

FOLLOW ME:

Imagine this...

Before we are born we're presented with a number of "life stories" to choose from. A number of options for the path we'll take in our life.

Would we choose the easiest life story? Would we choose the one with the greatest fame or fortune? If this was real then most of us would wonder why the hell we chose the life we have now with the struggles and pain we go through. Such choices would come from a very "human" way of thinking.

However, at the time we are still able to see things from a "universal" perspective instead of the more limited perspective of our human experience. So in this circumstance what "life story" would we choose?

The real question is...

Would I choose the life story I'm currently living? If you asked me this 40 years ago, 20 years ago, even 10 years ago I would have said no!

If you ask me the same question today then yes, I would choose this life story. I would choose all the hell I went through... the fear, self doubt, pain and failure... the joy, happiness, fun and victories.

The revelation I have come to is I am who I am today only because of all I went through over the past 50+ years. Without fire, heat, pressure and time there would be no diamonds!

Now, looking back from here, I can see why I'd choose this life.

Come with me and I'll show you why ...

INTRODUCTION:

"I close my eyes and my twilight images go by all too soon, like an angel passing through my room"

ABBA

4Feb2013:

These are the days of my life ... from when I was young and restless to feeling bold and beautiful!

That's a little joke my mum would appreciate, if she were still here. In fact, this project is dedicated to my mum, Wanda Young. In many ways she was responsible for all the different periods and what even feel like different lives I've lived within this particular life ... the ABBA time, the Doctor Who time, she even influenced the current GLBTIQ Community Group that I started.

I'm calling this book "ABBA, Doctor Who and Men!", because that basically summarises my life up to now. That journey was mainly focussed around three particular areas ... ABBA Fan Club times, Doctor Who and the Doctor Who Fan Club time, the many years of my "big gay adventure" that all started in 1975.

In 2012 I started a local GLBTIQ social and support group here in Wyndham, in the west of Melbourne, with the help of Wyndham City Council. Wyndham covers Werribee and surrounding suburbs and is the fastest growing area in Australia. At the time there was nothing here in the west specifically for GLBTI residents.

We planned our very first event for "Meet Your GLBTIQ Neighbours" to be held at Cafe Aroma in Watton Street, Werribee. Mum was unwell so I flew up to Maitland to visit her the weekend before this event. I didn't explain to her specifically when the event was or how important it was to me but she must have sensed it.

She'd been very sick in one way or another for a long time. Arthritis and skin cancers that needed to be cut out, one had recently been removed from her face that was not healing well and had resulted in some medical issues that put her back in hospital. She had lost a lot of weight and was no longer "full of life" as she would usually seem.

That weekend, as I said goodbye and stepped out of her room into the corridor, I began to cry because I had an overwhelming sense that it was the last time I would see her in that frail 83 year old body that was now failing her. On my way out, I stopped up on the hill beside the wing of the hospital where her room was, under a beautiful old tree, I could see the window of her room. With tears in my eyes I waved goodbye.

I turned and walked to the car, drove to the airport and got on the plane. Somehow, feeling numb and disconnected from any real emotions I arrived back in Melbourne, drove the 45 minutes from the airport back home, got in the door, was greeted by my partner David and our two fur kids, Merlin and Millie, went up to David, hugged him and absolutely burst into tears. I told him I felt that was the last time I would see mum. And it was...

When I saw her that last time she had said to me twice: "I've had enough, Mickey, I don't think I can put up with any more of this", and I said to her: "Mum, you've had an amazing life, you've raised three very strong and responsible children, you have three amazing grandchildren, you've survived a very difficult life, you should be so proud of everything you've done in this life, but if you've had enough, if you really want to go, then just ... let go! Because I promise you, that you'll simply leave here and it'll be just like you walked across the room. You'll be fine, you'll be happy, you'll be free of the pain, free of the struggle, free of the body that's giving out and letting you down even though your spirit could go on forever, because your spirit does go on forever."

So it was the very day after our first hugely successful event for "Meet Your GLBTIQ Neighbours" or "Wyndham Rainbow Neighbours Inc" as we are now called, that I got the news she had passed. If we lost her the day before or even on the day of the event I would never have been able to do what I did that day with so many people there, the things we had to do to encourage, inspire and begin this process of a new community group. So, her timing was perfect, she must have sensed it literally hanging on that extra day and putting herself second right to the end. Another fallen hero!

5Feb2013:

At the moment I'm sitting in the backyard of our home in Werribee. Everyone who comes here says how beautiful and peaceful our yard and our home is, surrounded by trees and tall hedges, the birds, the water fountains, the flowers, plants, the buddas (we are not Buddhist by the way) and it's a beautiful summer day here in Melbourne. A new year, a new phase in my life and it feels the right time to start this process of looking back over the first 50+ years of this life.

So this book will cover thoughts, recollections, memories and stories initially sorted into various years because that's really the easiest way for me to remember. As with most things in life, the end result may be a little different to what I initially planned.

As I became a teenager, the two things that I became interested in, and passionate about, were ABBA and Doctor Who. ABBA was the first music that really captured my attention and resonated with me, and it still does. I've listened to ABBA since 1975 and I still love their music after 40+ years. The ABBA phenomenon will always be part of my life, and the four of them, Frida, Agnetha, Benny and Bjorn are like extended family. It feels like they've always been around and the day one of them passes will be absolutely devastating, just as it has been for me when some of the Doctor Who people have passed.

Liz Sladen (Sarah Jane Smith) passed unexpectedly about a year and a half ago now. That was very difficult because she had been in my life since 1975 as someone I enjoyed watching and had always brought happiness to my life, just as ABBA and Doctor Who have always been a source of great happiness and escape from life's stresses. However, there have been times when some of the fans have also been a source of those stresses.

I started watching Doctor Who in 1975 and Tom Baker was my first and favourite Doctor. The day that he passes will also be devastating and I hope that's a long time away. We have lost far too many Who people in 2011/2012. To name a few, we lost Liz Sladen, Nicholas Courtney (The Brigadier), Mary Tamm (the first Romana) and also Directors, Producers and others, which is made even sadder now because 2013 is the 50th anniversary of Doctor Who and we won't have them as part of the celebrations.

Apart from ABBA and Doctor Who this book will also cover my "born again" times in various Pentecostal Churches, my spiritual journey, and my struggle with being gay which are all neatly wrapped up under the "men" part of the title.

Looking back, all that's happened in my life is clearly part of the spiritual journey that I'm on this time around. I'm amazed that I became the person I am today. I am proud of who I am today. Just as I'm sure mum and all those who have gone before are proud of me.

But enough about death ... this is about life!

So let's move on to when things really start to change ... 1975!

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