

# salvos

magazine



## Being friends, being friendly

The human need for  
closeness and community



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### FEATURE

Overcoming  
back-to-  
school blues

### FAITH TALK

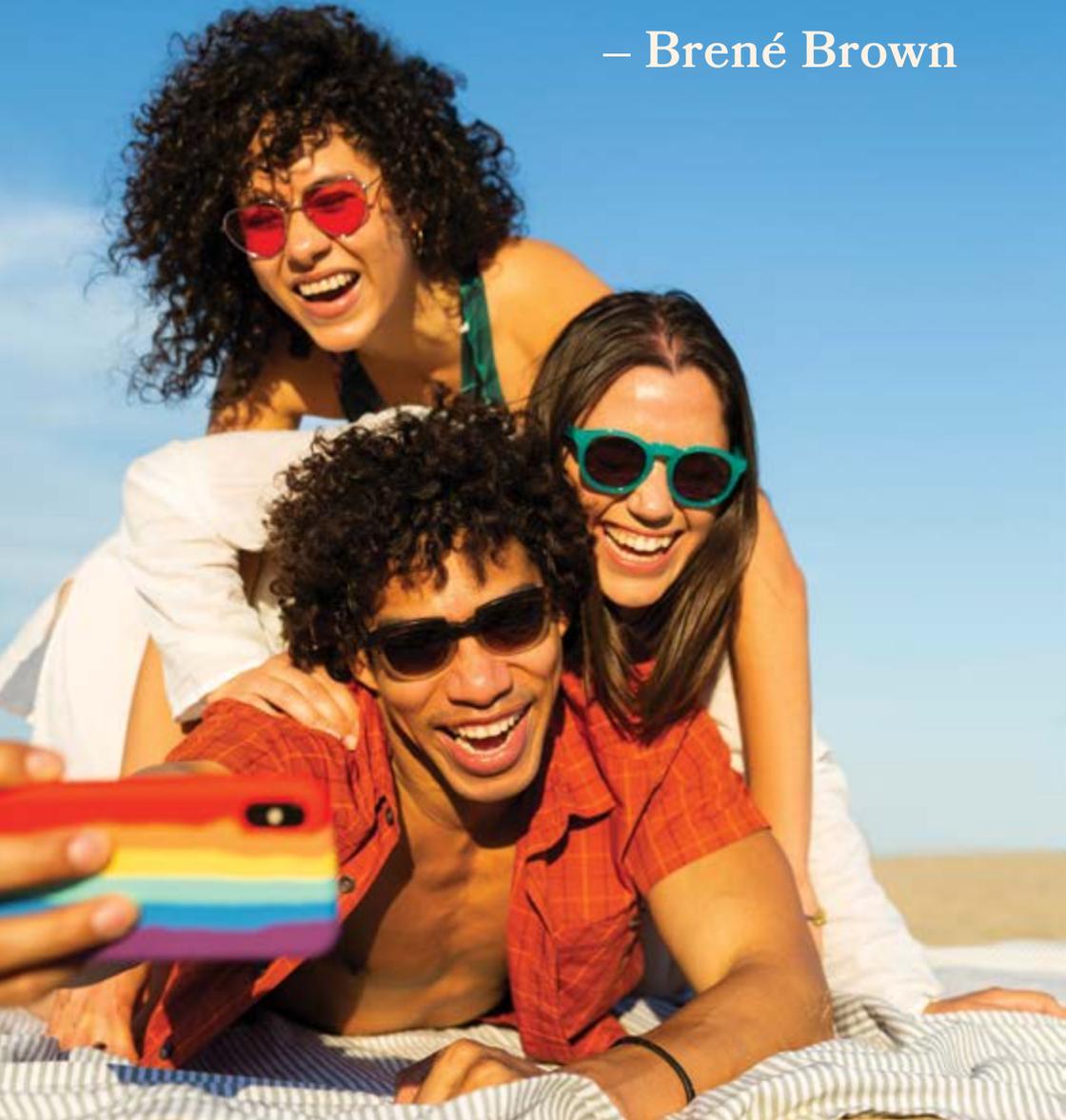
Rescheduling  
time for real  
connection

### MY STORY

Dreams  
become  
reality

**“True belonging never asks us  
to change who we are.  
True belonging requires us to  
be who we are.”**

**– Brené Brown**





## The Salvation Army is about giving hope where it's needed most.

### What is The Salvation Army?

The Salvation Army, an international movement, is an evangelical part of the universal Christian Church.

### Vision Statement

Wherever there is hardship or injustice, Salvos will live, love and fight alongside others to transform Australia one life at a time with the love of Jesus.

### Mission Statement

The Salvation Army is a Christian movement dedicated to sharing the love of Jesus by:

- Caring for people
- Creating faith pathways
- Building healthy communities
- Working for justice



The Salvation Army Australia acknowledges the Traditional Owners of the land on which we meet and work and pay our respect to Elders, past, present, and future. We value and include people of all cultures, languages, abilities, sexual orientations, gender identities, gender expressions, and intersex status. We are committed to providing programs that are fully inclusive. We are committed to the safety and well-being of people of all ages, particularly children.

# Salvos Magazine

**Founders** William and Catherine Booth

**General** Brian Peddle

**Territorial Leader** Commissioner Miriam Gluyas

**Secretary for Communications and Editor-In-Chief**

Colonel Rodney Walters

**Publications Manager** Cheryl Tinker

**Editor** Simone Worthing

**Graphic Designer** Ryan Harrison

**Editorial phone** (03) 8878 4500

**Enquiry email** [salvosmagazine@salvationarmy.org.au](mailto:salvosmagazine@salvationarmy.org.au)

**All other Salvation Army enquiries** 13 72 58

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## Kindness is key

It's only the second month of 2023, and already our communities are buzzing with activity. Traffic is back, Valentine's Day chocolates have replaced January sales and school holidays are definitely over.

For many, facing the demands of going back to school is hard. In last week's edition of *Salvos Magazine*, we focused on ways to help younger children socialise at school. This week, we interview a Salvos youth specialist about some of the challenges older students may face, and how they can prepare for these in advance, seek support as needed and benefit from the opportunities school brings.

Friends are a vital part of school, and Jo-anne Brown writes about friends in her article. She also discusses online friendships, the difference between friends and being friendly, and emphasises the importance of being kind to all.

In Faith Talk, James Burns writes about unplugging from the internet sometimes, and instead taking time to connect to God in prayer. God is available to us 24/7 and all we have to do is talk to him.

Simone Worthing  
**Editor**

# Overcoming back-to-school blues

If the new school year seems daunting, help is at hand

**For most students across Australia, the 2023 school year has kicked off and classes, sport and other activities are in full swing. To help high school students handle the challenges and changes ahead, *Salvos Magazine* writer Anthony Castle spoke to John Marion, Youth and Young Adults Specialist for The Salvation Army Australia.**

**Anthony Castle:** For many, the new school year is like returning to something they know. For others, it's completely new. What kind of thoughts and feelings might they be experiencing?

**John Marion:** Going back to school can bring up so many emotions. You might be excited about seeing your friends, the opportunity to try new subjects, or to find out who is in your classes. You might feel a confidence boost as you move up a year, become more senior in the school and are more familiar with how everything works. You might even feel relief to be back at school and in an environment where you have people who care about you.

But school can also be difficult or challenging. You might feel anxiety at the thought of seeing people who make you feel uncomfortable or pick on you. Maybe the pressures and expectations to do well or achieve good grades make you feel like giving up. Sometimes you might even feel alone – that you are surrounded by so many people, but no one is there for you to rely on.

It can be helpful to remember that everyone will have differing emotions about going back to school, so you're not alone. When we talk about how we are feeling we can start to prepare for what we can do about these feelings.

**What do we do with what we're feeling?**

Sometimes it can be a struggle to know what feelings mean and what you can do about them. It can be helpful to first take some time to recognise all the emotions you are experiencing and to remember that no emotion is bad.

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**Reaching out if you are struggling can help you start the year feeling your best.**

”

When you have noted your emotions, you can work out if you need support or what you might need help with. Maybe you're feeling anxious about being in large crowds with people you don't know, because you're worried that you'll feel alone. When you realise this, you can work out what can help you feel more confident. You could make sure that you walk into school with a friend or have a place where you can meet so you feel supported.

It can also be difficult to know what you are feeling sometimes, making it a challenge to plan and prepare for the



year ahead. When you are struggling to understand your emotions, it can be helpful to talk to people you trust and who can support you. You might have supportive friends who are good listeners, or carers, teachers or chaplains you can talk to. Perhaps going to a professional service like headspace or a school counsellor is what you need.

Reaching out if you are struggling can help you start the year feeling your best.

### **What are some of the risks, and opportunities, in returning to school?**

The new school year brings with it so many opportunities. You get to try new subjects, make new friends and learn new things. This can be an exciting time where you explore who you are and what makes you happy. You can start to think about what careers might interest you when you leave school, experiences you want to have and people you want to be with.

But the new school year can also be challenging. If you find the start of the

year difficult you might want to give up, disengage and disconnect. You might push away friends and teachers, stop trying in class and miss opportunities to try new things. If the school year doesn't start off as you expected or wanted it to, it can be hard to get back on track.

It's important to know that, just because the school year might not start well, it can still get better. If you begin to struggle you can look to friends, teachers, counsellors and chaplains for support to help you get back on track.

### **What are a few things we can do to organise the supports we need?**

#### **1. Mental preparation**

Thinking through what you need or want for your first weeks back at school can help you work out what support you might need. You could work out a time and place to meet friends, look over your timetable and school map so you know where you need to go, or have your school uniform ready for when you ▶



wake up. If you go over the day in your head, you can form a plan to make your weeks easier and feel prepared.

### 2. *Get into a good sleeping pattern*

It can be helpful to get into a rhythm of eight to nine hours of sleep each night before school starts and continue that routine. Being rested and adjusted to the routine can help you feel prepared.

### 3. *Identify support*

Being aware of the people you can go to for support can help you feel confident in knowing what to do if school starts to feel difficult. It's the same with resources such as mindfulness apps, phone lines

you can call and programs or groups you may be able to attend.

Knowing what supports you have before you need them can help you feel prepared if or when you do want help, and make the process easier.

“

**Just because the school year might not start well, it can still get better.**

”

## HELPFUL RESOURCES

### Helplines

Lifeline – Call **13 11 14** for crisis support and counselling, with a focus on suicide prevention.

Kids Helpline – Call **1800 55 1800** for free, private and confidential phone and online counselling services for young people aged five to 25.

### Mindfulness apps

Smiling Mind

headspace: meditate and relax

### Programs or groups

Visit [headspace.org.au](https://headspace.org.au) to see what your local centre offers and for information about mental health and wellbeing.

Check out your local Salvation Army church or youth group.



Scan here for more on mental health.

# Being friends, being friendly

The human need for closeness and community

**WORDS** Jo-anne Brown

I'm sure we've all seen it at some time – two kids fighting in a playground and some adult comes along and says, "Shake hands and be friends now." We might have been one of those kids told to be friends with someone we really didn't like. Whether we've been there or just seen it, we know that being friends is not as easy as shaking hands and it certainly doesn't happen just because someone else says it should!

As Valentine's Day approaches, many of us are getting inundated with advertising and merchandising which may prompt us to start thinking about the friends and relationships in our lives. Most of these relationships won't be the romantic kind but are, nevertheless, shaped by affection, and even love.

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**Friends want the best for each other and don't try to change each other into something they are not.**

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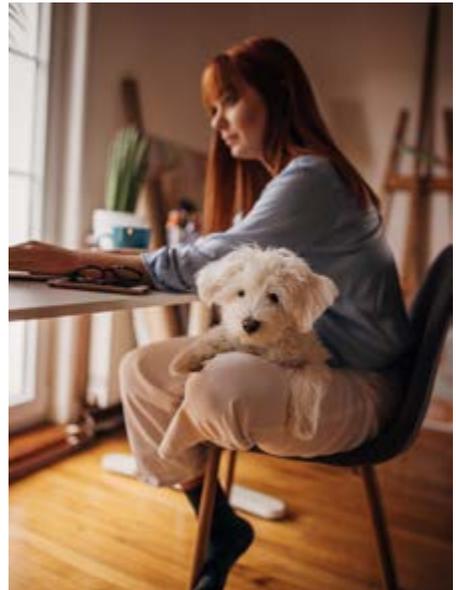
## FACEBOOK FRIENDS

When we open Facebook, we can see how many 'friends' we have, how many 'friends' we have in common with other friends, and who wants to be friends with us. We can also often see, in minute

detail, exactly what our friends are doing, or eating, at any given moment.

Some of our Facebook friends, however, may be people we have never met and don't know anything about. How do we decide whose friend request we accept and whose we reject? How can we show authentic friendship to Facebook friends?

From shaking hands and being friends in the playground with kids we don't necessarily like, to having hundreds of friends on Facebook who we might not even know, friendship seems to be a rather broad concept and may leave us feeling uncertain about how to be a friend and who we want to be friends with. ▶





### **AUTHENTIC FRIENDSHIP**

So, what is friendship, and what does it mean to be friends? Friendship is precious, and based on mutual respect, affection and trust. A true friend is someone we can share our thoughts and feelings with, someone we can laugh or cry with, and who understands and accepts us just as we are. Friends want the best for each other and don't try to change each other into something they are not.

“

**Not everyone shares our values or is willing to understand us and be there for us ... and that's okay.**

”

My closest friends are those I can talk to about anything, and I know they will support me and do their best to understand me. Even when they can't understand exactly what I might be going through, I know they will be there

for me and do their best to help me through difficult times. Real friends are not only people I enjoy spending time with – they're also people who help me become a better person and who want to share the ups and downs of life with me.

Some friends I might not see very often, either because of distance or because life circumstances make it hard to catch up regularly. What I love about such friendships, though, is when we do catch up in person or online it's as though we only saw each other yesterday and nothing has changed at all.

### **BEING FRIENDLY**

Friendship is not the same as being friendly. We all know people we are friendly with, whose company we enjoy, but who we don't necessarily see as friends. They are people we have some kind of connection with, but we don't have the same expectations of them as we do with our friends. We don't need hundreds of friends – just a handful we can rely on and with whom we can relax and be ourselves.

It's not possible, or even desirable, to be friends with everyone – that would

be too much. Not everyone shares our values or is willing to understand us and be there for us. We certainly can't be there all the time for all the people we know. And that's okay. We can, however, be friendly and treat everyone we encounter with respect and kindness. We can show understanding and acceptance, even if we don't want to spend lots of time with them.

This might be harder than being friends. Friends are generally people we get on easily with, who we like being around and who have at least some interests in common with us. Friends make life easier and bring us pleasure.

It's not so easy to be friendly with people who have radically different viewpoints to us, or who loudly and aggressively share opinions that are divisive or judgmental. Some people might make us feel uncomfortable when they criticise or judge others unfairly or

make fun of people and causes that we care about.

### CREATED BY GOD

Yet each person, even those who are hard to get along with, is someone who has intrinsic value – simply because they share our humanity and have been created by God. Everyone deserves kindness and respect, even if we can't respect the way they behave or their opinions. We all have longings, hopes, and dreams – and we all have wounds, disappointments and pain of some kind.

“

**We all have longings, hopes, and dreams – and we all have wounds, disappointments and pain of some kind.**

”

To return to the kids in the playground who need to make up and be friends, it might be more realistic to suggest they learn to respect each other, or find a way to be kind, rather than expecting two kids who may never get on together to be friends.

Friendship is important and we should choose our friends wisely – and do our best to be kind, friendly and respectful to everyone we encounter, whatever relationship we might have with them.



Scan here for more on finding meaning.

# Unplugged

Scheduling time for real connection

**WORDS** James Burns

A friend of mine who's not a regular commuter went on a journey recently. None of the passengers spoke to each other, not even about the weather. But they were British, so no surprise there. Instead, most of them were engrossed in whatever was on their phones.

Travelling again the next day, my friend decided to join them. Settling into her seat, she put her earphones on and started listening to a podcast on her phone. Looking around after a few minutes, she saw that people were looking at her and only then realised that she hadn't plugged the earphones into her phone, so everyone else could hear what she was listening to. An embarrassing moment.

But how do we react when we can't get connected? We fuss and fume when our phone loses its charge, when we are in a place that has no internet connection, or anything else that prevents us being in touch with friends on social media or work via email. At such times we feel disconnected and unplugged.

For many, being out of touch can be a source of stress and frustration. But is it all bad? Can such times allow us to slow down and step back from our busyness and, rather than concentrating on the immediacy of life, allow us to reflect on our long-term future and what is important?

What if we spent less time on our phones connecting with people on

social media and more time connecting with God?

It couldn't be easier than speaking to God in prayer. You need no fancy words or sayings – just talk as you would to a friend and share your hopes, fears and concerns with him.

“

**For many, being out of touch can be a source of stress and frustration. But is it all bad?**

”

You can pray anytime and anywhere. It's acknowledging God's existence and your need for him that's important. As the Bible says in Jeremiah chapter 29, verse 12: "At that time, you will call out for me, and I will hear. You will pray, and I will listen" (*The Voice* translation).

Why not schedule time today to unplug from the unimportant and connect with God?

*James Burns is a Salvo freelance writer from Dunstable Salvos, UK.*



Scan here for more on the need for community.



# Creating a Garden of Hope

Transforming Mark's dream into reality became a labour of love

**WORDS** Naomi Singlehurst

Mark is the Community Garden Coordinator for the Garden of Hope at The Salvation Army's Harry Hunter Rehabilitation Centre in Western Australia. Years earlier, Mark literally had a dream about creating a community garden at the centre that would serve people in addiction recovery and provide a space for community events, family connection and mentoring.

Over several years the dream of the garden became reality, with support from a local builder and others who shared Mark's vision. Today, the space includes a table that seats 70 for communal meals, a 'yarning circle', a huge vegie garden, a barbecue, a pizza oven and a chicken pen.

Mark firmly believes that his recovery from addiction, and the vision, provision and strength to create the garden came from God.

## A LONG JOURNEY

Mark not only manages the garden but also plays guitar and leads worship there, as well as at his local Salvos church. He is married to Salvo officer (pastor) Nikki and is a mentor to many.

Just over 10 years ago, Mark was struggling with addiction and living on the streets.

He was born in Wellington, New Zealand, when his parents were just 18, and the family grew to include a daughter and another son.



Mark's garden is now the venue for a range of community and church activities.



Mark, left, with Major Colin Medling, who had a huge impact on his faith journey.

"My sister passed away just before I turned five, and it tore the family apart," Mark says. "My parents divorced and I'd spend six months with Mum, six months with Dad – I just had that feeling of never belonging."

At 14, Mark left school and started hanging out with older guys. Smoking pot and drinking with them, he felt like he finally fitted in. By 16, he was using heroin and amphetamines.

When employed in the mining industry, Mark had a serious car accident at work and his drug use accelerated.

He says: "By the beginning of 2012 I was sleeping on the streets in Perth and ended up in jail. I was probably the last person I thought would ever be picking up a Bible, or calling out to God," he adds, "but I remember screaming out to God in prison, saying, 'I don't want to wake up. If you're there, just take my life.'"

Today, Mark believes God did 'take his life', but in an unexpected way. He was sent to see the prison chaplain, and was directed to undertake full-time residential recovery through the Salvos' Harry Hunter Rehabilitation Centre.

### FINDING FAITH, HOPE AND LOVE

Mark says he found the residential recovery experience amazing. Through

the classes, counselling, 12-step program and spiritual support, his faith in God began to grow.

"Major Colin was the manager there," he says, "and he had a really big impact on my faith journey. One night in the chapel I felt God speak to me. He said, 'You can't do this anymore. You've got to be honest and real, and I'm with you.' My life changed that night."



Mark's Garden of Hope dream is now a reality.

### THE ROAD TO HOPE

After completing the program, Mark found a job at a Salvos homelessness shelter, where he met Nikki, who was running a youth program.

Mark says he wants others to know that there is always hope, no matter how dark life may seem. His life is now dedicated to helping people.

"There were so many other people who cared and journeyed with me," he says. "I feel like I was loved into God's kingdom. I wasn't dragged. I wasn't pulled. People just came alongside me and loved me at a time when I didn't deserve it. It really had a massive impact on my life."



Scan here for more on the need for community.

## Lemon yogurt cake



### Ingredients

3 eggs (separated), 240g yogurt, zest 1 lemon, 1 tbsp lemon juice, 2½ tbsp cornflour, ½ cup self-raising flour, pinch salt, ½ cup sugar, icing sugar (optional)

### Method

- Whisk egg yolks with yogurt, lemon zest and juice.
- Combine cornflour and flour. Add to the yolk mixture.
- Beat egg whites with a pinch of salt until foamy. Start adding sugar. When stiff peaks form, gradually fold egg whites into the batter.
- Pour into an 18cm cake tin and place in a baking dish filled with hot water.
- Bake at 150°C for 60 minutes.
- Dust with icing sugar if desired.

## HAVE A LAUGH

Where do keyboards go to have dinner?  
The space bar.

Why can't you tell anyone about space?  
Because it's too out of this world!



Why didn't the sun go to university?  
Because it already had a  
million degrees!

What is an astronaut's  
favourite chocolate?  
A Mars bar.

## SIGNING IN



# Sudoku

Fill in the grid so that every row, every column and every 3x3 box contains the digits 1 to 9.

8	5		9	6			7	2
9				4			6	1
	6							
7					4	2	1	
1						7		4
		4			7		9	
2		3		9				
6		9				1		7
5			4					



# Quick quiz

1. The highest mountain known to man is on an asteroid called Vesta. How high is it?
2. What colour do the sunsets on Mars appear to be?
3. What do we call large objects, made of dust and ice, that orbit the sun?
4. What makes the moon glow?
5. What do we call an area of such immense gravity that nothing, not even light, can escape from it?

# Tum-Tum



On which page of this week's *Salvos Magazine* is Tum-Tum hiding?

# Bible byte

"The heavens declare the glory of God; the skies proclaim the work of his hands."

Psalm 19, verse 1

*New International Version*

**Quiz answers:** 1. 22km 2. Blue 3. Comets 4. It reflects the light of the sun. 5. A black hole.  
 Tum-Tum: is hiding on the book on page 6.

DID YOU KNOW?

**One million earths could fit inside the sun - and the sun is considered an average-size star.**

**If you could fly a plane to Pluto, the trip would take more than 800 years!**

**Scientists estimate that there are about 500,000 pieces of space junk today.**

**There are more stars in the universe than grains of sand on all the beaches on earth. That's at least a billion trillion!**

5	7	8	4	1	6	9	2	3
6	4	9	3	2	5	1	8	7
2	1	3	7	9	8	6	4	5
3	2	4	1	8	7	5	9	6
1	8	6	2	5	9	7	3	4
7	9	5	6	3	4	2	1	8
4	6	2	8	7	1	3	5	9
9	3	7	5	4	2	8	6	1
8	5	1	9	6	3	4	7	2



# Have you taken care of your Will?

**A gift in your Will can help The Salvation Army create a long-lasting impact in the lives of those experiencing hardship.**

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Find out how you can start or continue your legacy of generosity. Contact The Salvation Army's Wills and Bequests team and ask for a free Wills booklet.

Together, we can give hope where it's needed most long into the future.



**CONTACT US TODAY**

1800 337 082 or visit  
[salvationarmy.org.au/wills](https://salvationarmy.org.au/wills)

