this was true, many Germans actually came to believe that Jews were not human. This led to the Nazis committing horrific acts against Jewish people with little opposition.

Stereotypes like the angry lesbian, the drunk Aborigine or the Muslim terrorist all oppress groups in our society.

My friend at school, Pia, always found it funny that people in our class would ask her to help them with maths. Why was it funny?

Because she wasn't very good at maths. People just assumed she'd

be good because she was Asian. A lot of Asian Australians
complain of this stereotype.

Racial stereotyping has come a long, long way since I was a kid, and a longer way since your parents were young, but you can still find heaps of examples of it on your TV. An Asian character is shy, an African boy is good at sport, an Italian girl is good at cooking. All of these stereotypes prevent us from understanding different races. Often people find it hard to be allowed 'out' of these stereotypes.

An actress friend of mine who is Vietnamese finds it difficult to get roles that aren't 'the refugee' or 'the asian extra'. Often casting agencies won't audition actors who are not white if the role doesn't specify a race. It is assumed by them that the role is white. Look outside, that's not a realistic representation.

Gender stereotyping is everywhere. Most girls I talk to are well aware of it. What is the female stereotype in the media? White, pretty and very, very thin. Here are some of the most common female stereotypes that are present within our TV shows, films and advertisements:

- *The mean girl.* These girls are often presented as bitchy, superficial and always on their phone. They don't seem to have anything to contribute to the world but a bitchy piece of gossip about one of their so-called friends.
- *The perfect princess.* Unlike the mean girl, these girls do not have an evil bone in their body. In fact, they are as nice as they are beautiful. Their sweetness gives you a toothache through the screen. Smart, popular and good at everything she tries, there is nothing a perfect princess can't do. (Except maybe be grumpy.)

- *The nagging mum.* These women are a real drag. Always nagging someone (usually their husband) to do something when everyone else is having a fun time.

And what about the men?

- *The superhero.* This guy is always in control and doesn't need help from anyone. Strong, dependable and quiet, the superhero literally saves the day and the world by himself. He is physically strong, good looking and is loved by everyone. He never has any problems, doesn't need human company and never EVER cries.
- *The dumb guy.* This stereotype is very popular in TV shows. The dumb guy is pretty much a complete goof. Think of Homer Simpson, Joey from *Friends*, Shay Spence from *iCarly*. This is also a very popular male stereotype in advertising for both male and female products. Advertisements with dads who don't know how to boil water or boyfriends who don't know what a tampon is use humour to catch your attention.

Sure these stereotypes are a bit of a laugh, but they reinforce certain beliefs and prejudices about groups of people. For example, making fun of the goofy dad who can't cook implies that women are naturally good at these tasks and men aren't. We are reduced to a simple stereotype of the woman who does the cooking and the dad who goes to work. Boring. The stereotype of the perfect princess and the superhero both insist on a level of 'perfection' and emotional control that are generally pretty unrealistic. Trying to always save the day without needing any support yourself can put a lot of unnecessary pressure on guys in real life. Gender roles are far more complex

in real life. These stereotypes limit our vision of the world and the future.

Thankfully, there are a lot of TV shows like *Degrassi Next Generation* or *Glee* these days that actively try and break down these stereotypes and illustrate how misleading these labels can be

That's totally gay

When I was at school in Melbourne back in the late nineties being gay was simply not allowed. If anyone was suspected as gay their life was made a living hell by kids at our school. Not only would they be harassed, both verbally and physically, but the bullies would also target the victim's friends too. In those days, coming out to your school friends as gay meant social death for both you and your friends. This made it really hard for people who were curious about their sexuality to express their feelings to themselves, let alone to those close to them. Not being able to discuss these very important and confusing things can make you feel very alone and fearful that there is something wrong with you. There were pretty much no homosexual characters on teen or kids' shows back then either, and a celebrity would not dare to be known as homosexual or lesbian for fear of their career being ruined.

*'Everyone should feel free to speak their mind,
no matter what their sexuality.'*

Ruby, age 13

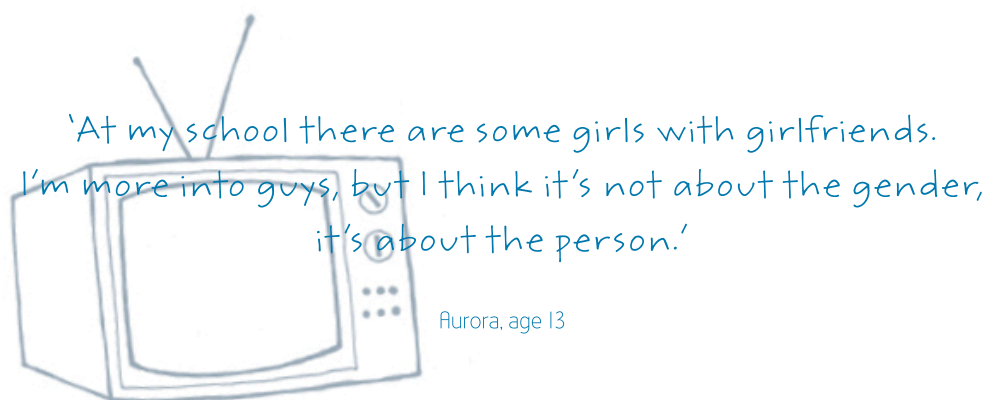
Things, thankfully, have changed since then. In schools I visited, gay students were talking about their lives in the open and without fear. This was one of the coolest things I experienced while writing this book. I can't help but wonder if the inclusion of

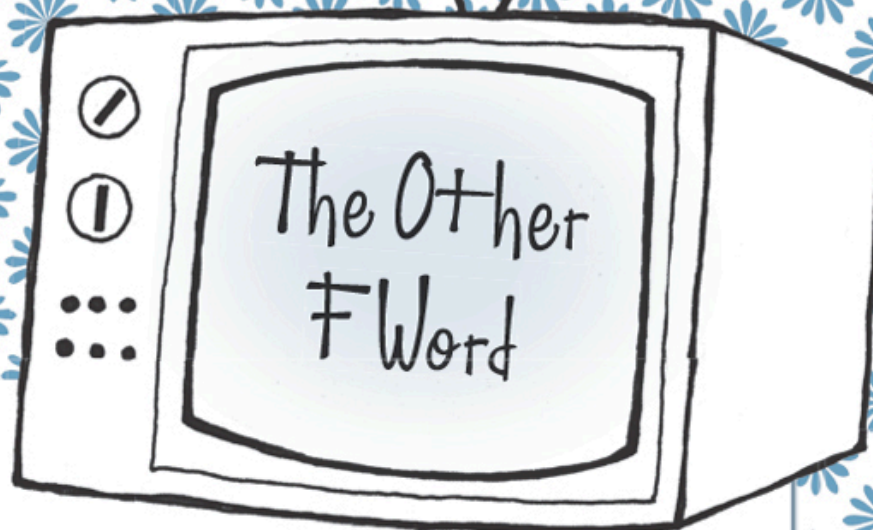
gay, lesbian, bisexual and transgendered characters on our TV and movie screens helped this movement along.

Once upon a time, it was easy for stereotypes of homosexuals as lonely sexual predators to be accepted as a reality. While the media still has a long way to go in representing gay, lesbian and transsexual people on our screens, it is amazing how far we've come in such a short period of time. The challenging of stereotypes can be very effective in changing the real life behaviour of people.

TV HOMEWORK

Watch your favourite TV show and note down any stereotypes that you see being portrayed on the screen (both in the show and the commercials). Plus, when your parents ask you what you are doing watching telly, tell them it's important homework!!!

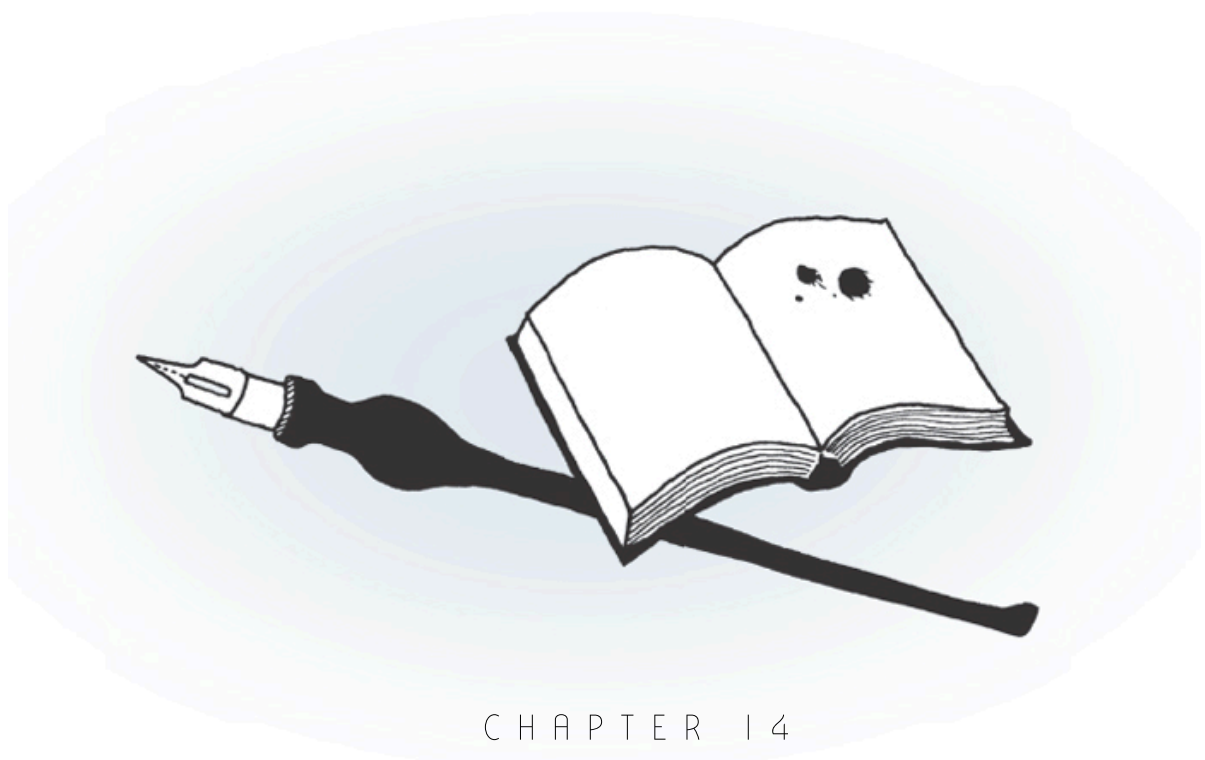




If you are living in Australia, you have probably heard of feminism. In some cases, you might have heard your mum and dad use the term, or an older sister. It might mean equality, power and opportunity to you. For some of you, it might have negative connotations. It might make you think of angry women fighting over words and insignificant arguments.

Soooo, what is it? Put simply, feminism is the view that women and men are born equal.

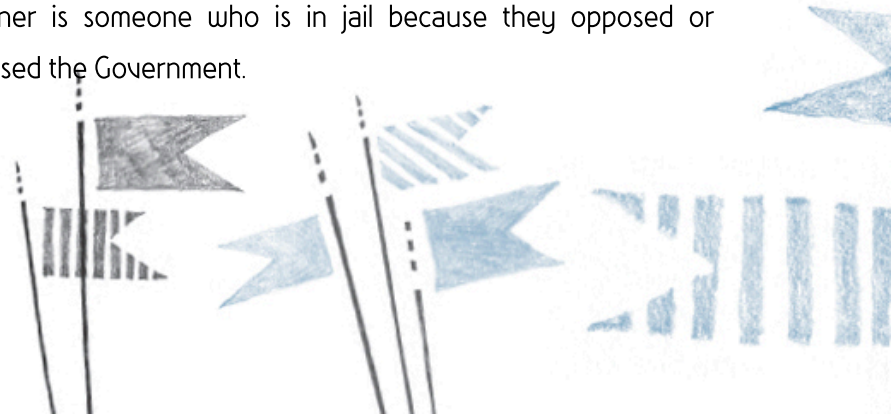
It is nothing more complex than that. It does not suggest women should be *like* men or should be *better* than men, but rather that women have 'equal worth' to men. Women deserve equal rights and opportunities to those enjoyed by men – without penalty. And we have come a long way. All females alive today benefit from the work of feminist activists. Can you believe that only forty years ago, girls weren't allowed to play sport at school with boys? Okkkay.



CHAPTER 14

HUMAN WRITER

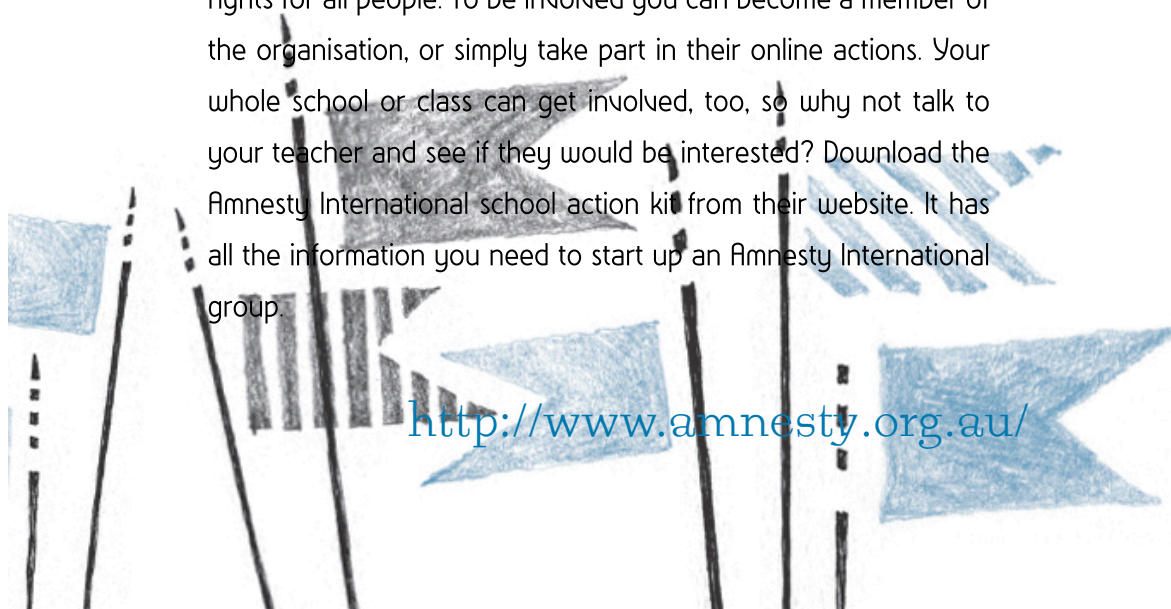
While travelling on the train to work in 1961, English lawyer Peter Benenson reads a story in the paper about two students from Portugal who have been imprisoned for seven years. Their crime? Simply raising their glasses and toasting to freedom at a dinner party. Yep, they are what we call 'political prisoners'. A political prisoner is someone who is in jail because they opposed or criticised the Government.



Sick of reading stories about basic human rights being disregarded around the world, Peter decides to do something about it. He speaks to some friends and they brainstorm what they can do to support the students in Portugal all the way from England. They decide that while they cannot fight this injustice in person, they can fight it on paper. Peter pens an article for a newspaper about the importance of people fighting not only for the Portuguese prisoners, but for all political prisoners around the world. He and his friends form a group to write letters to governments and aid organisations to urge the release of these innocent people. They begin to send letters, their friends and family do too, and soon thousands and thousands of letters start arriving, demanding the release of the prisoners. And so the well-known Nobel Prizewinning human rights organisation, Amnesty International, is born.

Amnesty International has grown to having over 2.8 million active supporters. They campaign for the protection of human rights for all people. To be involved you can become a member of the organisation, or simply take part in their online actions. Your whole school or class can get involved, too, so why not talk to your teacher and see if they would be interested? Download the Amnesty International school action kit from their website. It has all the information you need to start up an Amnesty International group.

<http://www.amnesty.org.au/>





Everyone has the right to freedom of opinion and expression; this right includes freedom to hold opinions without interference and to seek, receive and impart information and ideas through any media and regardless of frontiers.

Article 19 of the UN Universal Declaration of Human Rights





TO WHOM IT MAY CONCERN

Yes, I know writing letters is kind of old fashioned but it is the rarity of writing letters that makes it all the more powerful a tool to let people know how you feel. Think about it – if someone has bothered to write a letter and send it in this age of IMing and text messaging, then it really must matter. In fact, some people in government offices say that a single letter received by a government or company is considered to represent the views of 100 to 1000 people. The idea is that for every person that has bothered to write a letter regarding the issue, there are usually a lot of people who feel the same.

So how do you write a letter to make someone sit up and take notice? Whether it is a letter to your school paper, *Dolly* magazine or a government overseas, here are three simple rules to follow:

1. Be clear about your message.

If you want to write about airbrushing on models in magazines don't wait until the third paragraph to mention it. Explain your objections simply.

2. Keep it short and sweet.

Writing a five-page letter to a company or government might be fun, but it's unlikely they'll read past the first page. Remember, they do not need to know your life story, just your opinion on the issue at hand.

3. Be polite.

There is no point writing a letter to someone and then swearing at them or calling them names. No one will respect that letter and you might even make the situation worse for yourself. Keep the letter polite and you are far more likely to get a reply.



Soooo . . .

There are a heap of resources online with sample letters and more helpful hints. Go to these organisations websites and do a search for letter-writing samples:

- Amnesty International Australia
<http://www.amnesty.org.au/>
- Green Peace
<http://www.greenpeace.org/australia>
- Oxfam
<http://www.oxfam.org.au/>

Don't forget that every letter makes an impact, even if it doesn't get published or a reply! Many organisations and offices are too busy to reply to every single letter and magazines and newspapers are bombarded with letters and emails every day. But this doesn't mean that your voice hasn't been heard. Writing letters can be one of the most effective ways to get your point across.



Football Fans Unite

Not all letters you write have to be about life and death issues.

When I was eleven years old I la la loved footy (Aussie rules). I also loved to watch a footy TV show called *Four Quarters*. Part of the reason I loved the show was one of the co-hosts: Brigitte Duclos. At that time, girls and women weren't really very visible in footy, despite females making up a huge percentage of the supporters. It was always men who were commentators and sports journalists, so as a female footy fan it was nice to see a female face among the men on the show. However, one week I turned on the show only to find that Brigitte had been replaced with another blokey footy commentator. Lame! Obviously, I was pretty upset that they had given the boot to Brig. I decided to write a letter to the local paper's TV guide and tell the world how I felt. I knew it was unlikely that my letter would result in Brigitte Duclos being brought back onto the show, but I wanted the producers to know that some fans of the show were unhappy with their decision. Not only did my letter get published, but the following week another reader wrote in applauding my letter. LOL! Brigitte never returned to *Four Quarters* but she went on to have a successful career on breakfast radio. And I continue to write to organisations if I feel the need to change something or to inform others.

'I wrote a letter to the paper because I read an article about teenagers being drunk and causing trouble. That doesn't sound

*like me and my friends. Not all teenagers are the same.
I wanted everyone to know that.'*

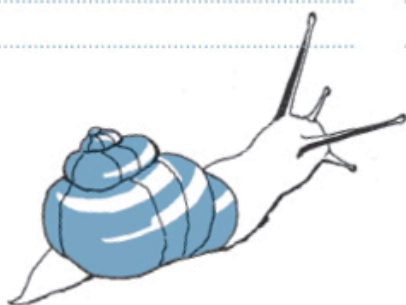
Lizzie, age 13

Operation Snail Mail

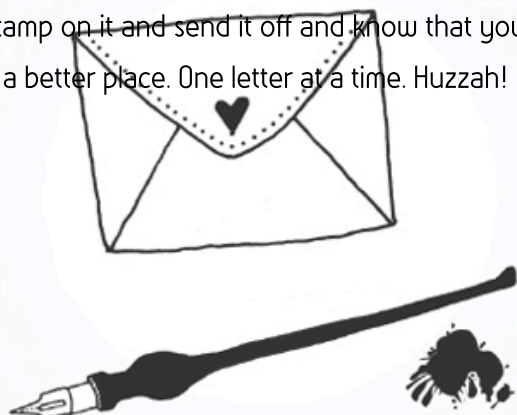
Soooooooo, why not jot down some individuals or organisations that you want to write a letter to in the Hot and Not list? Why is there a hot list? Your letters don't always have to be negative. You can write a letter to let someone know that they or their company are doing a good job too. In this world it is rare to get positive feedback. People mostly stay quiet until something upsets them, which is kind of lame. So why not send a letter of appreciation to someone or something that has floated your boat recently.

Still can't think of anyone? Well, what about . . .

- *The woman in the tuckshop at school who makes the best cake EVER?*
- *Your favourite TV show that always delivers with good storylines or laughs?*
- *A program your local council runs that's rocked your socks?*
- *Your favourite magazine that had a particularly cool article in it?*
- *Your grandma who tells hilarious jokes?*



Now that you've got your lists, write a letter from each column. Yep, write a letter to let someone know you are unhappy with something from the NOT list and write someone a letter and let them know you think they're ace from the HOT list. Use the steps outlined earlier and keep it short and sweet. Alternatively, check out one of the charities websites on the previous page and use their action sections that help you write letters with prefilled emails. Don't forget to be polite and straight to the point. Then chuck a stamp on it and send it off and know that you are making the world a better place. One letter at a time. Huzzah!



'I wanted to take my best friend to the social as my partner. But she wasn't allowed because of the rule that girls aren't allowed to take girls to the social. I wrote a letter to the principal and they let my friend come. We had a great time.'

Cassie, age 14



CHAPTER 15

ACTION HEROES

**'How wonderful it is that nobody need wait a single moment
before starting to improve the world.'**

Anne Frank, Holocaust prisoner

So this section of the book has been a lot about groups of people getting together and making change, but how exactly did it all come about? Martin Luther King Jr didn't wake up one day to be the leader of the civil rights movement in the USA by accident. He organised and campaigned from a young age. Danny Seo created Earth 2000 by talking about the issues he felt

were important and getting other people his age excited about the challenge. Paul Benenson and his friends wrote letters, Charlie Perkins and the Sydney student Freedom Riders documented their actions for the media, the suffragettes made pamphlets and held meetings, and countless other groups throughout history got together and made change through actions. Whether it was a photocopied zine or an impassioned speech to millions, these changemakers were able to communicate to people and make them stop and think.

Luckily for us, it's easier than ever before to get together and make change. Thanks to the Internet, you can utilise a heap of online resources provided by charities and groups on their websites (see all the links earlier). You are also able to communicate to your friends and group members by sending an SMS, a group email, or creating an event on a website.

The actnow.com.au website is a must go-to for any budding changemaker. The Action Toolkit contains tips, tutorials and fun ideas to help you and your group achieve what you want to. The best part about it? All the stuff you read on the actnow website is written by other young activists!

ACTIVATE

To create change, you first have to find a group of like-minded people who also care about a particular issue. The group could be as large as your entire school or as small as just you and your best friend.

When you've got your group together then you have to work out what you want the outcome of the group action to be. Here are some tips for organising a group or an action without losing your mind, or your best friends.

1. Know what you want before you start asking for it.

A handy way to start your planning is to write down what you want your group or your group's action to **achieve**. Make your goal as simple as possible. If you can state this goal clearly, you will have an easier job seeing what you need to do to make it happen.

With this action we want to . . .

- raise awareness about an issue?
- raise money for something?
- discuss a specific issue, eg. asking for the council to look at the environmental costs of a development?
- campaign for a specific rule to be changed, eg. people from other schools to be allowed to attend your school dance

Don't forget to focus on a solution. There is no point holding a protest or information night about an injustice going on in the world and offering people no course of action to change it. Even if your solution is to raise money to send to troubled communities, try to focus on this. Spending all your time discussing the negative aspects of the action can make you (and your friends) feel helpless and sad. Be positive and hopeful, and you'll find people will be far more willing to come along for the ride.

*'Act as if what you do makes a difference.
It does.'*

William James, philosopher



2. Brainstorm the best way to get your way.

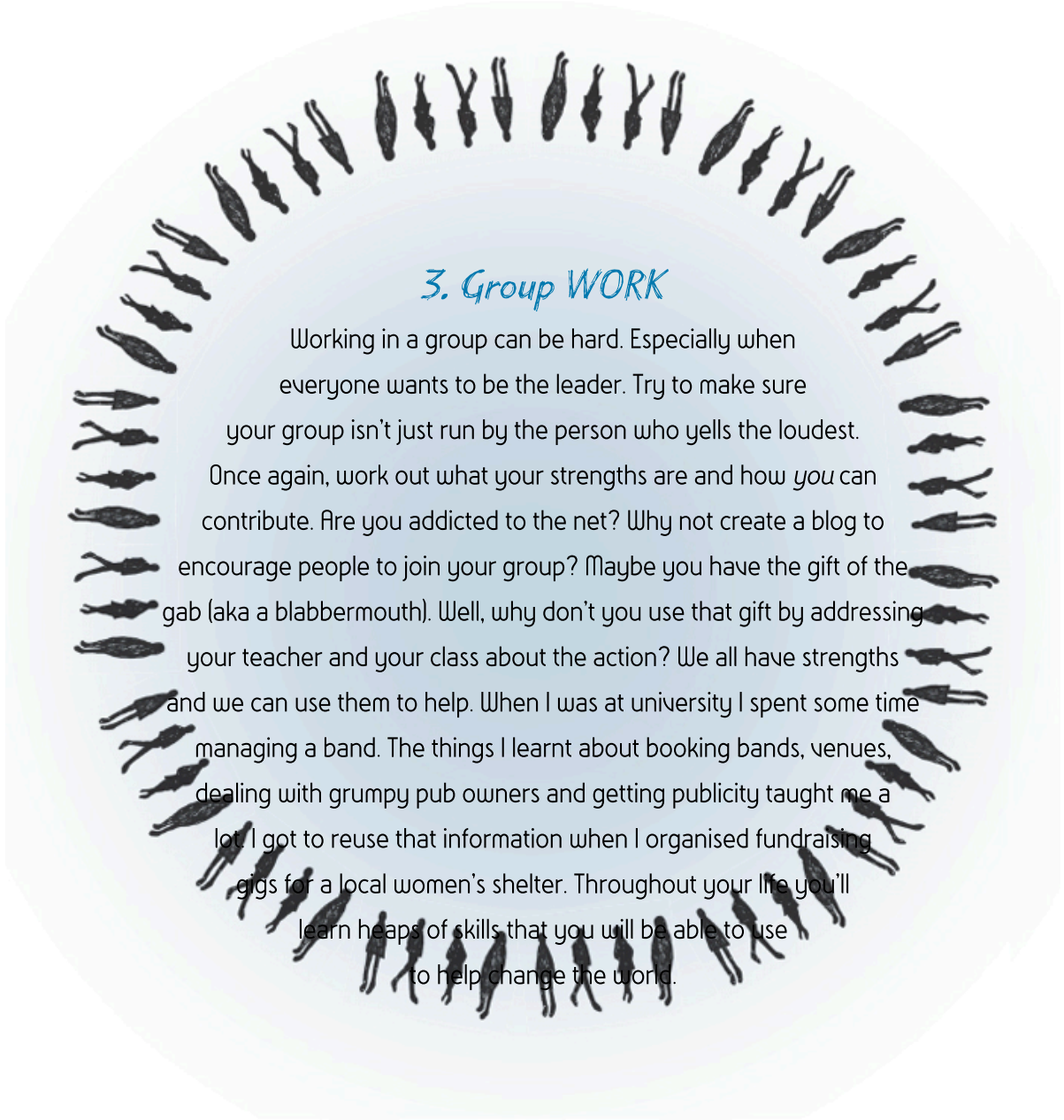
Now you know what you want the outcome of your action to be, start brainstorming what action would be most appropriate to achieve this.

Go online and see what other groups might already be doing. A lot of charities hold fun runs or other events that you could take part in as a team. This cuts down a lot of the work as the organisation will send you posters and other promotional material. P.S. If you are trying to raise cash, remember people are far more likely to give money to your cause if they are familiar with the event. By all means create your own event, just be aware of how much extra work this might involve, and if you have that time to dedicate.

Think about your group's strengths and interests. Are you all on the same basketball team? Why not organise a basketball round robin at school where teams pay a small fee to take part, with all funds going to your chosen charity? Love fashion? Organise a charity fashion show. You all kick some serious cooking arse? Have a restaurant night where you invite all your parents for a fancy meal with everyone contributing to the cooking, waiting and, most importantly, dishwashing!

Remember not all group actions need to be fundraisers or events. A big part of being in a group is about having FUN and learning about things together. If you and your friends start an environmental issues group, maybe you could begin by holding a

monthly movie night with all movies themed about environmental issues to get you talking about it.



3. Group WORK

Working in a group can be hard. Especially when everyone wants to be the leader. Try to make sure your group isn't just run by the person who yells the loudest. Once again, work out what your strengths are and how *you* can contribute. Are you addicted to the net? Why not create a blog to encourage people to join your group? Maybe you have the gift of the gab (aka a blabbermouth). Well, why don't you use that gift by addressing your teacher and your class about the action? We all have strengths and we can use them to help. When I was at university I spent some time managing a band. The things I learnt about booking bands, venues, dealing with grumpy pub owners and getting publicity taught me a lot. I got to reuse that information when I organised fundraising gigs for a local women's shelter. Throughout your life you'll learn heaps of skills that you will be able to use to help change the world.

Remember to write down who will do what task. Make sure that not all the responsibility is on one person's shoulders. Even if they insist.

I find it often helps to nominate one person to be the group secretary. This person's job is to write down the important things you guys decide upon when you meet up. So, if in a week no one

can remember what they said they'd do, you can always just check the secretary's book.

Something
to consider...

NATIONAL YOUTH WEEK

Every year in April, thousands of young people get together to talk about the future of Australia. National Youth Week is open to twelve to twenty-five year olds across the country and events are held in every state. I was lucky enough to go to the first ever National Youth Week in the year 2000 (yes, ages ago, I know!) It is a great way for everyone to get together and to have their say. Who knows, you might meet some new friends? Check out what is being organised for National Youth Week in your area.

www.youthweek.com





YOUR PLANET

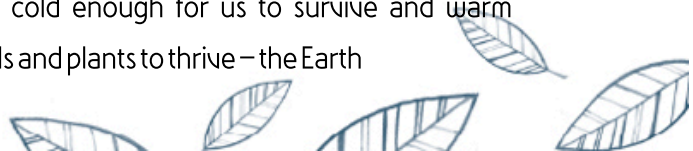


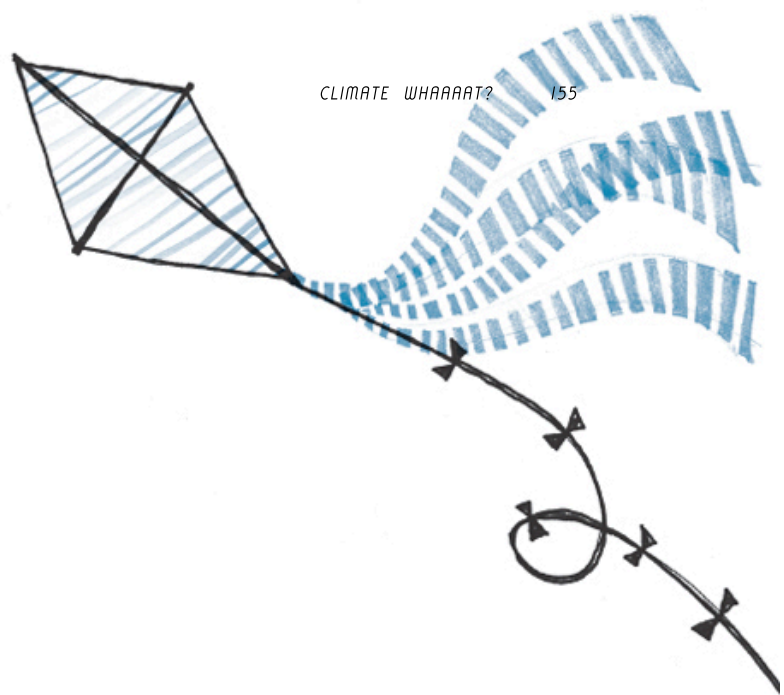
CHAPTER 16

CLIMATE WHAAT?

Okay, so I'm assuming you know what climate change is. I mean, it's kind of a big deal. Carbon sinking, greenhouse gases, ice caps melting . . . Yikes, there's a lot to get your head around. So let's break it down once and for all.

Basically, the world's most dangerous animals – humans – haven't been treating our planet with respect. Earth has a gazillion amazingly complex processes that allow us to call it home sweet home. One of these is the Greenhouse effect. In order to make our climate livable – both cold enough for us to survive and warm enough to allow animals and plants to thrive – the Earth





performs a balancing act. Greenhouse gases are released into the atmosphere, which then traps energy from the sun to heat the planet. Forests, bushland, deserts, oceans and seas then absorb (or sink) carbon and other greenhouse gases, allowing the natural cycle to continue again and again. Unfortunately, over the past hundred years, humans have been throwing the process off balance by releasing (way) too many greenhouse gases into the air – like methane and carbon dioxide. With the invention of the motor car and all the mod cons that make our lives easier, not to mention the factories that make *them*, our emissions have increased steadily and VERY quickly! Most scientists believe this is causing even more heat from the sun to be trapped in our atmosphere and is heating up our world at a quicker pace than is natural. At the same time, we have been clearing a lot of the vegetation (forests and bushland) that would usually 'sink' this carbon naturally. Our planet is out of balance and it looks like we might be in serious trouble.

'I want Earth to be clean and for us to use less carbon emissions.'

Emma, age 12

'You know the saying "What goes up must come down?"

Well, that's true for global warming pollution. It goes up into the sky, but it also comes down, some of it quickly and some very slowly. To fight the climate crisis, we have to reduce the amount that goes up and increase the amount that comes down'.

Al Gore, Our Choice

Now, this has a number of effects. One of the most serious is rising sea levels due to the glaciers melting. If this continues at the current rate, entire cities and countries may be under water within the century! This imbalance has also brought on increasingly dangerous and unpredictable weather conditions, which are getting worse. Noticed how many natural disasters have been occurring in the past few years? Some scientists suggest the increase in weather events such as typhoons, hurricanes, tsunamis, and bushfires is linked to climate change.

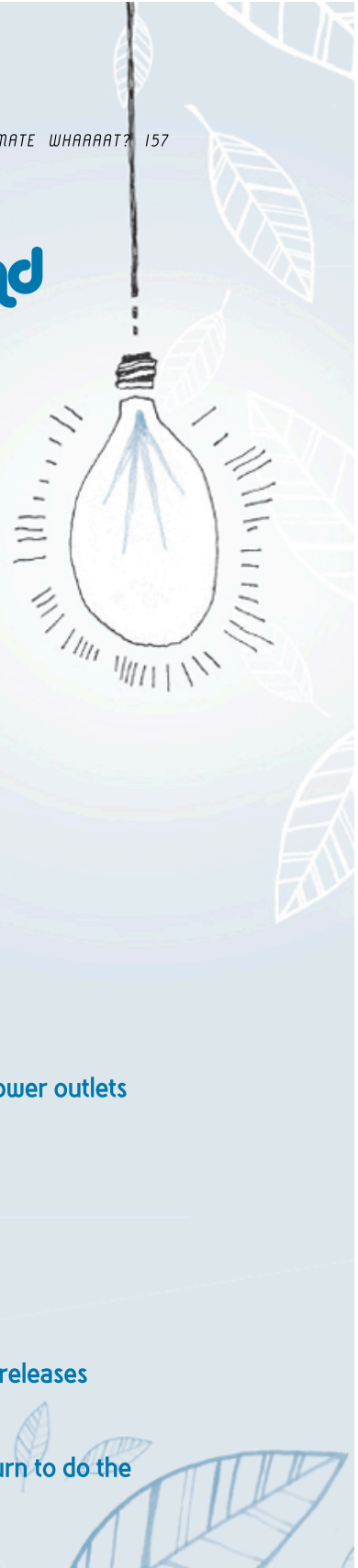
But, what can we do about it?

Well, even though it might seem like such a scary big problem, scientists and organisations have been working for years on ways humans can reduce their toll on the world. There are a number of effective and practical steps our governments and companies can do to make real change, fast. But cast your mind back to the chapter on People Power. Individuals are the key to real change. If everyone makes an effort to combat climate change, our planet has the best chance possible for surviving.

So what are you going to do about it? Well, first you need to see how you rate as a carbon consumer. Try this Carbon-Free quiz. Then go online and calculate your household's **carbon footprint**. Your carbon footprint is a measure of your overall contribution of carbon dioxide and other greenhouse gases to the atmosphere.

Carbon-Free Quiiz: Are you Earth's Friend or Frenemy?

1. What's your favourite meal?
 - a) Maccaaaaaasssss!
 - b) home-made bangers and mash – classic!
 - c) vegetarian lasagne
2. How do you get to school?
 - a) car
 - b) take the bus/public transport
 - c) walk/ride/skip/skate
3. Before you leave the room you ...
 - a) do nothing! I'm outta here!
 - b) turn the lights off
 - c) turn the lights off (of course) and turn all power outlets off at the switch
4. What's a carbon sink?
 - a) a kitchen sink made of carbon?
 - b) another name for the ozone layer
 - c) anything that absorbs more carbon than it releases
5. Dad just put a load of laundry on and it's your turn to do the drying. You ...



- a) uh, it's called a clothes dryer for a reason, duh?!
 - b) leave the clothes in the washing machine to dry when the load finishes
 - c) hang them on the washing line or clotheshorse
6. How long do you shower for?
- a) depends on the songs playing on the radio
 - b) mostly under 5 minutes
 - c) 3 minutes and fifteen seconds – EXACTLY. I time it.
7. How many of the following items do you have in your room?
- Computer, mobile phone, fan, TV, DVD player, gaming console, CD player, MP3 player, hairdryer, digital alarm clock, hair straightener, lamp, printer, heater, phone charger?*
- a) 8+
 - b) 4-7
 - c) 0-3

Results:

Mostly A's

Your Planet's Frenemy

Woah! You've been a baaaad friend to Planet Earth.

It might seem inconvenient or annoying to have to turn off your lamp at the switch or have a shorter shower, but these small changes will have a very real impact in curbing one human's CO₂ emissions. Remember, like a real friend, the planet will only treat you as well as you treat it.

Mostly Bs

Your Planet's Fair Weather Friend

Look, you're doing pretty well. You're not the Greenest Girl, but you know what's up and you are making an effort to change the world. There are some things that you can't do much about in relation to carbon emissions. The next chapter will show you how you can offset some of those unavoidable carbon emissions.

Mostly Cs

Your Planet's BFF

Go girl. You're the best friend a planet can have.

Anything you scored a not-so-perfect mark on? Have a look and see if you can perfect perfection. Oh, right, you've already done that? Of course. Now go and pass your wealth of knowledge on to your family and friends.

Calculate your carbon footprint online:

<http://www.wwf.org.au/footprint/>

<http://www.abc.net.au/tv/carboncops/calculator.htm>



CHAPTER 17

CARBON TRADING CHALLENGE

Now, to be completely realistic here, there are some carbon emissions you can't really do much about: like, if you live far away from school and your only transport is a car. Also, while you might be a carbon-sinking saint, your *parents* could be increasing your household's carbon footprint. Luckily, you do have the choice to offset some of those unavoidable carbon emissions. Try and create your own carbon offsets at home and make sure that any of those pesky CO₂s you can stop, you do.

Because no one can be perfect all the time, if you do slip up and leave the heating on too long, try and make your own carbon trading to redeem yourself! You could pogo-stick your way to school and cut out the car trip. Or don't brush your teeth for two days. Hmmm . . . or maybe just don't put the heating on the next day.

Complete some of these following carbon challenges:

I. Slay the Energy Vampire

Did you know that a lot of your appliances are sucking electricity when they're not even in use? These vampire energy zappers are sneaky and can account for up to 10 per cent of your annual household energy usage! And a television on standby can use up to 85 per cent of the power it uses when it's switched on!²⁸ So put your house on an energy diet and cut out those unnecessary emissions.

Energy Diet Plan

Week 1

Do an energy assessment of your house and count how many powerpoints you find that are still turned on at the wall switch when they are not in use. Make some signs to remind people to turn them off at the switch.

Week 2

Now do the same assessment and see if you have made any reductions. Are the appliances now switched off when they are not in use? If not, repeat . . . and repeat and repeat. It's hard for adults to remember to do things (they are used to years of doing

things a certain way), however, it only takes a few weeks to get into this new habit. Stick with it.

2. Eat Your Greens

Unfortunately, while hamburgers are delicious, they are also a huge carbon bummer. The UN released a study in 2006 that said that meat generates an estimated 18 per cent of total human-induced greenhouse-gas emissions globally. Eeek! Why so much?

Well, not only do we have to transport the meat to the supermarket/ restaurant/takeaway store, the animals themselves have a huge carbon footprint. A lot of carbon-soaking land is cleared for them. Out go the carbon-sinking rainforests and in go the grassy paddocks. Animals have to eat, of course, so a lot of energy and water goes into both growing the feed and transporting it to the animals. Cows also add to the footprint by farting. Yep, that's right, farting. Cows fart methane. Which is a particularly dangerous greenhouse gas, having about twenty-five times the impact of carbon dioxide!!!²⁹

Progress Report!

A Canadian power company, TransAlta, is developing a supplement to add to cows' feed to cut down their farting!³⁰ Now, if only they made this for humans . . . Father's Day present?

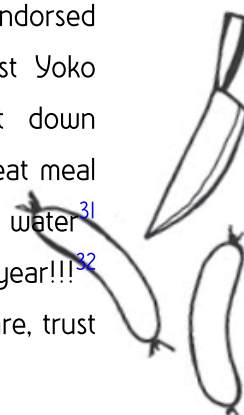


So, what's a meat lovin' cowgirl to do?

Try to eat locally farmed meat (ask your butcher or supermarket – they'll know where your meat comes from) and

cut down on transport emissions.

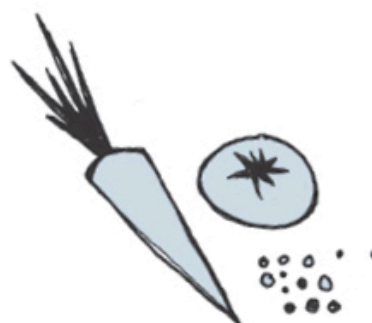
Why not join thousands of people around the world in the Meatless Monday campaign? This campaign, which is endorsed by ex-Beatle Paul McCartney, artist and peace activist Yoko Ono and a ton of other celebrities, aims to cut down consumption of meat by 15 per cent. By cutting one meat meal out of your week you can save up to 10,000 litres of water³¹ and cut greenhouse pollution by up to 300 kg per year!!!³² Plus, you'll be surprised by how yummy veggie burgers are, trust me.



<http://meatlessmondays-australia.com/>

'I don't feel right about meat because I feel uncomfortable about killing animals. So now I'm vegetarian. At first my parents thought it was just a phase, but I've been vegetarian for a while now so they're helping me to get everything I need from other food.'

Dee, age 14

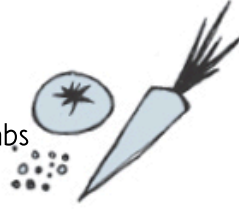


Ingredients:

- 2½ tbsps extra virgin olive oil
- 1 large onion, finely chopped
- 1 garlic clove, finely chopped
- 300 g carrots, coarsely grated
- 300 g zucchinis, coarsely grated
- 1½ tsps ground cumin
- 1½ tsps ground coriander

3 tbsps reduced-fat peanut butter

2 tbsps chopped fresh coriander
 pepper to taste
 1½ cups fresh wholemeal breadcrumbs
 1 egg, beaten

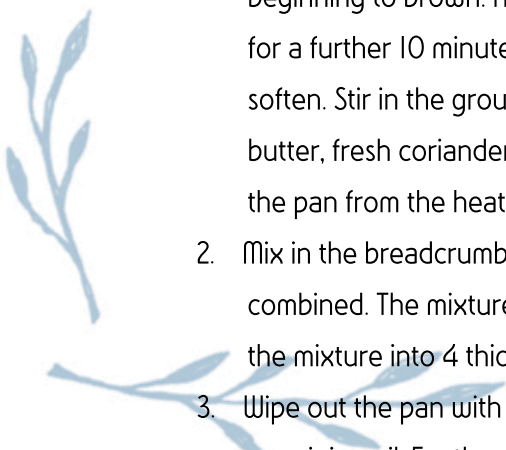


To serve:

2 tomatoes, seeded and chopped
 2 tbsps tomato sauce, chutney or pickles
 Pepper to taste
 4 hamburger buns
 2 tsps mayonnaise
 4 iceberg lettuce leaves, shredded
 1 spring onion, thinly sliced

Preparation:

1. Heat 2 tbsps of oil in a large non-stick frying pan. Add the onion and garlic, and cook over medium heat for 5 minutes, stirring frequently until the onion is soft and beginning to brown. Add the carrots and zucchinis and fry for a further 10 minutes, stirring until the vegetables soften. Stir in the ground cumin and coriander, peanut butter, fresh coriander and pepper, and mix well. Remove the pan from the heat and set aside to cool slightly.
2. Mix in the breadcrumbs and egg until thoroughly combined. The mixture should bind together well. Shape the mixture into 4 thick patties about 10 cm in diameter.
3. Wipe out the pan with paper towel, then add and heat the remaining oil. Fry the patties over low to medium heat for 5 minutes on each side, or until they are firm and golden.

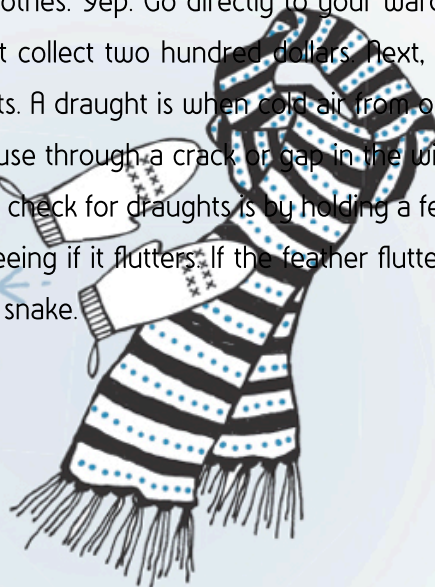


4. To serve, stir the tomatoes and tomato sauce together with a little pepper. Split the hamburger buns in half and toast the cut sides. Spread $\frac{1}{2}$ tspn mayonnaise on each piece of bun, then place some lettuce and a patty on top of half of the buns. Spread with the tomato mixture and top with the shallot slices. Replace the tops of the buns and serve.

3. Heating Shmeating

Yeah, I know it can get cold in winter. But those little heaters we like to sizzle next to us burn up energy that could easily be saved with a bit of effort. An easy tip is to dust or vacuum the surfaces and tops of any heaters. By doing this simple task you can improve the flow of heat from the heater.³³

But don't forget, when you're cold, the first thing you should do is put on warmer clothes. Yep. Go directly to your wardrobe, do not pass GO, do not collect two hundred dollars. Next, check your house for draughts. A draught is when cold air from outside is being let into the house through a crack or gap in the window or door. A good way to check for draughts is by holding a feather to any windows and seeing if it flutters. If the feather flutters, it's time to make a draught snake.



DRAUGHT SNAKE

Stuff You'll Need:

- an old pair of jeans
- dried kidney beans (approx 2 ½ bags per 'snake')
- large-holed plastic funnel or mixing bowl with lip

Instructions:

1. Measure the width of your doors and windows where you need to stop any draughts or air leakage. Cut the jeans into a rectangular strip of material that is as long as this window draft and around 10cm wide.
2. With right sides together, sew sides and ends in a 1cm seam. Make sure you leave at least 10cm opening in the centre of one of the sides. Turn the bean snake right side out.
3. Insert funnel into the 10cm opening. Start pouring in the dried beans. When the snake is full on both sides of the opening, remove funnel and simply stitch the opening closed.

Voila! No more cold air
coming in underneath the door.

4. Think Global, Eat Local

'Food miles' is a term that measures the distance from where food is produced to where it is consumed. Why does that matter? Well, the amount of fossil fuel that is burned in the transportation of meat, fruit and vegies can be a huge contributor to your personal carbon footprint. Some of the fruit in your local supermarkets has been flown from places as far away as Africa! That's a huge carbon footprint for one little mandarin!

BTW it is called food miles and not food kilometres because the term originated in England, where miles is still part of their measuring system.

How did this happen?

Before modern transportation systems, people would simply eat food they'd grown themselves or that had been grown within a small distance of their home. But as transportation progressed, people began to eat food from further and further away. The game changed again when refrigeration was invented and all of a sudden you could store produce for a longer period of time, allowing it to be transported from even *further* away. The possibility of transporting fresh food from somewhere as far as Sweden to Australia became a reality.

This has increased the amount of foods available to us, allowing us to try a variety of cuisine all year round. Researchers at the Centre for Education and Research in Environmental Strategies (CERES) calculated that the contents of a typical Melbourne shopping basket these days have travelled over 70,000 kilometres in total – almost two loops of the globe. Wowza! However, there's a catch. Like human travel, food travel has environmental consequences.

But you can still eat your greens. Try to get your family eating locally grown produce. If you can't grow it yourself, see if there's a farmers' market

near by. This cuts down on the cost of getting it from the farmer to the supplier to you. It'll taste fresher and it can be cheaper too. Just go onto this website and find your local farmer's market:

<http://www.farmersmarkets.org.au>

Grow Your Own

There's no greener solution than growing your own food. Not only do you cut out transportation carbon emissions, but you're actually reducing carbon by creating a natural carbon sink. Win, win.

Now, not everyone has a big backyard with a sprawling orchard, but you'll be surprised at how easy some vegetables are to grow in pots and smaller flowerbeds. Vegies like carrots, squash and onions are pretty easy to grow and require hardly any TLC at all. They can even be grown inside. Still not sure if you're able to grow your vegies at home? Check out if your council or school has a community garden. Community gardens are a place where people without backyards can grow flowers, fruit and vegies. Give your local council a call or send them an email, and if there isn't one, talk to your neighbours and see if you can start one. That could be a project you could get up and running with a group of people – something to create change in your community (see the ACTION HEROES chapter).

This website lists community gardens around Australia:

www.communitygarden.org.au/

Your Own Patch of Earth

A good place to start if you want to grow your own produce is a herb garden. All you need is a windowsill/courtyard or flowerbed and maybe just a bit of dirt underneath your fingernails.

Stuff you'll need:

- yoghurt tubs (or just plant straight into the ground if you can)
- herb seeds – try basil and parsley
- bag of soil (can be bought from a local supermarket).

Instructions:

1. Fill some old yoghurt tubs with soil
2. Sprinkle in some herb seeds (can also be purchased from the supermarket).
3. Now you can just sit back and watch them grow . . . and of course EAT them.

When they've grown, why don't you sprinkle some on your pasta. Bellissimo!

P.S. Don't forget to put some more old ice-cream tubs or other containers outside so they can catch any rainwater for you to water the plants with.

From little things, delicious things grow.

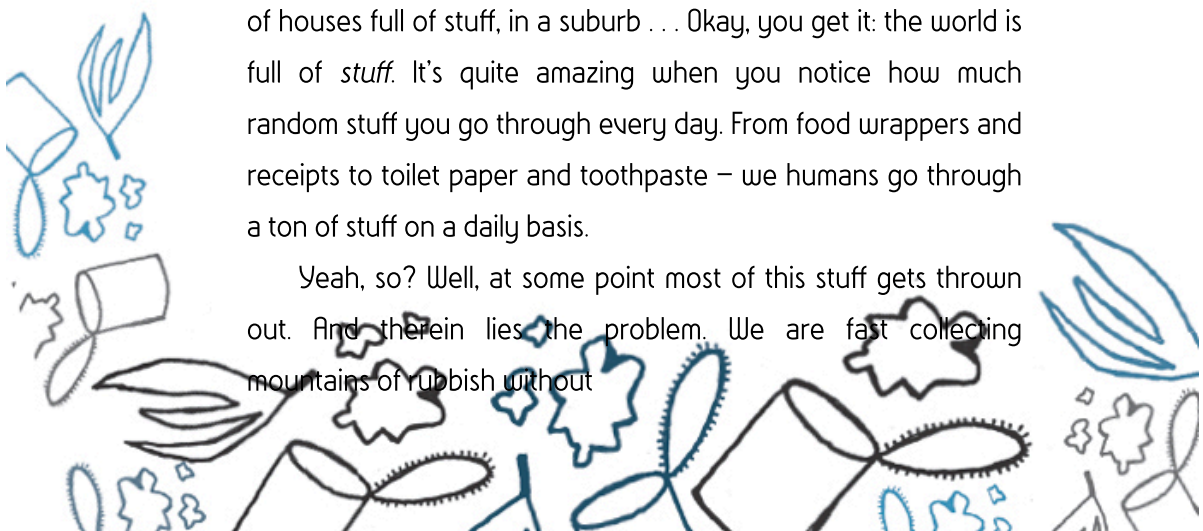


CHAPTER 18

WASTE NOT, WANT NOT!

My room is full of stuff, in a house full of stuff, in a street that is full of houses full of stuff, in a suburb . . . Okay, you get it: the world is full of *stuff*. It's quite amazing when you notice how much random stuff you go through every day. From food wrappers and receipts to toilet paper and toothpaste – we humans go through a ton of stuff on a daily basis.

Yeah, so? Well, at some point most of this stuff gets thrown out. And therein lies the problem. We are fast collecting mountains of rubbish without

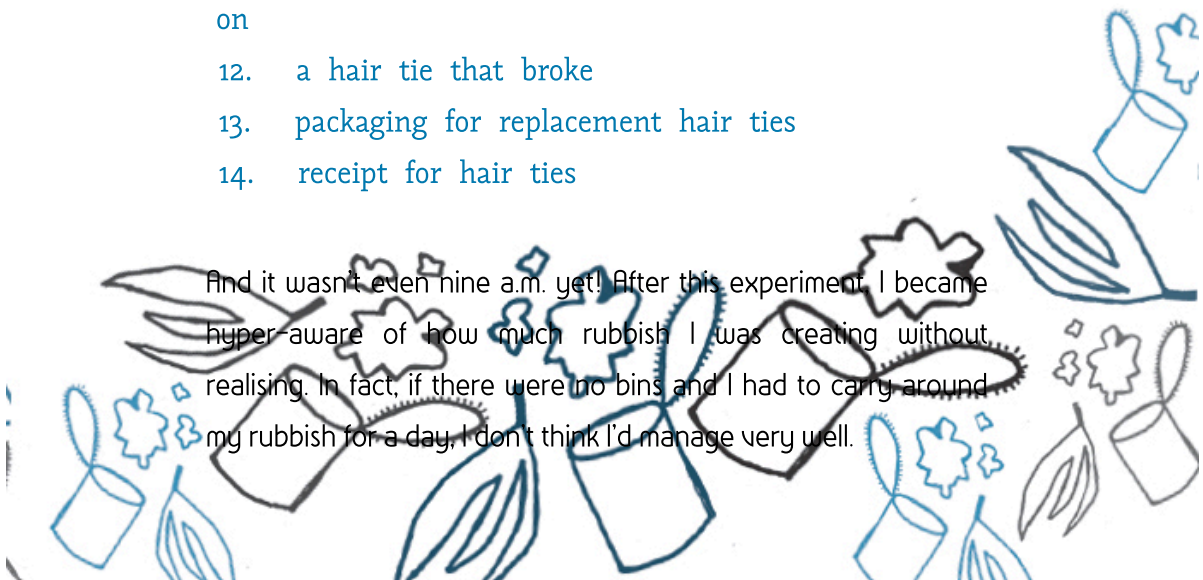


even realising. In fact, in Australia, each individual generates nearly 700 kg of waste every year.³⁴ Yikes!

This puts Australia just behind the USA as one of the most wasteful societies on our planet. So how does someone like you, or me, generate that much rubbish? Well, I started to write down all the waste I created in one morning. The results shocked me.

1. two tissues
2. tram ticket
3. paper bag (my bread roll was in)
4. the receipt that came with the bread roll
5. coffee cup
6. napkin that came with the coffee
7. banana peel
8. apple core
9. newspaper
10. another tissue (yikes!)
11. 2 pieces of paper that I had scribbled directions on
12. a hair tie that broke
13. packaging for replacement hair ties
14. receipt for hair ties

And it wasn't even nine a.m. yet! After this experiment, I became hyper-aware of how much rubbish I was creating without realising. In fact, if there were no bins and I had to carry around my rubbish for a day, I don't think I'd manage very well.





What did you collect today? See if you can make your own list.

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So now we know that we make a heap of rubbish just by living our daily lives, where does all this rubbish go when we throw it out?

Most of our waste goes into a general (not recyclable) rubbish bin. So it's most likely that rubbish is going on a truck trip to a landfill somewhere. A landfill (also known as a tip or a dump) is where we deposit our rubbish by burying it. Now, while we might not be able to see the rubbish anymore, that doesn't mean it's not there. It can take a really long time for the rubbish to break down and disappear into the Earth. While it's sitting there, the rubbish leaks liquid wastes and 'landfill gas'. Landfill gas contains methane, which we know is one of the nastiest greenhouse gases, and pollutes soil, air and water-ways. Gross. Some waste such as some plastic bags, polystyrene and certain metals can't even be broken down and just sits in the landfills as the rest of the rubbish around it slowly decomposes.



Even biodegradable stuff can take its sweet time before it's fully broken down.

- **newspaper:** 2-5 weeks
- **banana peel:** 3-5 weeks
- **orange peels:** 6 months
- **cotton rags:** 1-5 months
- **cigarette butts:** up to 12 years
- **plastic or cardboard milk carton:** 5 years
- **scrap metals:** up to 50 years to decay, depending on the metal
- **aluminium drink cans:** up to 80 years (!!!)

E-What?

The fastest-growing trend in rubbish?

e-waste. And no, that is not where your

emails go when you delete them. It's all of the

old mobile phones, TVs and computers that are thrown out in their millions every year. Responsible for about 70 per cent of the nasty toxic chemicals in the landfills (such as lead, cadmium and mercury), e-waste is not planet friendly. Ugh! Recycle your e-waste by contacting your local council.

Soooo . . . what can we do to stop collecting all of this rubbish?

The most effective way you can fight waste is to reduce what you use BEFORE you put it in the bin. This is called precycling.

When you made your list of rubbish, was there anything that you notice you use day after day? If so, is there a way that you can reuse it? I, for one, now carry a fancy hankie around, rather than constantly using and throwing



out tissue after tissue. I also bought a keep cup to cut down the waste I create when I feed my caffeine addiction. Considering I have a couple of takeaway coffees a day, I think I have probably saved a little rainforest by now. I also made the switch from disposable water bottles to an aluminum bottle that I refill. These are small changes, but added up over a year they save a LOT of waste.



Nude Food

A lot of schools are taking up the 'reduce, reuse, recycle' baton by introducing Nude Food days or weeks at school. Nude food is about cutting down the packaging and waste from your lunchbox. There is even a National Nude Food Day in October every year. Why not see if your school can get involved (if it isn't already). You could even make it fun and give awards to the class that creates the least amount of waste.

Why nude food? Well, food is one of the worst products when it comes to unnecessary packaging. Ever opened up a bag of chips only to find twelve more packages inside in their own bags? What a waste! Try buying in bulk instead, and fill up individual plastic ziplock bags yourself and then reuse them. It'll save waste and money! (Just in case your parents need convincing!)

A lot of girls I talked to spoke about participating in nude lunches and said that they didn't make real changes to their waste – they simply threw the wrappers in the bins at home and put the food in containers. Brainstorm some ideas in your class and see if you can truly make a nude lunch and if it isn't possible,

talk about why? There's no point going to an effort if it's not really cutting down waste!



Make a Personalised Fancy Hankie!

You will need:

1 large square of material 30cms x 30cms
embroidery thread
needle
pinking shears
material chalk

Instructions:

Trim the edges of your piece of material with some pinking shears (these have jagged edges and prevent the edges of your material from fraying).

Using the material chalk, write your name in fancy lettering in the centre of your square of material.



Threading your needle with the embroidery thread, sew your name into the material, following the chalk writing. A simple running stitch is good for this. If you are not very good at sewing, simply use a hobbytext pen or permanent marker

to write your name. Or you could even
draw a little picture!

Compost

About one-third of the household rubbish that makes its way to the landfill each week is made up of things that could rot away naturally in your garden and enrich the soil with all good things to grow more beautiful plants and yummy vegetables. Make the most of this good waste by composting!

How does it work? The composting process breaks down a rich mixture of ingredients to produce potent humus. Humus (not to be confused with the delicious hommus) is naturally decayed plant or animal matter that gives the soil and plants nutrients.

Clean Up Australia has heaps of tips on its website for turning that waste into healthy green compost.

<http://www.cleanup.org.au>

The basic steps are:

1. Choose a site. Start your compost heap or bin in a well-drained area that has some shade. Too much sun will dry out your compost.

2. Compost the right waste.

- Green ingredients: Compost needs a mixture of nitrogen rich organic materials such as fruit and vegetable peelings, and green garden vegetation such as fresh grass clippings and green leaves.
- Brown ingredients: dry leaves, woody twigs, paper and straw.
- Water
- Some soil or completed compost to introduce composting micro-organisms

3. Layer. Start with a thick layer of coarse material (about 15cm), such as twigs or mulch, which is used for drainage. Then follow with a layered system using the materials above: Garden clippings and kitchen scraps, dry leaves and paper (wet). Add water after each layer to keep the heap moist but not wet. Then repeat. Finish by sprinkling soil or finished compost on top of food scraps, which will make a richer compost and help reduce smells.

4. Maintain your compost. Keep your compost well aerated to prevent foul odours or methane. Turn your compost with a garden fork on a weekly basis. Otherwise, place garden stakes or pipes through the heap to allow air in.

Depending on the mix of ingredients, the duration for the compost to turn into a rich soil can be anything from six weeks to six months.

'My mum taught me that recycling is really good for the environment so we have a recycling bin and a compost bin at home. We also have chickens and they eat the compost.'

Mei, age 13

Tip transformation

CERES – Centre for Education and Research in Environmental Strategies – is an award-winning, not-for-profit, environment and education centre and urban farm in suburban Melbourne. But what a lot of people don't know is that CERES was actually built on an old municipal tip that was once a landfill and wasteland. What a sustainable make-over! If you're in Melbourne you should check it out IRL. If not, jump on their website.

<http://www.ceres.org.au/>





Compost **INs** and **OUTs** For every composting **INs**

- fruit and vegetable waste
- food waste (except meat products)
- paper
- twigs
- soil
- leaves
- garden waste

OUTs

- glossy magazines (recycle, darling, recycle)
- meat products (unless you want to attract rats and other rodents!)
- metals or other things that can't break down (D'uh)
- weeds or any plant with seeds - 'cos they'll grow, grow, grow!
- pet cat or dog droppings. They can contaminate the soil. And they're gross. Don't... Do it.

PRO TIP: Just 'cos you're green doesn't mean you have

to put up with smelly compost. If the pile begins to

reek,

try mixing in more brown materials such as dried leaves or garden soil. That should even out the smell a bit.



CHAPTER 19

RECYCLE, RECYCLE, RECYCLE

Nowadays people are about as savvy with what plastic you can recycle as they are with what time their favourite TV show is on. But it hasn't always been like that. The idea to recycle our rubbish started when I was young. The local council gave each house some small recycling bins and then explained what could go into them. I remember lots of people getting annoyed about how much time it would take to separate their rubbish – weird, huh? Now nobody complains about having to rinse the cans and take two bins out. Recycling is a perfect example of how quickly humans can adapt.

But despite how far we've come, recycling still has a long way till it's reached its planet-saving potential.

Batteries: Power the new source

Of every country in the whole world, Australia is the number one worst offender for not recycling batteries. How embarrassing. Why is this so? Well, Australia has one of the lowest amounts of rechargeable batteries, with 81 per cent of our batteries being single use. Oops. Worse still, of these single use batteries only 6 per cent are recycled!³⁵ This amounts to over 8,000 tonnes of batteries ending up in Australian landfills every year.³⁶ Batteries contain such nasty chemicals that they have to be contained in concrete before going into landfill, just to keep the toxins from leaking into the environment. Eeek!

While Australia doesn't have the facilities to recycle single-use batteries yet, there are organisations that are helping Australian batteries get to these recycling plants overseas. How can you help?

Why not create a battery recycling drive at school? Contact your local council and check the Internet for the best way for you to recycle batteries in your area. There might be a service to pick up recycled batteries, or you may need to take them to a drop-off spot. Do some sleuthing and see what the best option is for you.

Now you can set up a box in which students and teachers can drop their flat batteries. Make sure they are single-use batteries and not rechargeable. Then just have them picked up or drop them off and, ta da! Another earth-saving initiative done by you. Nice work.

How to avoid all the effort next time:

Convince your parents to buy rechargeable batteries. Rechargeable batteries are more expensive than single-use ones, but you will recover the cost in 1-1.5 years, and in that time a lot of batteries will be prevented from going into landfill.

182 GIRL!

PAPER TRAIL

It still surprises me how much paper is not recycled. Considering we have every opportunity to reuse it – with recycling bins at home, at schools and offices – it's pretty ridiculous that paper and cardboard still end up in landfills. In fact, offices are the worst in the game, with the Department of Ecology and Conservation in NSW estimating that only one out of ten pieces of paper used in offices goes into the recycling bin.³⁷

'I try to recycle, but sometimes I get confused with what can be recycled.'

Emma, age 12

The Paper Trail Contract

I do solemnly swear that I will follow the paper trail and do my best to prevent paper going unrecycled in my presence. I will origami, stencil, zine and papier-mâché my way to a paper-waste-free household.

But you don't need to throw it all to the recycling plant.

There are many cool things you can do with used paper at home.

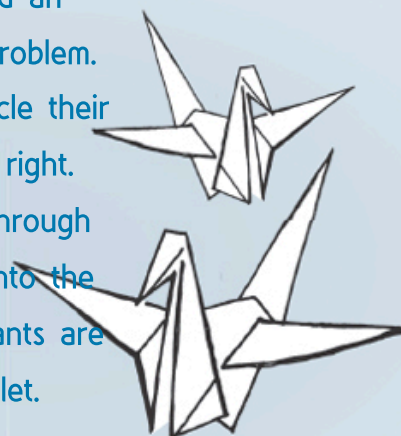
1. Make wrapping-paper and cards.
2. Make paper-crane mobiles. Not only is this activity fun, but the mobiles make cute gifts. It doesn't matter if there is writing on the

paper already. In fact, a bit of type on the paper can give a crane some personality.

3. Put it in the compost. (But not if it's glossy!)
4. Cut out the middleman and recycle your own paper at home!
With a bit of time and creativity you can make fancy invitations or something for your letter writing. All you need is some shredded paper, an old window screen and a blender. Google how to recycle your own paper and you can find heaps of videos showing you how.
5. Papier mâché isn't just for kids. Check out some amazing papier mâché projects from some of the world's best crafters on the paper'n'stitch website and get some inspiration! My favourites are the Tamashi birds that crafter Anat makes.

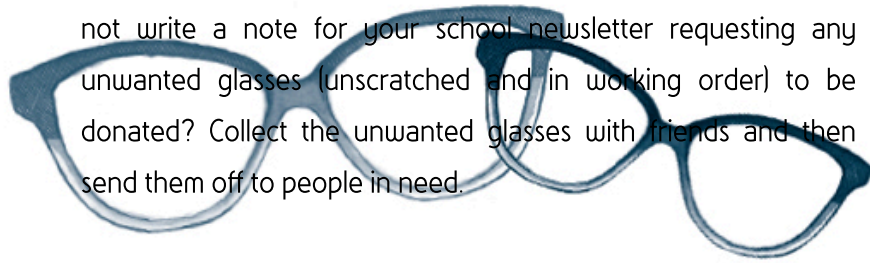
<http://www.papermstitch.com>

An elephant park in Thailand has found an inventive way to deal with their waste problem. The park in Ayutthaya has begun to recycle their elephants' dung into paper! Yep, that's right. Poo paper. The money that gets made through the sales of the paper then goes back into the park to help the elephants. So the elephants are paying their way by going to the toilet. not bad work if you can get it!³⁸



Gift of sight

Recycling isn't just good for the environment, it can also be good for human kind. Glasses are expensive. A pair can set you back hundreds of dollars. A person who needs glasses will go through a new pair of glasses every few years. Think about all the glasses that is over a lifetime! In Europe and the USA over 10 million pairs of glasses are discarded each year.³⁹ So what happens to the glasses that get left behind? Usually they are put in a cupboard and forgotten about. Recycle those old glasses and give someone who is needy the gift of sight! There are organisations out there such as Unite for Sight and Vision Aid Overseas that do this. Why not write a note for your school newsletter requesting any unwanted glasses (unscratched and in working order) to be donated? Collect the unwanted glasses with friends and then send them off to people in need.



Check out:

www.uniteforsight.org

www.vao.org.uk

Take back the tap

When bottled water was first released as a product, a lot of people were confused. People couldn't believe that companies were actually trying to get them to buy something that they could get for

free from the tap. But the marketing and advertising was so good that within a couple of years most people didn't think twice about paying for something they'd always got for free. And in the 1990s, sales of bottled water exploded. Now, people are more aware

of the negative effects this product has on the environment and are fighting back: taking back the tap!

Bottled water not only costs you heaps but it is also bad for your planet.

1. Plastic water bottles can take hundreds of years to decay (hundreds!!!) and just add more waste to our already full landfills!⁴⁰
2. Billions of barrels of oil are used in the making of these water bottles! Not to mention the carbon cost of transporting them to shops around the world. In fact, producing and delivering a litre of bottled water can emit hundreds of times more greenhouse gases than a litre of tap water.
3. Bottled water can cost up to 10,000 times more than tap water.⁴¹
4. Studies have shown that bottled water is not better for you than tap water. In fact, some studies say that the lack of fluoride in bottled water is actually bad for your teeth! Eeek!

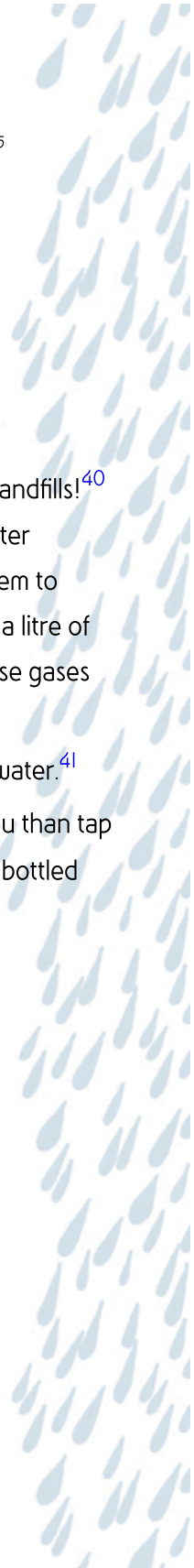
Some communities are even banning bottled water for environmental reasons.

In the small New South Wales town of Bundanoon the people actually voted to outlaw bottled water. This radical decision to become a bottled

-water-free town was made after a bottling company proposed to extract millions of litres of water from the local aquifer. The town said NO WAY and the ban was suggested.

How did they do it? Bundanoon's stores have removed bottled water from their shelves, instead selling cheap reusable water bottles. The council then made public drinking fountains and water dispensers available across the town where people could fill up the reusable water bottles. Good job, Bundanoon!

So take a leaf out of Bundanoon's book, and choose tap water over bottled water whenever possible. Get an aluminum bottle from



a camping store

or supermarket and fill it up before you leave the house. Save your money and the world!

Crafty Junk

Remember that room divider tip that was mentioned at the beginning of the book (if you have to share your room with pesky siblings)? Try this amazing room divider made from plastic bottles!

<http://www.apartmenttherapy.com/sf/green-ideas/plastic-bottle-decor-by-michelle-brand-049643>

Try dressing up an old piece of clothing with this!

Funky can necklace corsage!

You will need:

- a variety of soft-drink cans
- some sharp metal cutters (you can also use multi-purpose scissors, but they might not be as sharp. And please do NOT use scissors specifically for material)
- a biro
- a compass or other sharp metal pin
- brass fastener
- some necklace chain and a clasp
- brooch pin
- strong adhesive



Directions:

- Cut the ends from the can and then cut down the side so that the can lies as one flat piece. Next draw a stencil of a flower in three different sizes along the piece of metal and cut out your shapes. For the necklace, try a large butterfly motif.
- Place the flowers on top of each other, the smallest flower at the top, and place flat on the flat surface. Push the metal pin through the centre of the flowers, then push your brass fastener through and bend back the arms of the fastener behind the flowers.
- Place a dab of glue on to the back of the brass fastener and press the brooch pin down on the glue. Wait to dry and then wear it.
- For the necklace, push the metal spike through the top ends of your butterfly's wings, then attach a link through each hole. Attach some chain to the links (as long as you want your necklace to be) then attach the ends of your necklace fastener to the ends of the chain. And wear!
- TIP: To avoid cutting yourself on the ends of the metal, add a strip of sticky tape to the back of the flower or butterfly and then fold over the edge to the front of the motif.



CHAPTER 20

WATER FIGHT!

Years ago the World Bank predicted that future world wars will be over fresh water. Yup, fresh water. That old thing that you can get from your bathroom or kitchen tap whenever you want.

At the time I thought it was completely insane. Considering we're a planet full of water, right?

Now, years later, when I remember this statement, I can understand it. So what's changed? Well, we've all become a lot more aware of how rare fresh water is, for a start. While nearly 70 per cent of the planet is covered in water, only 3 per cent of it is drinkable. Plus, environmental factors have also put the squeeze on this resource. Over the last decade, Australia has suffered from one of the longest, most severe droughts in our history. In my home state of Victoria, water restrictions have been big business over the past decade. During the worst of the drought, television commercials during prime-time slots explained water-saving tips, and our diminishing dam levels were played on billboards as if they were the new must-have jeans.

'No more sprinklers and water fights!'

Ruby, age 13

Some of you might be lucky enough not to have had to obey strict water restrictions in your state or territory. But even so, it's really only a matter of time.

Why?

Australia's population is increasing and more people = more water usage. Not only for personal usage like showers and food preparation – but a lot of things that you might not expect use water in production. From your T-shirt to your DVD player, water plays a large role in a number of industries. As our population increases, our consumption increases. We're becoming a more water-thirsty nation, and our usage is outstripping our ability to retain it.

Water Saver Quiz:

Water saving is kind of an Olympic sport in Australia. People have embraced it, especially in the southern states, and there are heaps and heaps of websites and organisations that can help you in your own water-saving race.

Most of you will have been bombarded with water-saving information at school . . . so let's see how closely you were listening!!

1. A dripping tap can waste how many litres a month?
 - a) 500 litres
 - b) 1000 litres
 - c) 2000 litres
2. The bathroom and toilet account for . . .% of the average household water usage in Australia?
 - a) 80%
 - b) 15%
 - c) 40%
3. The best time to water the garden is:
 - a) in the evening
 - b) in the morning
 - c) all of the above
4. If it takes 500 litres of water to produce a kilo of potatoes, how many litres of water does it take to produce a kilo of beef?
 - a) 1,000 litres
 - b) 10,000 litres
 - c) 100,000 litres

5. A dual flush toilet system uses what percentage of water a single flush toilet does?

a) 35%

- b) 50%
 - c) 85%
6. The majority of the Earth's fresh water is . . .
- a) in the ocean
 - b) in lakes and rivers
 - c) underground

Results:

- 1. A)1, B)2, C)3
- 2. A)1, B)2, C)3
- 3. A)2, B)2, C)3
- 4. A)1, B)2, C)3
- 5. A)2, B)3, C)1
- 6. A)1, B)2, C)3

7 • 10: Back to Basics.

Okay, so maybe you should have been listening a bit harder in class when you were learning about water. Someone was a little bit too interested in a certain boy in the front row? Only joking. Don't worry, it's no hard to improve your score. Read on and you'll be top of the class in no time.

11 • 20: Pretty Good, but Room for Improvement.

You're pretty much a water whiz. There are a couple of things that you can improve on. See if you can cut down your water usage even more and you'll be a water warrior in no time.

21 · 28: Top of the Class!

Okay girl, you've got this one in the bag. We salute you!

My Top 5 Favourite Water-Saving Tips

1. Keep a bucket in the shower with you. When it gets full, empty it on the garden. Easy, cute and clean.
2. Wait until the dishwasher is full before putting it on.
3. Turn off the water during a shower if you are waiting for your conditioner to set. You can clean your teeth while you wait, or sing your favourite song without the pesky water drowning your diva out.
4. Keep a bottle of water in the fridge so on a hot day you don't have to wait for the water to run cool from the tap.
5. Don't wash your hair every day. Washing your hair every couple of days is healthier for your hair and your water consumption. If your hair gets oily, use a dry shampoo spray or good old talcum powder between washes!

Don't have a dual flush toilet? Don't worry, you can make one yourself. Just fill up a 2 litre soft drink bottle with water and put it in the cistern tank. This will immediately reduce the amount of water flushed!

'We use water-saving showerheads.'

.....Veronica, age 12.....

.....
.....
.....
What's your tip?
.....
.....
.....



Recycling Water

Due to this growing global demand, scientists have developed ways for water to be recycled. This is when water is treated or cleaned and then reused. By using recycled water for things like flushing the toilet or watering the lawns, the dwindling supplies of drinking water can be saved for actual drinking and food preparation. Makes sense, doesn't it?

Cities in Europe and America already use recycled water. In fact, London has had recycled water for over a hundred years!

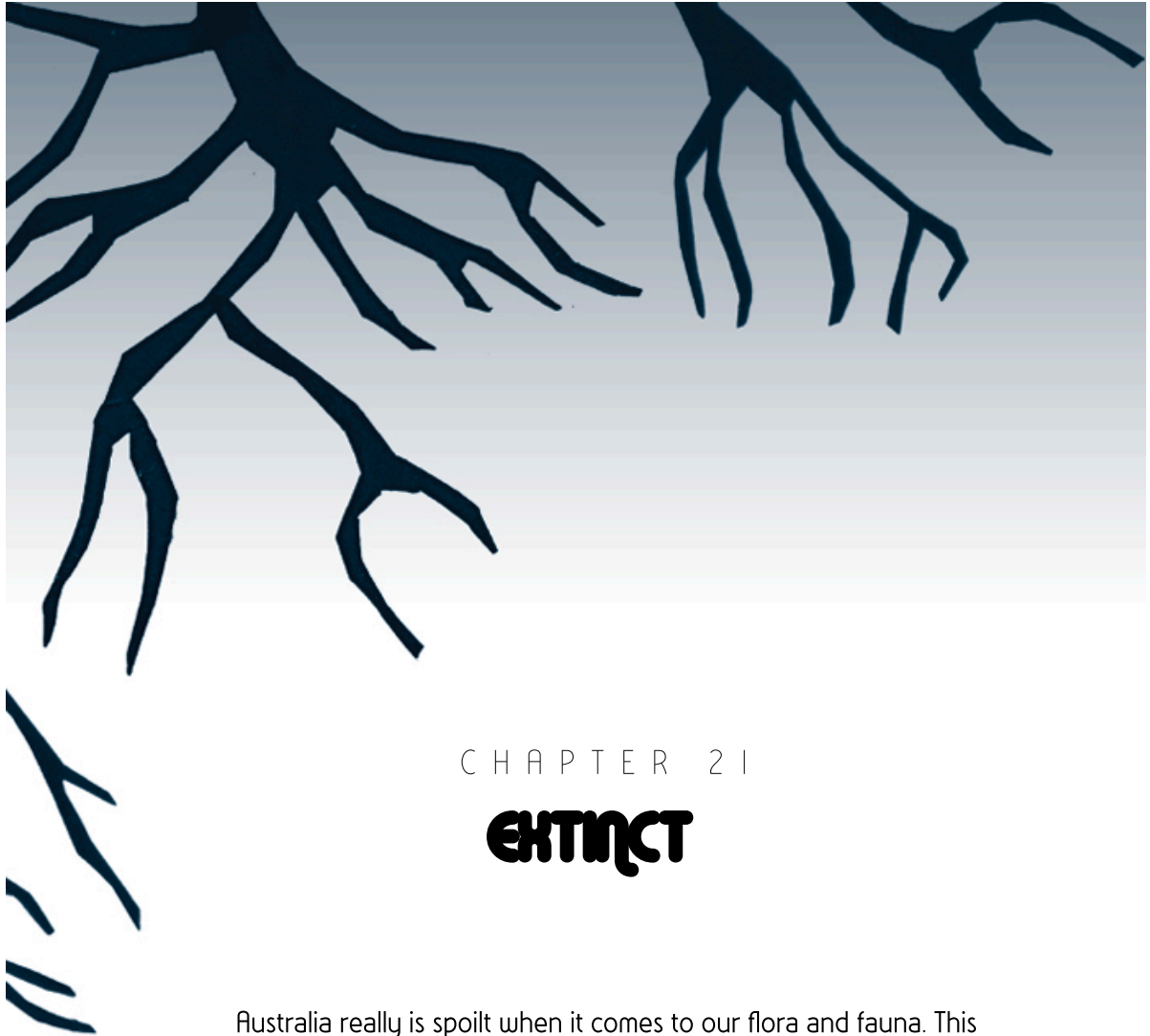
Water World

Around one billion people in the world have little or no access to drinking water. And that number is increasing. Many people in developing countries are forced to drink contaminated water. And dirty water kills more people a year than war does. 1.8 million people die every year from diarrhoeal diseases.⁴² So what can we do about this?

Charity Water is a group that aims to stop these senseless deaths by providing things like water pumps and wells to developing countries. Dedicated to making a difference, the charity challenges people not to get overwhelmed by the amount of people who need their help, and aim to help just one. If everyone followed this advice we would be well on the way to prevent deaths due to dirty water.

The website has a schools initiative called Water For Schools, which is a student-run campaign. Check it out.

<http://www.charitywater.org/getinvolved/>

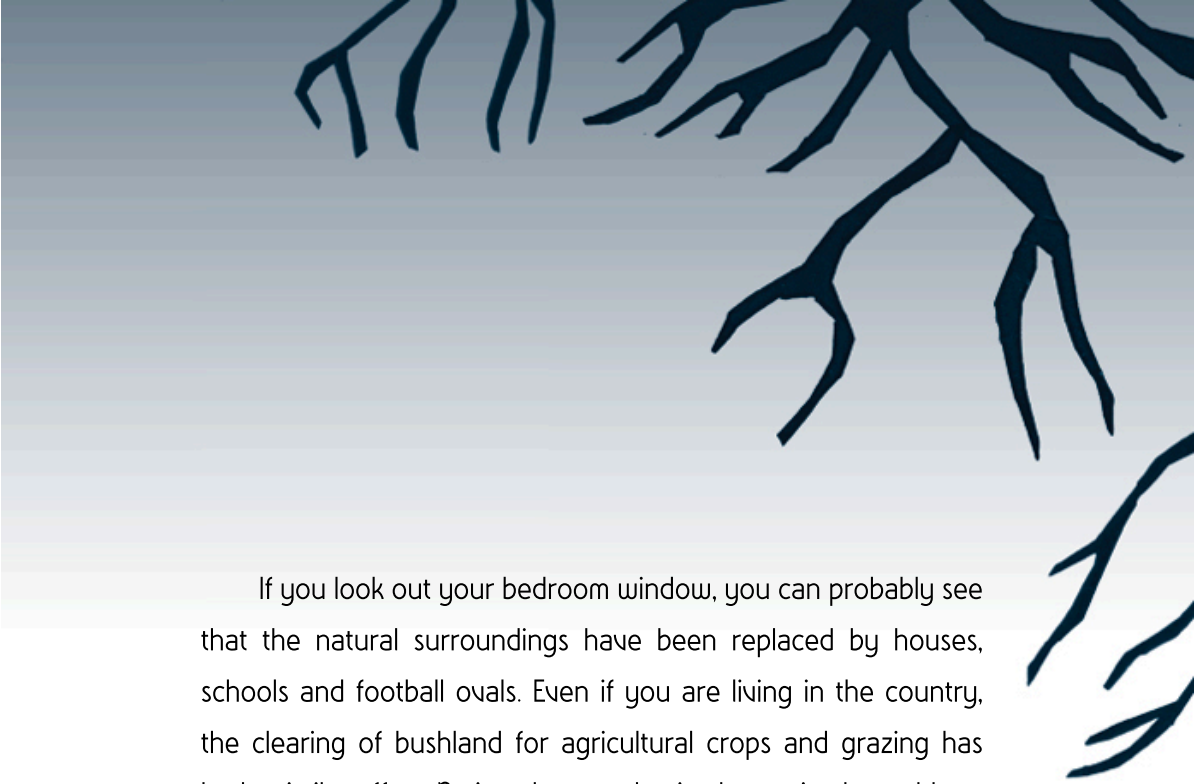


CHAPTER 21

EXTINCT

Australia really is spoilt when it comes to our flora and fauna. This big ol' country supports around seven to ten per cent of the world's species. And a lot of these species aren't found anywhere else. We are indeed the lucky country. However, this could all change.

For me, the word 'extinction' just brings up images of dinosaurs, and of course, the dodo. But in fact, extinction is a very real threat for many species today. Extinction means a species no longer exists. The Australian government has predicted that as many as 240 species of native animals and over 1160 species of native plants could become completely extinct in the near future.⁴³ Uh oh. So why is this?



If you look out your bedroom window, you can probably see that the natural surroundings have been replaced by houses, schools and football ovals. Even if you are living in the country, the clearing of bushland for agricultural crops and grazing has had a similar effect. Native plants and animals are simply unable to live in these urban environments.

And your pet puppy has also caused an eco-system shake up for our backyards. Across the planet, indigenous species are struggling to survive against introduced crops and domestic animals. Feral cats and other predators are great hunters and many native animals find it difficult to compete.

Outside of your backyard, large-scale land clearing due to mining and logging plays a big part in land clearing in Australia. According to the CSIRO more than 550,000 hectares of native Australian vegetation is cleared every year. That is the equivalent of about ten average suburban house blocks per minute, every minute of the year. Yikes! Unsurprisingly, the ecological loss from this land clearing is massive. It is estimated that in Australia around two million mammals, 8.5 million birds and 89 million reptiles die every year, as a direct result of land clearing!⁴⁴ Woah!

So what are we supposed to do? All move into tree houses and get rid of our cats? It's hardly ideal. Luckily no one is asking us to do that (I couldn't live in a world without cats anywho!). Humans don't have to be the problem, they can be part of the solution.

196 GIRL!



Canary in the coal mine

Many species of Australian birds are facing uncertain futures. Yep, that's right, your cat's favourite snack is facing a lot of challenges. As the human population spreads, the resulting habitat loss and degradation have had a major impact on bird populations. The recent Australian drought caused extra stress, and climate change is no help either.

According to the International Union for Conservation of Nature, a vulnerable species is one that faces a 20 per cent decline in population numbers over ten years, or three generations, whichever is longer. Australia has listed 83 native birds as vulnerable!

An endangered species is one that faces a population reduction of 50 per cent over that same period of time. We have 41 endangered species.

And *critically* endangered species are those that face an 80 per cent chance of become extinct within ten years or three generations, whichever is longer.

The trees are felled

Most Australian parrots, cockatoos, lorikeets, owls, kookaburras and kingfishers nest in the hollows of dead or living trees. Up to 17 per cent of birds in south-eastern Australia rely on these tree

hollows and cavities for nesting, and many return to the same nesting site each breeding season.

These trees are around 100 years old and the hollows and cavities have been caused by termites or fungi; by lightning, rain or wind, or by fire damage. When branches break off and fall to the forest floor, or rot suspended in the foliage, they provide excellent nesting sites. Eucalypts, particularly the red river gum, mountain gum, mountain grey gum and yellow box, all have hollows. Eucalypts also tend to shed their lower branches, leaving an exposed area in which birds can create their own hollows.

One of the major threats to many native birds is the reduction in these types of habitat, which leaves them without nesting sites. Old-growth forests cannot be easily replaced. Land clearance for agricultural purposes has left the Superb Parrot vulnerable in New South Wales and a number of other parrots, including the Red-tailed Black Cockatoo and the Swift Parrot, are now endangered.

Woodlands are also being cleared and harvested for firewood, and the removal of dead wood and woody debris involved in fireproofing semi-rural properties also has its impact.

“Canary in the coal mine” which comes from a time when miners knew that if their caged canaries toppled over it meant imminent asphyxiation for them — is not just an empty phrase: where birds are dying now (through poisons, habitat destruction and famine), people will die later. The die-off of seabirds, for instance, signals a die-off in sea life, including fish. It doesn't take a very smart augur to read that omen.’



Oh! rangutan

How much palm oil have you had today? Not sure?

You may not have heard of palm oil but you've definitely eaten it. Palm oil is in an estimated 40 per cent of food on our supermarket shelves in Australia.⁴⁵ It's in all types of products from chocolate biscuits, chips, crackers, to soap and even make-up. Palm oil comes from the fruit of the palm oil tree and only grows in tropical environments. In fact, 85 per cent of the world's palm oil is produced in Australia's backyard, coming from Malaysia and Indonesia.⁴⁶

And this industry is having a devastating effect on the ecology of these countries. Indonesia is facing the highest rate of tropical rainforest loss in the world due to its booming palm oil industry. In South-East Asia alone, the equivalent of 300 football fields are deforested every hour for palm oil production.⁴⁷ I don't have to tell you that this is not great news for the environment. By clearing the rainforests, not only are you losing a vital sink for carbon, but the actual clearing and burning accounts for up to 25 per cent of the greenhouse gases produced by humans.⁴⁸ Rainforests are rich in species. In fact, worldwiderainforestsarehometonearlytwothirdsof all living species on the planet. Ah, that's only an approximate 60 millionspecies.⁴⁹ No. Big. Deal.

In the areas being cleared for palm oil there are some very special creatures that are suffering. Sumatra is home to Sumatran rhinos, clouded leopards, Sumatran tigers, Asian tapirs, Sumatran elephants and thousands of other species. However, it is humans' closest animal relative – the orangutan – that has scientists and animal lovers particularly concerned. Palm oil typically costs the lives of up to fifty orangutans each week.⁵⁰ The destruction of the rainforest habitat of Sumatran and Bornean orangutans is pushing those endangered species even closer to extinction. If

something isn't done soon to stop the spread of palm oil plantations into the forests where the orangutans live, they will be extinct in twenty years.

So what can we **do** about it?

Avoid eating anything with palm oil in it. Not so easy. It is often listed in ingredients simply as: vegetable oil.⁵¹ Sneaky!

‘I joined a website to stop Palm Oil use.
Their slogan was “Don’t Palm us off”.’

Marla, age 12

The zoo suggests you look out for the following ingredients
in your products in order to avoid the sneaky palm oil:

- Sodium dodecyl sulfate
- (SDS or NaDS)
- Palmate
- Palm oil kernal
- Palmitate

PALM OIL IN COSMETICS

- Elaeis guineensis
- Glyceryl stearate
- Stearic acid

CHEMICALS CONTAINING PALM OIL

- Steareth -2
- Steareth -20
- Sodium lauryl sulfate
- Sodium lauryl sulfoacetate
- (coconut and/or palm)
- Hydrated palm glycerides
- Sodium isostearoyllactylate

- (from vegetable stearic acid)
- Cetylpalmitate & octylpalmitate

Fishy Business

Now to a problem of sustainability in our own backyard, or rather in our own back waters. Australia is, as you should know from having to sing the national anthem at school assembly, 'girt by sea'. That means we're literally surrounded by marine life. We not only have *more* fish, but we have more *varieties* of fish than most countries across the world.⁵² Score! But due to overfishing, some species are unable to reproduce quickly enough to survive. In 2006, a global study done by ecologists and economists warned that the world will run out of seafood in 2048 if commercial fishing continues at current rates.⁵³ Yikes!

Despite the fact that our oceans cover almost 70 per cent of the planet's surface, we still have much to learn about our deep blue sea. The oceans are home to around 97 per cent of life on Earth.

You might be scared of sharks, but they should definitely be scared of humans. The rise in the popularity of eating shark (or, as it is sometimes called, flake) over the past few decades, has caused the fishing of some species to exceed their ability to sustainably exist. Slow growing and late maturing, sharks produce few babies and so are unable to replenish their numbers very quickly. It is estimated that twenty-six to seventy-three million sharks are killed every day. M.I.L.L.I.O.N. Without sharks, aquatic ecosystems would be in big trouble. Sharks are an important predator of the sea and there is fear that without them, the eco system could suffer long-term damage.⁵⁴ So next time you get fish and chips, why not hold off on the flake and get a fish that is sustainable, such as barramundi or calamari?

Thankfully, Australia is leading the way with conservation of our waters, accounting for over half the protected marine areas in the world today.⁵⁵ That is something to be proud of. Organisations such as the Marine Stewardship Council (MSC) are making real change in helping create sustainable fishing practices. MSC is the world's leading certification and eco labelling program for sustainable seafood. Look out for the MSC tick of approval on your seafood products.

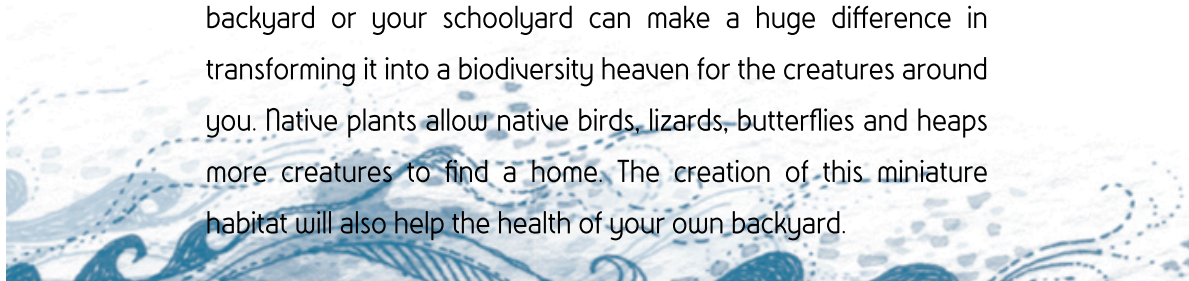
To make it easier to know which fish to eat, a sustainable fishing guide has been produced by the Australian Marine Conservation Authority (AMCA). You can find it here:

www.amcs.org.au

Not In Your Backyard

We all know that having a healthy supply of all different species of plants and animals is important for a healthy and happy planet. It's how we can ensure our native animals are protected; how we can safeguard against pests and disease and provide sources of new medicines and other plant-derived compounds.

But you don't have to chain yourself to a tree in a forest somewhere to promote biodiversity (which is all the different animal and plant species). Planting some local species in your own backyard or your schoolyard can make a huge difference in transforming it into a biodiversity heaven for the creatures around you. Native plants allow native birds, lizards, butterflies and heaps more creatures to find a home. The creation of this miniature habitat will also help the health of your own backyard.



In the past couple of years, native plants have made a revival in the backyards of Australia. Not only do they encourage soil health, combat salinity and support native animals, local plant communities are drought resistant and don't need much water to survive.

Considering most of us are trying to save water,
that's a huge tick in their box.

And one of the best things about planting local plants is that they are more likely to thrive than other plants. Which is a good thing if you're a klutz in the garden like me.

July 31st is National Tree Day in Australia, run by Planet Ark. Over one million native trees and shrubs were planted in 2010. Wowza!

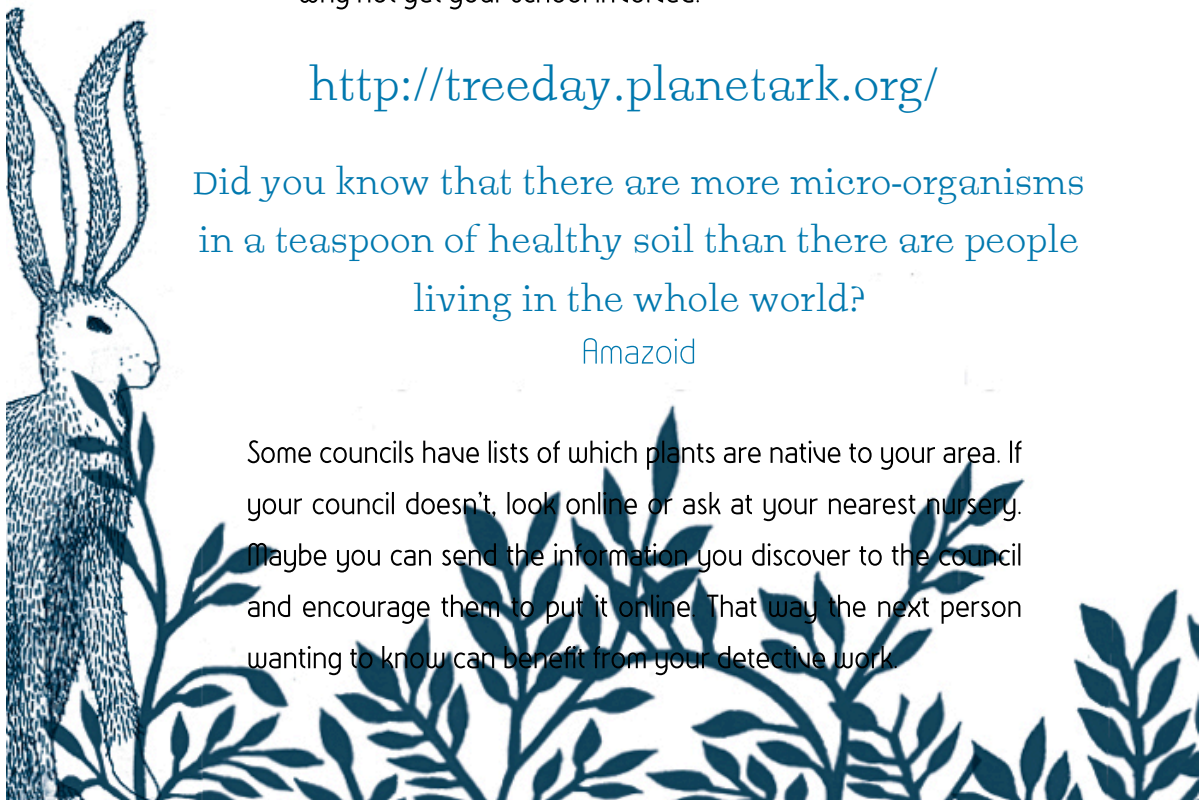
Why not get your school involved:

<http://treeday.planetark.org/>

Did you know that there are more micro-organisms
in a teaspoon of healthy soil than there are people
living in the whole world?

Amazoid

Some councils have lists of which plants are native to your area. If your council doesn't, look online or ask at your nearest nursery. Maybe you can send the information you discover to the council and encourage them to put it online. That way the next person wanting to know can benefit from your detective work.



Tips

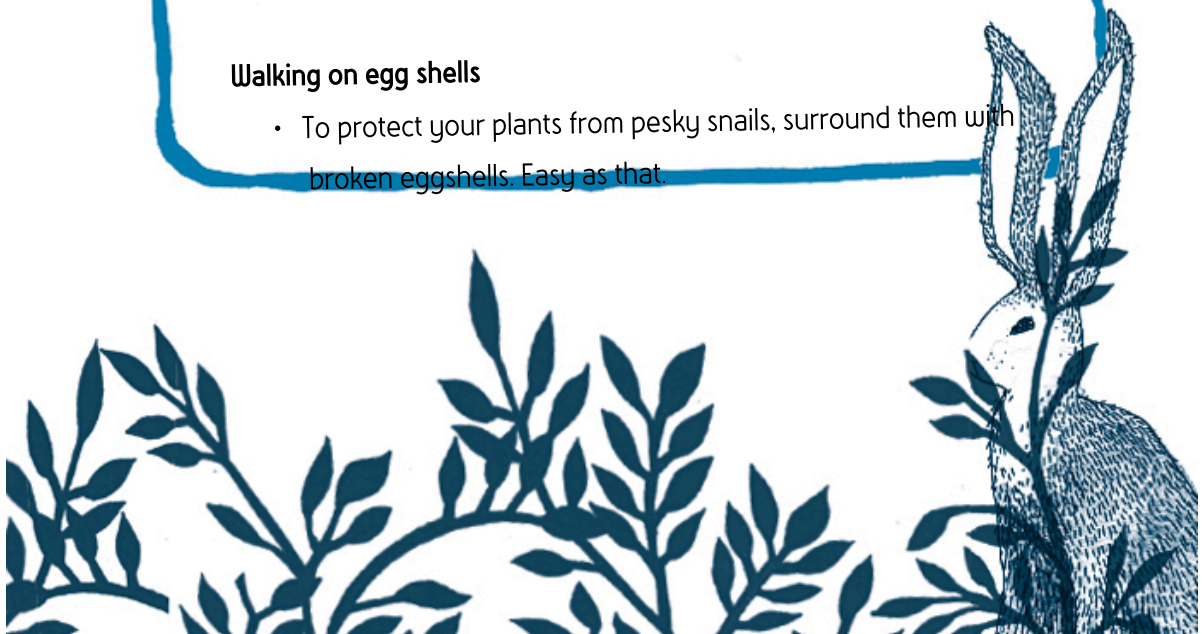
- Be a responsible pet owner! If you have a dog or cat, make sure they are inside or secure at night and not able to hunt down the creatures that will start to call your backyard home.
- Try to avoid pesticides. These can kill off the diverse range of species you are trying to cultivate. But, how do I keep the bugs off my lettuce?!!!
Try these natural alternatives:

Garlic water

- Crush three or four cloves of garlic and infuse them in half a litre of hot water until it is cool and suitably smelly. It is most effective against soft-bodied insects such as aphids or bean fly. It can even be used on vegetables in the harvest season, though they may taste a bit garlicky.

Walking on egg shells

- To protect your plants from pesky snails, surround them with broken eggshells. Easy as that.





CHAPTER 22

GREEN CLEAN

Every day we slather chemicals on our face, scrub them into our toilets and spray them onto our bodies. But what if the products that we use to clean ourselves and our home are actually creating a mess of our planet and our bodies?

For a group of people that are pretty concerned with what we put in our mouths, we Australians don't seem to pay much attention to what we put on our skin. Ask most people what moisturiser they are squirting into their hands and they'll look at you blankly. Well, you're not eating it, so it doesn't matter, right? Wrong.

Your skin actually absorbs up to 60 per cent of the chemicals in products that come into contact with it.⁵⁶ Those chemicals are then sent directly into your bloodstream. No one is sure of the long-term effect of all these chemicals on us yet. Eeek.

All right, all right, now before you start throwing out everything in your bathroom, relax. It is unlikely that your shampoo is poisoning you. But it is better for the environment, and potentially your health, to limit your exposure to these chemicals in your daily life. Luckily, there are heaps of green products out there that you can use instead. But what better way to know what is in the bottle than make it yourself?!

Try these natural beauty products fit for a pamper princess:

Egg White Face Mask

It's as easy as 1, 2, 3...

Ingredients:

2 eggs

Lemon juice

1. Crack the eggs and separate the yolks. (You can then make a hydrating hair conditioner with the left-over egg yolks! Pg 209)
2. Add a squeeze of lemon juice and stir in with the egg whites to combine.
3. Apply the mixture to a clean face and neck area, and relax. After about ten minutes it should have hardened. Once it has, rinse well with warm water and pat dry.

Oatmeal Exfoliating Scrub

Ingredients:

2 heaped tspns fine oatmeal

1 tspn baking soda

1. Mix oatmeal and baking soda, add enough water to make a thick paste.
2. Rub over face, making sure to massage it into oily areas.
3. Rinse with warm water and pat dry.

Did you know that a lot of popular-brand cosmetics products contain mineral oil and petrolatum, which are both from non-renewable sources? Now that is NOT cute.

About Face

Carla Oates, AKA The Beauty Chef, knows about this chemical warfare first hand. As a beauty editor at a magazine, she was sent so many free and trial lotions and potions that she had to keep them in a room that became known as 'mummy's product room'. She says, 'Most of our favourite cosmetics are made with chemical solvents and synthetic additives – questionable substances that are directly absorbed into the body through the skin and over time may compromise our wellbeing'.⁵⁷ Carla decided she needed to stop this chemical invasion and began experimenting with her own skin-care recipes. The results were glowing, and she began to package up her natural skin-care lotions and distribute them to friends. She was finally convinced to write down her recipes, and has published them in a book: *Feeding Your Skin*. The lotions

contain mostly products you can find in your pantry. Check out
Carla's website www.thebeautychef.com

Honey cream cleanser

This cleanser can be used on all skin types and with ingredients that don't have numbers in them, or give your tongue a panic attack trying to pronounce.

1 tspn honey – warmed enough to make it runny. (You can stand the jar in hot water to warm it up.)

1 tspn natural yoghurt

1. In a small bowl, combine the honey and yoghurt thoroughly.
2. Apply to damp skin with hands.
3. Rinse thoroughly with a damp, warm cloth three times and pat dry with a soft towel.

TEST YOUR PRODUCTS ON ANIMALS ...

FRIENDS MAKE GOOD GUINEA PIGS!

Luckily, you don't have to make all your products yourself. There are a lot of toxin-free, green products in supermarkets and chemists. Ava Anderson was only fourteen years old when she decided to launch her own line of toxin-free beauty products in 2008. Fitting in the development of her product around work and after-school activities, Ava is one busy beauty queen! Check out her website here:

<http://www.zerotoxinsnow.com/>

Give Your Hair a Fair Go

Teenage girls are renowned for abusing their hair with chemicals. From bleaches and rinses to hairspray and gel, girls' hair has so many chemicals put through it that it's often a wonder it doesn't fall out in protest. Try these natural alternatives from: www.mybeautyrecipes.com and give your hair a chemical break, just this once.

Shampoo

Ingredients:

2 tbspn olive oil

1 egg

1 tbspn lemon juice

1 tspn apple cider vinegar

1. Combine all ingredients in a blender or mix with a fork until combined.
2. Use like regular shampoo. Since it's made with products that could go bad, don't save any leftovers for later use.

Being green doesn't always mean that you have to miss out on the fun pamper times. And being pampered doesn't always have to be at the expense of the planet (or your health). Looking after

your body, skin and hair is a great way to relax and unwind after a long day of kicking arse. Plus, it's a fun thing to do with friends that doesn't break the bank.

Conditioner

Ingredients:

1 egg yolk (you could use the left-over face mask yolk!)

$\frac{1}{2}$ tspn olive oil

$\frac{3}{4}$ cup lukewarm water

1. Beat the egg yolk until it's thick and white. Add the oil and mix well.
2. Add the water into the egg mixture and mix well.
3. Massage into hair that is clean and wet. Let it rest for ten minutes before rinsing it out.







CHAPTER 23

NOW WHAT?

Sooo...Now what? Now it's time for you to pass on something back to all the other girls out there. And no, I don't mean your nasty cold. Whether it's a story about someone amazing, a kickarse sewing pattern or a water-saving master plan, be a gossip girl and tell your friends, your family and your neighbour's cat. Saving the world and your wardrobe is a lot more fun when you do it with friends (and cats!).

In this book I've talked about how individuals can change lives, the world, governments and how you feel at recess. So here is a collection of my favourite inspiring females who sometimes slip through the cracks of history books. It is my Hall of Fame.

When you're feeling a bit rough around the edges or just want a quick kickarse lady pick me up – it's good to remember those people out there that make you feel like you can slam-dunk life, just like them. From bloggers, rockstars, suffragettes to hip hop producers. So . . . Do you know an amazing female who you think deserves to be in the Hall of Fame? A singer, hockey player, computer programmer, your cousin or best friend? Here's your chance to begin your own Hall of Fame. Don't be shy, jump right in.

Oh, and P.S. check out my website:

www.girltheultimateguide.com

I'll be trying to keep it fresh and new not like the coleslaw in the back of my fridge. I can't promise I'll update it all the time, but I can promise I'll wipe my hard drive at least once while trying to upload something. (Hint. Always make promises you can keep!)



HALL OF FAME

★*Freedom Rider*★

'Who the hell is **Diane Nash**?' That was the question the US Attorney General Robert F. Kennedy yelled down the phone to his assistant in 1961. Diane is a civil rights crusader, mum and educator. Born in 1938 in Chicago, Diane grew up interested in religion and participating in beauty pageants. She was even the runner-up in Miss Illinois! Noice! However, it was her role in the Freedom Rides in 1961 that made the President and Attorney General of the USA sit up and take notice of this young student.

The Freedom Ride was a test of new laws that prevented segregation: this is a separation of races in all parts of public life. It would also prove to be a test of the American people. A group of student volunteers rode buses through a number of Southern states to test whether both white and black students would be allowed to use the bus terminals – as had been legally decreed the year earlier. Unfortunately, the riders were attacked by mobs who disagreed with desegregation and in some cases imprisoned by local police. One of the buses was even set on fire with the protesters and other passengers stuck inside! Luckily, no one died in these attacks. However, the protesters were in bad spirits and thought about quitting.

But the fiery beauty queen from Chicago wasn't going to let fear get in the way of justice. 'It was clear to me that if we allowed the Freedom Ride to stop at that point, just after so much violence had been inflicted, the message would have been sent that all you have to do to stop a nonviolent campaign is inflict

massive violence,' says Diane. Under Diane's leadership, the protest continued, gaining nation-wide coverage. It is seen

as the influence for further civil rights battles in the coming decade. Over 1000 volunteers of all races and religions took part in the protest. Most historians note that without Diane, the protest would not have gone on to be one of the most significant moments in the civil rights movement.

Eco-warrior

WAY before anyone knew about global warming, people were fighting for the survival of our planet. **Rachel Carson** was born in Pennsylvania, USA, in 1907. As a child she loved to read and write, and her first story was published in a children's literary magazine when she was ten. She also loved plants and animals and she became a scientist and nature writer for the US government. In 1962, her book *Silent Spring* was published. She was the first person to write about the environmental damage caused by pesticides and herbicides. Many powerful people in the chemical industries tried to discredit Rachel. She was called 'a bird and bunny lover', and a 'hysterical female'. Her book caused a huge stir across the world. As a result of *Silent Spring*, people began to discuss the effects of pesticides and a number of particularly dangerous pesticides were banned. By observing her world and writing about it, Rachel Carson prompted a grass-roots movement that we now know as environmentalism.

Hip-Hop Royalty

If you watched video clips you could be forgiven for thinking that the only place for girls in hip-hop would be dancing in the background in a skimpy bikini. But women have actually been a huge part of hip-hop since the genre began. Singer/musician/CEO/producer and all round superstar **Sylvia Robinson** cofounded the record label Sugar Hill Records with her husband in 1979. She began encouraging young rap artists she

saw out at clubs to record their music. It was through this support for rap artists that Sylvia was able to record some of the earliest rap albums. She is often heralded as the

mastermind behind the world's first commercially successful rap song: Sugar Hill Gang's single 'Rapper's Delight'. Sylvia encouraged her label's rappers to have socially conscious (political) lyrics. Grandmaster Flash & the Furious Five's most successful single, 'The Message', is accredited to Sylvia's vision and guiding force. Sylvia made such an impact on the genre some people call her the mother of modern hip-hop. While she passed away in 2011, she was still making hits way into her late sixties. In fact, one of the last songs she helped write was Jay Z and Alicia Keys' hit, 'Empire State of Mind'.

Women rights crusader

Uida (which rhymes with Ida) Goldstein wrote an autobiography when she was ten years old, which concluded: 'Now please follow my example and begin when you are young to give an account of yourself, so that when you are older and wiser you will be able to write longer and better autobiographies.' Uida wanted to be special, and she was. She looked with clear eyes at the world around her and campaigned for women's rights worldwide. When Uida was born in 1869, women were not allowed to vote, education was for the wealthy and there were no social services to help the poor. She believed political power in women's hands would lead to a more compassionate, fairer world. These days the United Nations agrees. In 1903 Uida was the first Australian woman to stand for federal parliament. She failed in her bid for the Senate but won a creditable 51,497 votes. She also edited her own magazines – these days she'd have been a blogger.

Priot Lrrl. Rockstar.

Born in 1968 in Portland, USA, **Kathleen Hanna** is a musician, writer and photographer. Kathleen, who was nineteen when she formed her band, Bikini Kill, was a major player in the creation of Riot Grrrl. Riot Grrrl (pronounced girl with a growl in the middle) was a music movement from the nineties that started

because girls in the music scene were sick of being treated differently to boys. Kathleen and her friends began to meet to discuss sexism within the music scene and a range of other issues they felt passionately about. These meetings turned into parties and they began putting on their own gigs, making their own zines and even putting out their own records. The excitement and inspiration for this community of rock girls spread around the world. Girls were encouraged to speak out, join bands and express themselves without fear of being made fun of by boys. Many bands today such as The Gossip credit the Riot Grrrl movement, and Kathleen in particular, as being a huge influence to their existence.

Mum to many. friend of all

Mum Shirl tricked authorities into allowing her to help people in need.

Colleen Shirley Smith was born in 1921 in Cowra, NSW of Wiradjuri descent as one of fourteen children. She had a tough start to life. She suffered from epilepsy and was not able to go to school but she didn't let this hold her back. Despite being unable to read or write, Shirl spoke SIXTEEN different Aboriginal languages! She began her community work when she was visiting one of her brothers in prison and she realised how many indigenous prisoners just needed someone to talk with. She kept visiting people in prisons long after her brother was released. She began to accompany people to court who were unfamiliar with the court system and unable to defend themselves. Her nickname was born from her inventive way of getting around authorities when people asked who she was, by replying, 'I'm his mum'. She soon began travelling up and down NSW to help people in need. When she wasn't helping people within the prison system, she was busy trying to find a home and money for children whose parents

could not care for them. When she couldn't find a home for a child she would take them in and, by the 1990s, she'd raised over sixty children. Woah! Towards the end of her life she was

given a number of government awards and she even had a firefighting boat named after her! But Mum Shirl didn't care for this stuff, instead explaining, 'My reward comes when I help a person in gaol or a young unmarried mother, a young girl who's been raped, or someone who has nowhere to sleep.'

I wish was a little bit taller.

I wish I was a baller ...

At 195cms tall **Lauren Jackson** has always stood out in a crowd. As the daughter of two professional basketball players there was no doubt that her height would be put to good use on the court. At the age of four she began playing basketball, at fourteen she got invited to attend the Australian Institute of Sport and at sixteen years old she was the youngest person ever to make it onto the national team. After dazzling the Australian sports community she headed over to the United States to play professionally as a twenty-year-old. And in 2004 she cemented her place in basketball history as both the youngest and the first foreigner to win the most valuable player of the year award for the entire league. An honour that she has now received two more times since – Yup! –prompting US basketball commentators to contend that Lauren could be the best female basketball player of all time. WOAH! But Lauren doesn't let the hype go to her head. In fact, she is studying psychology at university while playing basketball. She explains that while keeping up the study load and games can be difficult she knows that basketball isn't going to last forever and hopes to be a social worker after she retires. Until that day comes she manages to fit in time doing work for domestic violence charities and programs that help bring sporting opportunities to kids in remote outback communities. And all the while she continues to dominate the basketball court. Slam dunk!

★ *Blogging sensation* ★

At eleven years old, **Tavi Gevinson** started a fashion blog called Style Rookie: a collage of photos she had taken with her camera and runway fashion photos accompanied by her commentary. Funny and insightful, the blog went on to attract more than 50,000 readers a day! Tavi's parents didn't know she had a blog until she asked their permission to be interviewed by the prestigious newspaper *The New York Times*. These days they are very supportive of her blogging career. Her dad, a teacher, drives her to the fashion events she is invited to attend, chaperoning her around fashion week. No snob, Gevinson described herself on her blog as a 'tiny 13-year-old-dork that sits inside all day wearing awkward jackets and pretty hats'. These days her writing is published in fashion magazines like *Harper's Bazaar* and online at Jezabel and Pop. She is the editor of the amazing website for teenage girls: www.rookiemag.com.

Chimpanzees Champion

When **Jane Goodall** was a child growing up in London, her mother gave her a toy chimpanzee she called Jubilee. Jane swore that when she was older she would work with these marvellous creatures. True to her word, in 1960 the 23-year-old Jane travelled to Tanzania to begin her life's work. She had no degree or background in science, and armed with only a notebook and binoculars she entered the wild world of chimpanzees. Her lack of training allowed Jane to engage with the animals in a different way from scientists at the time. Instead of numbering the chimpanzees (which was scientific protocol) she gave them names and observed their behaviour as if they were people. She wrote about their unique personalities and relationships with each other. She found that, 'it isn't only human beings who have personality,

who are capable of rational thought [and] emotions like joy and sorrow.' She published her findings in her first book

nine years later, *My Friends the Wild Chimpanzees*. Her work changed the way we understand both chimpanzees and their close relative – humans. These days she runs the Jane Goodall Institute, which works to protect these chimpanzees, and travels the world spreading the message of sustainability.

*Writer, traveller,
miss do-it-all-and-some*

When Australian writer **Tara June Winch** was seventeen she packed a tent, some boots and a writing pad and took off to explore Australia by herself. Growing up in council housing in Wollongong NSW, Tara is of Wiradjuri, Afghan and English descent. On this trip Tara hoped to find out more about her Aboriginal heritage. But while she longed to hear the history of her people, her family members were often trying to forget it. One of her uncles, who she met on her trip, told Tara that he had nothing to share with her about being a young Aboriginal because growing up 'we weren't allowed to be Aboriginals'. While this was a harsh reality for her to hear, Tara kept on her journey, writing, thinking and exploring. When Tara returned from the trip she entered a short story competition held at a library. She was placed runner up and began writing her first novel *Swallow the Air*. The novel deals with the concept of belonging and identity in Australian society. Not only was the novel published before she turned twenty-two, but it won Tara a swag of awards including The *Sydney Morning Herald's* Young Australian Novelists Award in 2007. In 2008 her achievements went global when she won a prestigious international mentorship award to move to New York and work with Nobel Prize winning African author, Wole Soyinka. Oh, and while all that was going on did I mention she had a child? Yep, not content just taking the Australian literary scene by storm

Tara also had a daughter, Lila. While she might spend her time travelling the world she still fosters her connection with her homeland and is an Ambassador for the Indigenous Literacy Project and PLAN International. And she isn't even thirty yet! Très impressive.

★ *Your choice* ★

Do you know an amazing woman who you think deserves to be in the Hall of Fame? A singer, hockey player, your cousin or best friend?

Write about them below and then email me their names and why they are so deserving to be in the Hall of Fame so I can share some of them with the rest of the world on my website:

.....

my HALL OF FAME:

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During the making of this book I moved three times, had four jobs, travelled around the world twice, ate approximately 1000 bagels, drank upwards of 2000 coffees and checked my Facebook five billion times. It's been a journey, y'all.

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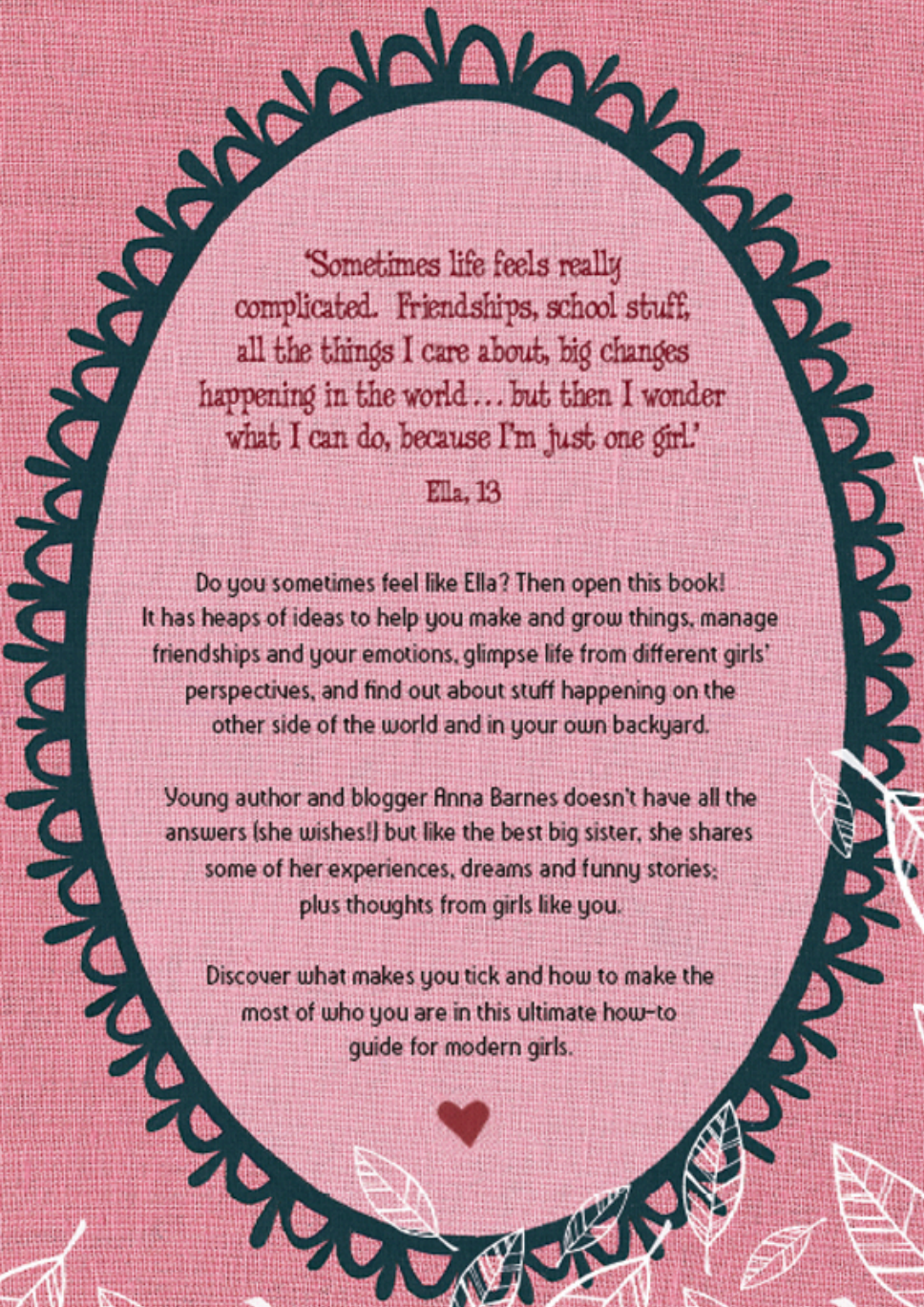
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Lastly, to the cats of the world: don't go a-changin'.

Peace,

Anna xox

'Sometimes life feels really complicated. Friendships, school stuff, all the things I care about, big changes happening in the world... but then I wonder what I can do, because I'm just one girl.'

Ella, 13

Do you sometimes feel like Ella? Then open this book! It has heaps of ideas to help you make and grow things, manage friendships and your emotions, glimpse life from different girls' perspectives, and find out about stuff happening on the other side of the world and in your own backyard.

Young author and blogger Anna Barnes doesn't have all the answers (she wishes!) but like the best big sister, she shares some of her experiences, dreams and funny stories: plus thoughts from girls like you.

Discover what makes you tick and how to make the most of who you are in this ultimate how-to guide for modern girls.

