



SEPTEMBER 2019 • ISSUE 12

## QUARTERLY

Dear Friends  
Welcome

## AT A GLANCE

- Sharon reflects on her first public lecture in Perth
- Activities at the Sharon Faye Foundation
- The history of emotion – a context for Emotional Strength
- Screen time statistics
- Our community grows
- Head to our updated website to view photos from the *Introduction to Emotional Strength - Emotion in Everyday Life* lecture



## INTRODUCTION TO EMOTIONAL STRENGTH - EMOTION IN EVERYDAY LIFE

### Sharon's reflection

The Sharon Faye Foundation's first public lecture was a huge success. We have received encouraging feedback from the audience and people are asking for more lectures. The Sharon Faye Foundation Board felt a great sense of achievement to deliver on our mission to Research Educate Disseminate at such an enjoyable and engaging event. As a presenter, I found the audience to be tremendously generous which made it easier and more enjoyable for me. In the lead up I felt excited and it was wonderful to meet and greet people upon arrival. So exciting!!!

As you might expect, the photo montage was very emotional for me seeing myself as a three-year-old up on the big screen. This child had no idea what was about to happen and ten years later I was judged as 'retarded' and doomed to living an uneducated life. To this day I am so grateful that was not the truth. All those years later when I was awarded my first degree, it showed me what humanity is capable of and what is possible in the world. The timing of the photos with the lyrics to the song 'Imagine' was perfectly placed and very moving to me. Particularly the words 'some may think I am a dreamer' (showing me with my first degree) 'but I am not the only one' (showing my

four children) hit the spot. I demonstrated open and vulnerable in that moment and connected to my gratitude and was able to share my story and move to the lectern to present the lecture. In retrospect, I realised that I demonstrated Emotional Strength in that moment. This was an unplanned and yet fitting opening to the lecture.

Thank you to the Sharon Faye Foundation team for supporting me to launch a quality lecture to be proud of.

## EMOTIONAL STRENGTH FOR THE SHARON FAYE FOUNDATION TEAM

Over the last three months the Sharon Faye Foundation team challenged themselves in the planning and delivering of our first public lecture. It was indeed a journey of Emotional Strength as we faced new and unexpected challenges together.

At the lecture, Sharon spoke of 'feeling a mess on the inside' and connecting to the mess in the process of building Emotional Strength. In the lead-up to the very moment when Sharon began speaking, we encountered moments of feeling extremely messy, overwhelmed, uncertain, inadequate and frustrated. These were the times when practising Emotional Strength was most important. By showing up, we moved through and discovered new ideas, solutions, energy and joys. As a result, the Sharon Faye Foundation team developed deeper knowledge, trust, strength and friendship. It has been an absolute privilege and we are grateful to be able to be with the internal mess!



*Imagine if  
... business was healthy*

## EMOTION THROUGH HISTORY

Throughout history, theologians, philosophers and most recently psychologists have grappled with what to make of emotions. Central questions have included what constitutes an emotion, the relationship between self and emotions, and the link between emotion and reason. In traditional societies, emotion and reason are typically equally valued. In modern societies, emotion has generally got a bad rap. As far back as pre-first century, Western religious conceptualisations held that bodily-based emotions – termed ‘passions’, ‘affections’ or ‘sentiments’ – were like wild inner beasts that needed to be tamed by God-given reason.

The modern ‘science’ of emotion is widely credited to 19th century naturalist Charles Darwin, who argued that emotions cause bodily expression. From there, psychology was born, prompting a short-lived burst of emotion research. Emotion research fell out of favour in the early 20th century with the emphasis on behaviourism, or the study of

behaviour, but has since seen a renaissance that continues into the 21st century, accompanied by advances in neuroscience and technology.

While debate continues over the brain basis for emotion, one thing has become clear: Emotions have arrived. It no longer makes scientific sense to talk of a divide between brain and body or reason and emotion. Emotion research is thriving, and emotion-based therapeutic models are gaining momentum.

There is still, however, a widespread view that some emotions are 'good' and some are 'bad' – a leftover of the old way of thinking. This is reflected in the ideas that negative emotions are a danger to self or society and must be controlled or hidden, or that it is unhealthy to keep negative emotion inside and they should be 'let out'.

Understanding the history of emotion is useful because it provides a context for Emotional Strength. Mapping our past shows us how long-standing cultural beliefs inform our everyday attitudes in the present. Emotional Strength challenges these beliefs. From an Emotional Strength perspective, it seems implausible that emotions can suddenly lose and regain functionality. All emotion is functional at some point in time. It is our actions, motivated by emotion, that can be productive or destructive. In other words, what requires separating is not emotion from reason, but emotion from action. Building Emotional Strength – feeling deeper into emotions from a position of vulnerability – fosters the ability to regulate our actions (not our emotions) in a productive, self-supportive way.

## SCREEN TIME STATISTICS

One aspect of the lecture that generated a lot of feedback, especially from parents, was screen time.

Recent Australian studies suggest Australians check their smartphones about 85 times a day and spend more than 46 hours a week looking at screens. Screen time – what is too much and how to manage it – has become the number one concern for parents. Statistics from the 2017 Royal Children's Hospital National Child Health Poll that provide useful food for thought include:

- Parents who report high levels of screen use themselves are more likely to report having children with high levels of screen use.

- 94% of Australian teenagers, 67% of primary school-aged children; and 36% of pre-schoolers have their own screen-based device.
- Almost half of all children regularly use screen-based devices at bedtime which interferes with quality sleep.

The Sharon Faye Foundation encourages conversations with your family around screen time and its use. For example, if you read your newspapers online, talk to your children about what you are doing. The key is to engage.

## UPCOMING LECTURE

We are proud to announce that Sharon Faye's next public lecture will be held early next year. Sharon will be presenting the data from the school project 'Building Emotional Strength in Teachers'.

## THANK YOU

Twice this year we have had the opportunity of meeting you all at community events. In February we jogged laps and ate banana bread together at the Feel to Heal Lap-a-thon, and in August we learned how to be present and connect with our emotions at Sharon's public lecture.

We take this opportunity to thank you

- Thank you for showing up with a welcoming heart which creates a safe place for everyone
- Thank you for bringing a curious mind and asking fabulous questions so that we can all benefit from the discussion
- Thank you for being open to engaging in the moment
- Thank you for your friendship, community and trust which we value so highly

# A FRESH LOOK FOR OUR WEBSITE

The updated Sharon Faye Foundation website now features a **PHOTO GALLERY** where you will find some great memories of our events and Sharon's marathons.

Our new **COMMUNITY PAGE** is where you will find our latest news plus links to all newsletters.

## BE A PART OF THE SHARON FAYE FOUNDATION COMMUNITY

The Sharon Faye Foundation's goal is to create healthy families, businesses and communities and you are an important part of our story.

We would be interested in your feedback and we'd love to hear from you for possible inclusion in future newsletter editions. Please tell us your Emotional Strength story and send it to

[hello@sharonfayefoundation.com.au](mailto:hello@sharonfayefoundation.com.au)

## DONATE

No matter the size, every donation helps us to further our research.

If you would like to donate to the Sharon Faye Foundation, please follow this **link** or **contact us** for details.

The Sharon Faye Foundation is endorsed as a Deductible Gift Recipient and donations of \$2 or more are tax deductible.

## SEE YOU NEXT TIME



**SHARON FAYE FOUNDATION LTD**

**[sharonfayefoundation.com.au](http://sharonfayefoundation.com.au)**

Ground Floor, 420 Bagot Road, Subiaco, Western Australia, 6008

T. 08 9381 1596 E. [hello@sharonfayefoundation.com.au](mailto:hello@sharonfayefoundation.com.au)

*RESEARCH INSTITUTE ON EMOTION*

**[Unsubscribe](#)**