

YES! I would like to help Odyssey House assist residents to live a drug free life.

Please find enclosed my donation of: (please circle)

\$50 **\$100** **\$500** or
\$ _____

Enclosed is my cheque / money order made payable to the Odyssey House McGrath Foundation or charge my credit card.

Visa **Mastercard** **Amex** **Diners Club**

Card number: _____/_____/_____/_____

Expiry Date: _____

Name on card: _____

Title: (Dr/ Mr/ Mrs/ Ms/ Miss): _____

Signature: _____

Email: _____

Address: _____

Telephone: _____

Facsimile: _____

I would like to pledge \$ _____ per month to be deducted from my Credit Card until revoked in writing by me or Odyssey House.

DONATIONS OVER \$2.00 ARE TAX DEDUCTIBLE.

For more information on Odyssey House, visit www.odysseyhouse.com.au
Phone: (02) 9820 9999
Fax: (02) 9820 1796



Please return this coupon and your donation to:
**Odyssey House McGrath Foundation,
PO Box 459, Campbelltown, NSW, 2560.**



Don't Drink and Drive

Alcohol reduces your ability to drive safely. No-one drives as well as usual after drinking alcohol, even though some people may look and act as though they are unaffected.

Alcohol affects most areas of your brain, so the effects are wide-ranging and impossible to compensate for. Alcohol is a depressant. This means alcohol:

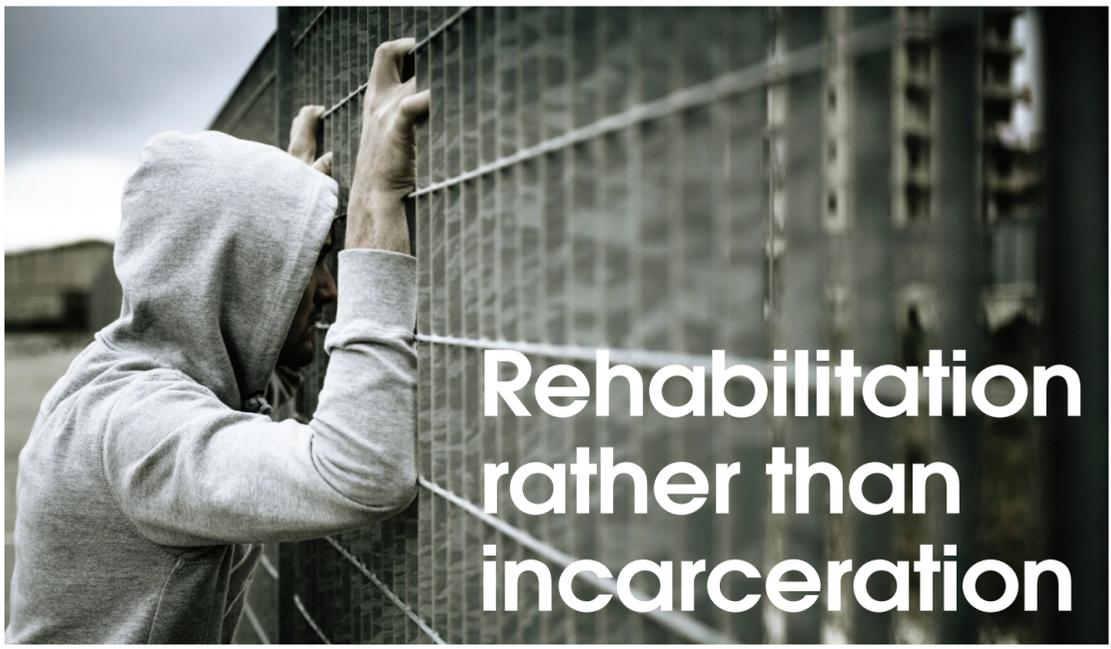
- Slows brain functions so that you can't respond to situations, make decisions or react quickly.
- Reduces your ability to judge how fast you are moving or your distance from other cars, people or objects.
- Gives you false confidence - you may take greater risks because you think your driving is better than it really is.
- Makes it harder to do more than one thing - while you concentrate on steering, you could miss seeing traffic lights, cars entering from side streets or pedestrians.
- Affects your sense of balance - very important if you ride a motorcycle.
- Makes you sleepy.

Under 0.05 is the legal limit for most drivers because of the well-documented crash risk associated with this blood alcohol concentration (BAC).

So, don't try to estimate it. Measure it, or better still, don't drink any alcohol if you plan to drive.

**Ref Roads and Maritime Services*

Please donate online
www.odysseyhouse.com.au



Rehabilitation rather than incarceration

Many people in prison are dependent on alcohol or other drugs and their criminal convictions are often directly related to their dependencies. Up to half have a co-existing mental illness.

Research by the Australian Institute of Criminology shows nearly half (48%) of all police detainees attributed their current offending to alcohol or drugs, with alcohol being more frequently attributed than all other drugs combined. Of those who attributed their offending to drug use, only 25 per cent attributed their crimes to economic factors, such as the need to fund drug addictions, whereas being intoxicated or under the influence of drugs or alcohol were reported as the cause by as many as 40 per cent.

Unfortunately, the criminal justice system is not conducive to rehabilitating drug dependent people who want to change their lives. Despite pledges of government funding over the years, drug rehabilitation services in prison are rare and operate on limited resources in an environment where illicit drugs are likely to be available. Therefore, with their dependency problems unresolved, former prisoners may continue to misuse alcohol and/or other drugs when they return to the community, and are hence more likely to reoffend.

However, people who are deemed suitable by the courts and are motivated to undertake treatment have the opportunity to undertake rehabilitation at Odyssey

House as an alternative to a custodial sentence for non-violent offences e.g. drug possession, selling drugs, breaking and entering, or petty fraud.

In 2011-12, almost half (46%) of Odyssey House clients were under a legal stipulation to undertake rehabilitation: bonded, bailed, home detention order, court diversion program including Magistrates Early Referral Into Treatment Program or Court Alcohol and Drug Assessment Service, or under probation or parole supervision (Odyssey House is not a locked-down facility. As a condition of their admission, all clients agree to abide by restrictions such as not leaving the facility without supervision).

Clients work to change negative attitudes and values, learn practical strategies for dealing with the ups and downs of daily life (from anger management to communication skills), reconnect with their families or create new support networks, and rebuild their lives to become productive and law-abiding members of society.

Rehabilitation produces effective return on investment

• Odyssey House's rehabilitation programs and services assist individuals to overcome their dependence and improve their physical and mental health. They also save the community money through

reduced crime, less family dysfunction, less reliance on welfare and health services, and greater workplace productivity.

• There is no drug use or criminal activity while a person is at Odyssey House. In 2011-12, Odyssey House residents accounted for over 33,256 drug-free and crime-free days. This amounted to a cost saving to society of more than \$18 million.

• Rehabilitation rather than incarceration makes economic sense. The Odyssey House program costs \$88 per person per day or \$32,000 p.a. for treatment services, accommodation and meals; by comparison, it costs \$72,000 p.a. to keep a person in prison, with no treatment provided.

• Two-thirds (67%) of a sample of Odyssey House residents were drug-free three years after completing treatment, with improved psychiatric and general health and significantly reduced criminal activity, according to the Australian Treatment Outcome Study (2007) by the National Drug and Alcohol Research Centre.

• Every \$1 invested in alcohol and other drug treatment results in a \$7 saving to the community according to the longitudinal CALDATA research project. It concluded the biggest cost savings are associated with reduced illicit drug use and criminal behaviour.



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www.odysseyhouse.com.au

June 2013



'A Calm in the Sea of Addiction'

odyssey NEWS



Road to recovery - Mel

A chronic alcohol problem was the gateway to a bigger drug problem for Mel, but her desire to build a better life for her young daughter and herself has seen her graduate Odyssey House after 17 months of treatment, including almost a year at the renowned Parents' and Children's Program.

"I started drinking when I was about 16. It started out as the perfect way to unwind with friends, feel more confident and be 'normal' in social situations. Over time it became a regular three-night binge every week at the pub, starting on Thursdays and ending in a disoriented blur on Sundays while I tried to remember what I'd done. It was a habit I could afford because I had a job at an accounting firm. I told myself I was just young and enjoying myself like everyone else my age, including my friends who were into the same lifestyle.

"By age 22, my 12-drinks-a-night party lifestyle was seriously affecting my life. I remember vomiting in the gutter on

occasion, sometimes calling in sick from work because of blinding hangover headaches, behaving irresponsibly and getting myself into dangerous situations. Some of my boyfriends were pretty big drinkers too and I was assaulted by some of them while I was drunk. I guess I'm lucky I wasn't also assaulted by strangers. I took a long hard look at myself and managed to cut back on my drinking.

"For 12 years I had it under control, but by 34 I felt my life was going nowhere and I went back to my old friend alcohol for comfort. From a glass of bubbly at home, I soon returned to binge drinking, but this time around alcohol wasn't enough for me and it became a gateway to other drugs... I started using amphetamines and my drinking problem became a bigger drug problem. People sometimes forget alcohol is a drug too.

"Two years later I had my daughter Isabelle, but although I fell completely in love with her, becoming a mother didn't stop my drug use

as I struggled with the demands of single motherhood. It was when I finally realised my drug dependence was affecting my ability to care for Isabelle - and that I could in fact lose her - that I admitted the shocking truth of my addiction to myself. As a result, I then also admitted myself to the Odyssey House residential rehabilitation program while Isabelle stayed with carers.

"I don't think I would have sought help if it hadn't been for my little girl; I started out doing it for her, but over time I also began doing it for myself too."

Cont from Page 1...Road to Recovery - Mel

"Being abstinent and not having the crutch of alcohol and amphetamines was incredibly tough at first. The structured environment of Odyssey House and group therapy really helped, as well as the supportive community of other people who are facing similar challenges and working hard to change their lives.

"Six months into my rehabilitation, Isabelle was able to join me and we moved into Odyssey's Parents' & Children's program, which is located on the grounds of the main residential facility. The cottages can house eight families in private rooms, with access to a communal kitchen and dining room, ensuring that family members can live together and also interact with other families with similar experiences.

"Being reunited with Isabelle made me so happy, and even more committed to seeing my treatment through for both of us. Odyssey House is one of the very few rehabilitation programs in Australia where young children can live with their parents while the adults undertake treatment, so I felt very fortunate to have the opportunity. Not only could I focus on dealing with the underlying personal reasons I resorted to alcohol and other drugs, but I could also learn how to be a better mother thanks to the intensive support,

family-specific therapy and practical parenting training that's provided by child psychologists, family support workers and therapists. They not only assist the parents, but also the children to ensure their wellbeing and help develop a happy, healthy, self-supporting family unit.

"I began to feel like I was a good mum, and Isabelle blossomed thanks to Odyssey House.

"Finally, after 17 months of rehabilitation my counsellors and I felt I was ready to leave Odyssey House to start my life afresh. Isabelle and I moved into housing with help from the Drug and Alcohol Women's Network. It was great to live independently while still having access to Odyssey's support networks such as the groups run by the After Care Program. I'm also able to go back to Odyssey whenever I wish to talk to staff members or just regroup myself.

"I was so proud to officially graduate from Odyssey House on 28 October 2012 - Celebrate Recovery Day - and to hear the applause and cheers from the hundreds of people there to congratulate me and my peers, including three other mothers from the Parents' and Children's Program. Isabelle also got to come up on stage with me.

"I spent New Year's Eve with friends and had a brilliant time, proving to myself that I could have fun without alcohol. I know it won't be easy given alcohol is so accessible and such a part of the Australian way of life, but I'm determined.

"I'm now studying floristry at TAFE, which I love. Isabelle is a thriving, happy four-year-old living a normal life with a mother who hasn't touched alcohol or amphetamines for two years.

"I'm so grateful for the new life I've been able to build. Odyssey House was a real pivotal part of my recovery. I learned so much there and had so much support from staff and residents alike. Odyssey House gave me the tools to help me stay in recovery and be a contributing member of society.

"I hope telling my story helps other people to make the life-changing decision to get professional help to overcome their problems with alcohol and other drugs."

A message from the Chairman



Doug Snedden

We are approaching the end of another financial year and Odyssey House remains busy with a full house at our residential facilities and strong demand across other services. Unlike most businesses, for us this results in increasing costs.

Further pressure has been added through the federal government's commitment to bring the pay of community sector workers up to the level of government employees. Unfortunately, the government's promise to fund the increase has not been fulfilled. We support the initiative and will continue the salary increases that commenced this year and will continue in coming years. However, this has severely impacted our financial position.

We receive approximately 80 per cent of funds needed for our operations from federal and state governments. The remainder comes from fundraising, special grants and donations. So, as tax time approaches I would ask you to make any donation you can afford, either to support our general operations or one of our specific projects and activities.

Any practical help is also gratefully received. I would like to thank the Member for Campbelltown, Brian Doyle, the staff of the Campbelltown Council and Bradford Insulation and Leighton Contractors for their assistance in upgrading the access road to our Withdrawal Unit and Assessment and Referral Centre at Minto. The many meetings were very helpful and the in-kind support has saved us significant expense.

It is also important to recognise individuals dealing with dependence on alcohol and other drugs, which remains a current topic across the community. Recent cases of some of the most gifted sports identities highlight the adverse impact on people's lives and careers. Their preparedness to confront their problems and take steps to overcome them deserves support from us all.

Finally, I would like to congratulate our CEO James Pitts who recently received a well-deserved community service award from the University of Western Sydney.

Doug Snedden
Chairman

Leading artists donate family-themed paintings for online auction



Derryn Tal's abstract contemporary work Kaleidoscope Dreams is based on the medley of shape and colour created by these childhood toys



Contemporary realist painter Paul Haggith's Holiday Home, based on fond memories of family holidays in old fibro beach shacks.



Greg McDonald's work Pit Stop features the old Kombi his dad used to drive the family around in on holidays.

Drawing inspiration from what family means to them, 23 talented Australian artists have donated a vibrant array of contemporary and abstract paintings and mixed media artworks for an exhibition and charity auction to benefit Odyssey House.

The Odyssey House Art Fundraiser was announced by CEO James Pitts during National Families Week and will feature an online auction, culminating in an exhibition at Campbelltown Art Gallery from 20-27 June during National Drug Action Week.

People being to own a unique piece of Australian art and help a worthy cause can register their interest and open the bidding at www.odysseyhouse.com.au from 21 May or place a bid at eBay from 1 June; or post comments on the Odyssey House Art Fundraiser Facebook page; the hammer will fall on 30 June.

The family theme of the artworks reflects the importance Odyssey House places on assisting the families of people struggling with alcohol or other drug problems, and the vital role of family members in supporting citizens in recovery, according to Mr Pitts.

"While Odyssey House helps individuals overcome drug dependence and change their lives, we also offer a variety of services to help their families to cope and to heal, particularly young children whose parents are undertaking rehabilitation through our Parents' & Children's Program," Mr Pitts said.

"Those values shine through in the overwhelming generosity of all the artists and particularly Tracie Worth, who has worked enthusiastically with her contacts to gather artworks for the Odyssey House Art Fundraiser. She has donated four artworks, including the throne-like Chair for Charity," he said.

Ms Worth's mission to raise funds for Odyssey House stems from having a loved one undertake rehabilitation for drug dependence, and seeing how helping one person can also help their family.

"Odyssey House is all about sharing, caring and helping people see the light again. Some of us get off track and lose our sense of life direction, and all we need to be able to find the path is to have support and love in our lives," Ms Worth said.

"It warms my heart to provide a way for people to support a worthwhile charitable organisation that makes such a difference, and to acquire a beautiful piece of art that reminds them of family.

"Looking at the Odyssey House Art Fundraiser collection, it's fascinating to see what the artists have created when they thought of family, and how they have expressed their emotions in different ways."

CEO honoured with UWS Community Award



James Pitts, longtime CEO of Odyssey House, was honoured with a 2013 University of Western Sydney (UWS) Community Award at a special ceremony on 17 April.

Presented by UWS Pro Chancellor, Ms Gillian Shadwick, the award recognises outstanding individuals who contribute above and beyond to the Greater Western Sydney community.

Mr Pitts was nominated by UWS School of Medicine Senior Lecturer Louella McCarthy not only for helping thousands of people overcome addiction, but also for enabling UWS medical students to gain firsthand experience of what residential rehabilitation entails through placements at Odyssey House.

"James has engaged with one of the most intractable challenges facing our society: alcohol and other drugs," Ms McCarthy wrote in her nomination.

"James has also devoted himself to ensuring that the many bodies involved in the alcohol and other drugs field remain connected and working together, through his participation on a number of boards and peak bodies at the state, national and regional levels."

"He has also been instrumental, through his partnership with the School of Medicine, in ensuring that the next generation of medical practitioners are aware of the multi-faceted nature of alcohol and other drug addiction and capable of

empathically caring for people in this situation."

Mr Pitts said he was honoured to receive the UWS Community Award for what he sees as his life's vocation, having worked in the field since 1978 and headed Odyssey House since 1984.

"Along with the dedicated staff at Odyssey House, I am proud of the vital work we do to give people the professional help and self-empowerment they need to overcome serious dependence, rebuild their lives and families, and become contributing members of the local community," Mr Pitts said.

"I sincerely thank UWS for this recognition, and for enabling Odyssey House to provide medical students with a real-world understanding of rehabilitation from serious alcohol and other drug problems, which can affect people of all ages and from all walks of life.

"Many students who come to us at Odyssey House have never met someone trying to overcome serious drug dependence, often with a co-existing mental illness, so it can be a huge eye-opener that dispels a lot of misconceptions and hopefully makes them more effective medical practitioners.

"Students quickly learn there's no magic pill to cure long-standing drug dependence."

A message from the Chief Executive Officer



James A. Pitts

We are in the process of preparing our operational budget for the 2013-14 financial year. Anyone who has had the responsibility of preparing a budget, whether for the home or company, will know how challenging it can be. To secure an effective budget there must be a balance between income and expenditure. There are times when these two entities do not always balance, and it is usually the income that is lacking, while costs associated with expenditure are always rising.

As our chairman mentions in his commentary, workers in the social welfare industry received a significant pay increase from December 2012. The Equal Remuneration Order from Fair Work Australia mandates a five per cent increase to employees covered by the Social, Community, Home Care and Disability services (SCHADS). These increases are in effect until 2020 in addition to annual CPI increases. So in our case, the added expenditure has impacted unfavourably on our budget preparation.

To counter the projected increase of more than \$300,000 in next year's budget, we have taken steps to increase our income.

We will implement a plan by which the psychological staff we employ will be able to receive Medicare rebates for services they provide. We are also investigating the possibilities of becoming a registered General Practice Clinic, which would enable us to provide direct medical care to our residents and receive the appropriate rebate from Medicare.

In addition, we are recruiting a senior Fundraising and Marketing Manager to upgrade and refresh our fundraising activities over the next year.

Our field of endeavour is marked by the many challenges we have to face, including meeting the needs of a challenging client population and finding the fiscal resources to do so. In all cases we firmly believe: "The harder we work, the luckier we get!"

James A Pitts, MA
Chief Executive Officer

