

Hailey Trudgeon - FINAL

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SPEAKERS

Outro, Intro, Marlo Slavin, Hailey Trudgeon

I Intro 00:13

Hi there. Thank you for joining us for Six Degrees Of Study an Uneducational Podcast. Today we have Hailey Trudgeon, who is studying a Bachelor of Community Health and a certificate in Narrative Therapy at Taree Universities Campus. We want to show you how it's highly likely there's only six degrees of separation between you, the career and the life you want. This is the Six Degrees podcast.

M Marlo Slavin 00:37

Hello, and welcome. I'm Marlo Slavin the campus coordinator at Taree Universities Campus. And welcome, Hailey. I'm really looking forward to talking with you today and hearing more about your journey. So you are accessing Taree Universities Campus space at the moment as a student, and you're studying Bachelor of Community Health. And I'm particularly interested to talk with you today about your certificate in Narrative Therapy. Do you want to tell us a bit more about what it was that attracted you to study Community Health and particularly Narrative Therapy?

H Hailey Trudgeon 01:12

Yeah, I was working in remote New South Wales at a preschool. And I found that storytelling was really helpful for children when they were going through tough times. And I wanted to find a course that could teach me a bit more about how I could use storytelling for children, especially around mental health. So I googled it and I found Narrative Therapy and Community Work. And yeah, and then I got very interested in Community Health and Community Work. So I enrolled in the Bachelor degree after that.

M Marlo Slavin 01:51

Right, and how long have you been studying the bachelor degrees so far?

H Hailey Trudgeon 01:55
I started in April this year, so not very long.

M Marlo Slavin 01:58
So you're fairly new student? And you've been undertaking the certificate, the Narrative Therapy as a parallel study or part of that degree?

H Hailey Trudgeon 02:05
Yeah, it's parallel. So it's separate.

M Marlo Slavin 02:08
Right. And and is that completed now?

H Hailey Trudgeon 02:11
Almost, I'm just submitting my last assessment this week, actually.

M Marlo Slavin 02:16
Okay. And how's it gone for you?

H Hailey Trudgeon 02:18
It's been really good. I found that I've learned a lot about how to help people tell their stories, especially helping children feel heard when they're going through a tough time. And yeah, it's given me a lot of skills in work opportunities that I've been doing, which has been good.

M Marlo Slavin 02:40
Interesting. I think a lot of people like me, will be a bit unfamiliar with what narrative therapy is, and interested to know, what it's generally considered to be how it's defined. But beyond that, also kind of what it means to you.

H Hailey Trudgeon 02:58
Yeah, so it's a form of counseling. But it's more focused on storytelling and helping people find

Yeah, so it's a form of counseling, but it's more focused on storytelling, and helping people into the alternative story. So I don't know if you've experienced this, but often, when people feel distressed or worried about something, whatever they're worried about becomes, sort of overwhelms them seems to be the only story of their life at the time. What narrative therapy does, it brings out all these alternative stories of people's lives and the stories of strength and resilience. And Michael White, who created Narrative Therapy spoke about it's like people that come to narrative therapists are coming, thinking that they're on a journey without a map. But what narrative therapists do is help people realize that they have the map or the skills to create a map all along by just remembering the skills they've used in the past. That makes sense.

M Marlo Slavin 04:03

Yeah, it sounds like it's really empowering the person with in showing them the tools they already have within themselves to sort of reclaim their story. Does that sound right?

H Hailey Trudgeon 04:14

Yes. Yeah.

M Marlo Slavin 04:15

Great. And so you've been studying it as a certificate. But I understand that even before that you've been doing some work, which really led you in this direction. Do you want to talk a little bit about some examples of the work and and where you've seen that working quite powerfully for? It's just many children you've been working with, isn't it?

H Hailey Trudgeon 04:34

Yes. Yeah. At the moment, it's just been children. Yeah. I first started working in a childcare center in Old Bar and it was during 2019 When the bushfires came. And a lot of children had to evacuate their homes and stay in evacuation centers. And I wanted to help children debrief about their experience. So I sat down with a heap of children and wrote down their stories. And they drew pictures. And we created a book and got it published. And that wasn't completely Narrative Therapy yet. But it's like a similar idea. And that's what got me very interested in what else I could do like that.

M Marlo Slavin 05:21

What was the book called Hailey?

H Hailey Trudgeon 05:22

When the fires came to Old Bar.

M Marlo Slavin 05:25
And has that been published?

H Hailey Trudgeon 05:26
Yeah. And it's at the Taree Library.

M Marlo Slavin 05:30
Oh, fantastic. And I understand at that time, you weren't far from being a child yourself? How old were you when you did that?

H Hailey Trudgeon 05:38
I was 17 at the time.

M Marlo Slavin 05:40
Right. Yeah, I think that's pretty amazing. So what was it that you saw happening for the children as they worked through their stories that really led you to believe there was something important in that for you?

H Hailey Trudgeon 05:53
I think the main thing that really inspired me was hearing the kids stories and how when they had those shared conversations, it just brought them all together. And I think it when they're together, they felt stronger, hopefully. And then the feedback I got after the book, I still get feedback now, like from people who have read it, and said that their kids really enjoyed having, you know, knowing that they're not alone in what they're experiencing. I think it helps people feel less isolated.

M Marlo Slavin 06:29
I think it's it sounds to me, like it's got a lot of potential. And I think today, you've been doing some work that relates to this. Do you want to tell us a little bit about that?

H Hailey Trudgeon 06:38
Yeah, so I've been working in some communities around Singleton. And I created a coloring book for kids, which is just a list of skills and knowledge is about if you have a loved one who works in emergency services, what you normally do to stay calm. So there were things like

petting a dog or going for a bush walk something like that. And yeah, there's, I've been traveling out there and having conversations with kids about what did you do? And what could you do next time? And it's just a sharing of knowledge and skills. And I find it. I think it's really empowering. And I hope it I hope it is, I find it empowering for myself when I do it.

M Marlo Slavin 07:26

Yeah, it sounds like it. So you're saying that, you ask them in the end? If they would take those skills and turn them into a superpower? What would that be?

H Hailey Trudgeon 07:37

Yeah. And I, Yeah, I've had some really funny answers with that, like today, a boy said that he reads when his dad goes to the fires, and I asked him if that was a superpower, what do you call it? He said, "Well, if it was a super power, I would shoot books out of my hands".

M Marlo Slavin 07:57

That's a funny image, shoot books out of your hands. That's fantastic. So I wonder if you could tell us a little bit more about sort of where you think what direction you think this will take you in? I mean, it may be too soon to tell, because you're really early in your degree, and you don't yet know what all the professional possibilities are for you. But I wonder if you have a sense of you, obviously very interested in narrative therapy, I wonder if you have a sense that that's going to take you somewhere in particular for your career.

H Hailey Trudgeon 08:32

Yeah, I'm very interested in group work. And I, when I was out west, I helped with the RFDS, like the Royal Flying Doctors in like, crisis situations. After the there was a fire in our town, and I really enjoyed just sitting with the kids and having a conversation, to debrief and now have a lot more skills. And I'm really interested in yeah, group work, whether it's a youth group or something where I can get people together over shared experiences, and help people feel less alone in whatever they're going through.

M Marlo Slavin 09:15

It's wonderful, interested to know, what you've picked up in your certificate course that have added to what you already knew and really helped you to learn the skills?

H Hailey Trudgeon 09:28

Yeah, I think something I really took away from it is seeing a person is part of a broader context. So when you feeling like for example, I think myself like if I feel shame for, you know, have like having moved back home or something, I think, you know, and I feel failure, it's

failure in relation to what and is it more part of a social expectation or is this an expectation I've put on myself? And is it something I agree with? We call it one of my friends call it the pool of discourses.

M Marlo Slavin 10:14
Yeah, that's beautiful.

H Hailey Trudgeon 10:15
Being aware of all these discourses to help you realize whatever problem you're facing may not be part of you. It's more external.

M Marlo Slavin 10:27
Yeah right.

H Hailey Trudgeon 10:28
It's easier to notice.

M Marlo Slavin 10:31
What are you doing, are you swimming through this pool of discourses?

H Hailey Trudgeon 10:35
Yeah, I think you're swimming and you're like, pushing them away.

M Marlo Slavin 10:39
Very nice. What a beautiful image. And is that water? Like, really blue and calming and soothing?

H Hailey Trudgeon 10:48
Yeah, I think well,

M Marlo Slavin 10:49
What are the discourses like?

What are the discourses like?

H

Hailey Trudgeon 10:51

I reckon the discourses like lots of rapid waves and stuff.

M

Marlo Slavin 10:57

You might need a surfboard in this pool of discourse.

H

Hailey Trudgeon 11:03

Yeah, there was this metaphor, I learnt last week, about a river, about narrative therapy. But it's, if you're thinking about a river, when your narrative therapist, you're working with a person or people, and instead of being in the river, if the river is the person's life, you kind of step onto the riverbank. And you look down at the river, so you're not immersed in the problems, but you can like assist them a bit better. And you can see, oh, there's a really chaotic area of the river over there. Over there, it's really calm and still.

M

Marlo Slavin 11:39

Fascinating, I can see why you're so interested in this. For my last question, today, I'd like to ask you why you think the world needs more narrative therapy?

H

Hailey Trudgeon 11:52

Oh man, um, I think I've had because when we do the training, you kind of practice on each other. And I found it very helpful. For me. When I was growing up, I had a friend called Lillian, and she, she passed away. And I used to, she had a disability. And that's why she passed away. And I used to feel very angry that she'd gone. And then I did have this conversation with someone using narrative therapy techniques. And it really helped me because it's called saying hello again. And I got to say hello to her again. And now when I go and work with kids, because she's really a motivator for me, when I go and work with kids, because I think of how she often felt like she couldn't be heard. And other people helped her feel heard. And when I work with kids, I can now picture her smiling, and she's a big motivator for me when I go out to work. And, yeah, I that's what really made me fall in love with narrative therapy. And I think that more people need to have conversations, where they get to say hello, again, to people they've lost, because it's very powerful.

M

Marlo Slavin 13:17

Absolutely. Yeah, I think you're spot on there. And I think when you first started talking with me about narrative therapy, I thought, there's going to be a lot of potential there for helping people to work through their grieving processes. And there's most certainly a lot of need for that in the

world. So I really encourage you on this journey, Hayley, because it seems like you're going through a process of discovering what it is you really want to do that's meaningful in the world. And I think that's absolutely amazing, especially that you're doing it so young, you know, you're doing many, many people go through a long journey of discovery to get to where you are at. So I think it's going to be really interesting to see where you get to with this.

H Hailey Trudgeon 14:06
Thank you.

M Marlo Slavin 14:06
And congratulations on finding that way, finding your way with this. And I guess we'll leave it there for today. So thank you so much for joining with the Six Degrees of Separation podcast. It's been wonderful to connect with you and hear your story.

H Hailey Trudgeon 14:24
Thank you.

M Marlo Slavin 14:25
Thank you.

O Outro 14:26
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