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**Submission to the Royal Commission into Mental Health System.**

I think the concept of mental illness is an out-modelled concept and should be scrapped. I think that people that spread around that type of language are just spreading around a lot of ignorance about mental trauma and there is enough ignorance spread around about that already.

I think the Mental Health Act should be repealed and people certainly should not be imprisoned or put in detention without trial or indeterminate sentences like they are on Manus Island. The Mental Health Act is a violation of conventions we have signed with the United Nations of civil and political rights. The convention on torture and cruelty and human degrading treatments and the convention on the rights of disabled people and of discrimination against woman.

To me, the whole Royal Commission is just one more cover up, one more whitewash and why has the issue of psychiatric abuse been covered up for so long? We have had psychiatric imprisonment for over 400 years and we've had psychiatrist abuse for over 200 years.

I think victims of psychiatric abuse should be compensated, like the victims of sexual abuse. No amount of money can compensate, but I believe they should have a government compensation scheme like the Commonwealth scheme into sexual abuse. I also think there should be a sorry day, a walk across Princess Bridge to just say sorry to at least acknowledge what people have been through, like many people of my age group.

I am now 78 years old and I became a victim of early intervention and of 'if it aint broke, don't fix it' syndrome. Many of my friends are in the same position 60 years later. I find it very hard to talk about and don't really want to talk about my own treatment., except to use it as an example. I was a victim of psychiatric abuse and neglect and during that time I was seeing a psychologist or a psychiatrist. I was given no treatment and no diagnosis and put on a drug of torture called Risperidone. Sidney Bloch wrote a book about this very thing. His book is called, Russia's Political Hospitals: The Abuse of Psychiatry in The Soviet Union. I don't believe there is any place for these drugs.

Why did I have to wait 9 years before I had the opportunity to have proper treatment with LSD and Psilocybin? I believe this treatment has not been available in Australia since 1975. Why are people denied access to a proper diagnosis?

I am quite frankly appalled at the so-called Terms of Reference, in that it says about treating anxiety and depression, but it says nothing about treating Post Traumatic Amnesia. I suffered with Post-

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Traumatic Amnesia for many years and I should have the same right. I experienced trauma at 14 years of age, following a general anaesthetic.

I have been getting good results from Transcendental Meditation (TM), which I started in the 1960's and it made me feel better emotionally and some of my memories returned, even though I was still depressed. I should have had treatment involving Psilocybin and LSD and I could have felt better much sooner, I could have been well by 1970.

I became a victim of the intravenous Ritalin disaster in the mid 60's, when I should have been having LSD treatments. I lived with that trauma for 30 years. The Ritalin treatment ruined my life, a bit like the Formaldehyde disaster and the equivalence of what people have gone through.

Mrs [REDACTED] from the Patient's Complaints Council read out my submission that I wrote to the Senate Committee, which explained the 25 different medications I had been treated with. It was commented that even one of those medications would have caused enormous damage and I had been treated with 25.

Someone put me in the Royal Melbourne Hospital many years ago, a few times, knowing they had no diagnosis or treatment.

I get very sick of these psychiatrist and psychologists leading you on, keeping you talking. A lot of them are not qualified to treat or diagnose trauma and keep you talking for your entire lifetime. Psychiatry is mainly a fraud, as what they do is imply that they have a diagnosis or treatment and they just lead you on and they don't have anything to offer. They are charging people a huge fee for something that has no scientific basis whatsoever. They are using people to get information out of them. Psychiatry is an appalling invasion of privacy. They are basically experimenting on people. I'm not against research but it must be done in the correct way.

Looking at these Terms of Reference, nobody should have to live with mental trauma and it should be treated promptly, not overnight, but most people don't need to suffer, why are they being kept sick for most of their lives and made to go on suffering trauma, chronic fatigue, amnesia and denied the right to live a full life? This is what I learnt from Transcendental Meditation.

How many patients are on this expert committee? I object to [REDACTED] being on this commission. He has very little insight. He has said 'mental health emerges'. Mental health does not

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emerge. [REDACTED] is not a qualified LSD Therapist and if there are no specialists in Australian then they need to look overseas. This treatment has not been available in Australia since 1975 and it was banned in the United States until 1966, until a few years ago.

There is a book by Michael Polland called How to Change Your Mind: The New Science of Psychedelics, which talks about the use of LSD Therapy.

LSD Therapy has been used in England since the 1990's. Allan Hoffman was well known in this area of treatment and research. He is no longer alive, but his work is getting recognition more so now, you know when people die, and their work is revered? This treatment should be reinstated in Victoria. I don't see why people need to travel overseas to get this treatment. My memory is not wonderful, but I have done a lot of memory work over the last 30 years and worked through things.

Mr [REDACTED] took some notes and it was not satisfactory as he did not write down word for word what I had to say. He quoted me as saying 'a facility', I would never use the word facility when referring to a psychiatric prison and what makes me angry is people using pseudo-euphemisms to describe what they are talking about. I believe things should be talked about, as they are.

I don't understand why psychiatric abuse has been covered up for so long?

When people get sick, they get a very good instinct about what they need, and animals do too. They know what is good for them and how to care for themselves.

I think religion has more to offer than psychiatry for spiritual and emotional development.

Young people go through darkness in their teenage years, well of course they do, they are worrying about exams and 'will I do well enough to have a career?' They go to extremes getting involved in so many things and overwork, going without sleep and that really is neurotic, I don't think they need to do that.

Scrap the exam systems and scrap the exams in the music system. You don't have to do music exams overseas and European musicians do very nicely.

The Maharishi School in Reservoir teaches their students Transcendental meditation in Primary School, this sounds quite young but perhaps this could be taught from Grade 7 to help reduce the trauma of going through exams.

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I have advised VMIAC and the Citizens Commission on Human Rights to send this submission to the United Nations, as Victoria is being very carefully watched by the United Nations.

What I was hearing the other night on a program called Big ideas on the ABC was about the United Nations convention on torture, cruel and degrading treatment and they talked about Manus Island but nothing about psychiatric imprisonment and the appalling record on the rights and treatment of disabled people.

I'm very dubious about the whole notion of psychiatric treatment anyway because its very paternalistic. It's like a catholic person going to confession, to their father confessor, everyone needs to find their own way. A lot of people find their way through TM, mindfulness or going to stay in a Buddhist monastery to find enlightenment. I think this is going to the extreme, although I think it would be very interesting. To get through life you need to work through your own problems. Some young people work through their problems later in life through art work, composing music and lots of different other ways of working through their problems. They say all art is therapy, well I guess it is in some way.

Some people keep a diary, writing things down is helpful and dream interpretation. I learnt how to do this a few years ago, I taught myself. You write down the dream and the interpretation will come to you. It might be a symbol or an association of an idea or something like that. It gives you the meaning of things that have happened. The unconscious mind is infinitively more creative than the conscious mind. Dreams are the Royal Road to the Unconscious.

The whole idea is to make the unconscious mind conscious and that's what you do through TM, mindfulness, prayer. People were doing this long before psychiatry was around. Psychiatry is a bit of a 'Johnny come lately'. Psychiatry has a place, but it is very superficial.

I also made a submission to the Royal Commission into Elder Abuse and what concerns me a lot is about patients left unbathed and I think this is appalling. I was in a psychiatric prison recently and I didn't even have a psychiatric condition. I had 7 or 8 medical conditions, none of which were diagnosed or treated, and I was not given a medical examination by a doctor and I was in excruciating pain in my spine. Later I was given an x-ray and I had Arthritis in my spine. I was told later I could take a Panadol each morning to relieve the pain and it manages the pain very well. I could go on about all the other things done to me in the psychiatric prison.

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I am just reading the Terms of Reference and it says a person has a right to take part in the decision making of their treatment, this is nonsense, it's always been the case, the final decision is always made by the patient. Any treatment that is given without the patient's knowledge and informed consent, is assault.

It also reads that all the Royal Commission recommendations will be accepted by the Andrew's Government, but these matters should be debated in parliament, not decided by a commission.

There has been a lot of criticism of CCHR and I'm a little bit sick of that because they are the only ones speaking out about psychiatric abuse. They are the only ones that would listen to what I had to say. Members of parliament wouldn't listen. I blame the Government for psychological abuse and the terrible Mental Health Act, it is the most appalling of human rights. I have had some bad experiences with members of parliament with one staff member saying, 'don't call us, we'll call you'.

I have read some of the details from the Royal Commission into Disability Services and it was horrific and yet the same abuse is happening in psychiatric services. I was in a psychiatric prison years ago and there was a girl who had epilepsy and the staff would pull her out of bed in the morning and throw her on the floor and call her 'a little epileptic rat'. I was rushed out of bed every morning and would faint because the medications I was on would lower my blood pressure and it was very dangerous, and I would go into the bathroom and pass out on the floor. I could have hit my head and got a serious injury. People should be given freedom of movement and shouldn't have to get out of bed unless they choose to or want to sit in a chair with a blanket and ottoman.

Public patients should have the same rights that people have in private practice and personal privacy. I object to being gossiped about at ward meetings, they collect a lot of hearsay evidence and it is often incorrect. Carolyn Frohmader said that disabled people should be talked to and not about. Confidentiality should only be broken in extreme circumstances. Defamatory labels should be scrapped.

I have been speaking to [REDACTED] office about this, we need an extension of time, they are rushing this thing though because they don't want anyone to know about it. They keep saying 'we don't want to know about the past, they care about the future'. They need to accept responsibility for what has happened in the past and people must be compensated. Legal Aid does not support taking a psychiatrist to justice and that's why people don't take them to Court. The Medical Board

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won't do anything. I've been told by VIMIAC that a lot of other people are saying the same things. I will not be written off as a dead loss. People can talk to their friends about the cruel, brutal and neglectful way they were treated, and they need to speak to their members of parliament, but they are afraid that they are putting their safety at risk.

One of the reasons people are homeless is because the government has wound down disability payments and social security. Pension levels are so low, people can't pay rent and live with violent parents and domestic violence because they can't afford to get away from their abuse. They shouldn't be put in high-rise hell either. I was put in there once and I got so unwell and had to go to hospital for a year.

I see in the paper this morning "A terrible decision to close Psychiatric Hospitals". They shouldn't have been there in the first place. I also don't like the term 'care'. We need essential services not a patronising form of care.

At the age of 19 years I was thrown into [REDACTED] by Dr [REDACTED]. He was a psychopath and cruel and he liked hitting me when I was down. He did a lot of damage to me. He himself had been a prisoner of war on Crete and he told me that if he could handle being a prisoner of war, that I could handle being in a psychiatric prison. I was on a hospital benefit, but no one asked me, and I could have been sent to a private hospital. When I was discharged, I was certified, and the public trustee never came near me and they should have seen that I was not given a disability benefit and I had no income at all when I went home. My mother would go to work at the hospital and I had no food, no breakfast or lunch, but I did have dinner and when I think of that time I was in such a deep depression.

Getting back to the Terms of Reference, I agree that we need to build homes for the homeless but the part about, people may require secure voluntary submissions, how can this be secure? It's just nonsense, we already have too many psychiatric prisons. There is a very dangerous resurgence of imprisonment. In the 1970's there was an anti-psychiatry movement and we hoped it would be scrapped. Psychiatry has become a sort of religion and very authoritarian. They use a lot of coercion and there is no incentive to cure the patient.

I'm quite grateful that the Royal Commission gave me the chance to tell my story. The atrocities that have happened to me and my friends. Dorothy Row said, "It's important for people to know their own story", and I totally agree. There is a book called The Damaged Man by Dr Tony Law. He was

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involved in a terrible car accident and I think he went onto have a breakdown and he described terrible desolation and I think doctors need to know how this feels and to understand. There is a piece of music on this matter called The Winter Journey by Franz Schubert about depression and I have listened to this a lot and felt like I understood. There is also The Dark Night of the Soul. People can express extreme suffering in music but there's not much expressed in words. I felt as though I was in eternal damnation.

People that suffer with depression need 3 things: rest, rest and rest and in psychiatric prisons they make people suffer from sleep deprivation and they were using people in the labour camps making them do boring and repetitive tasks. A lot of people don't know how to relax and it's exhausting. People are not often in a place to get rest. Government should focus on housing so that they can get some rest. What's the point of going to hospital if all you are given are dangerous drugs?