

A photograph of a sandy beach with footprints and some seaweed. The sand is light brown and shows several distinct footprints. To the right, there is a patch of dark, wet sand with green seaweed and some fallen leaves. The overall scene is a natural, outdoor setting.

Songlines and Footprints

The Association Of Participating Service Users

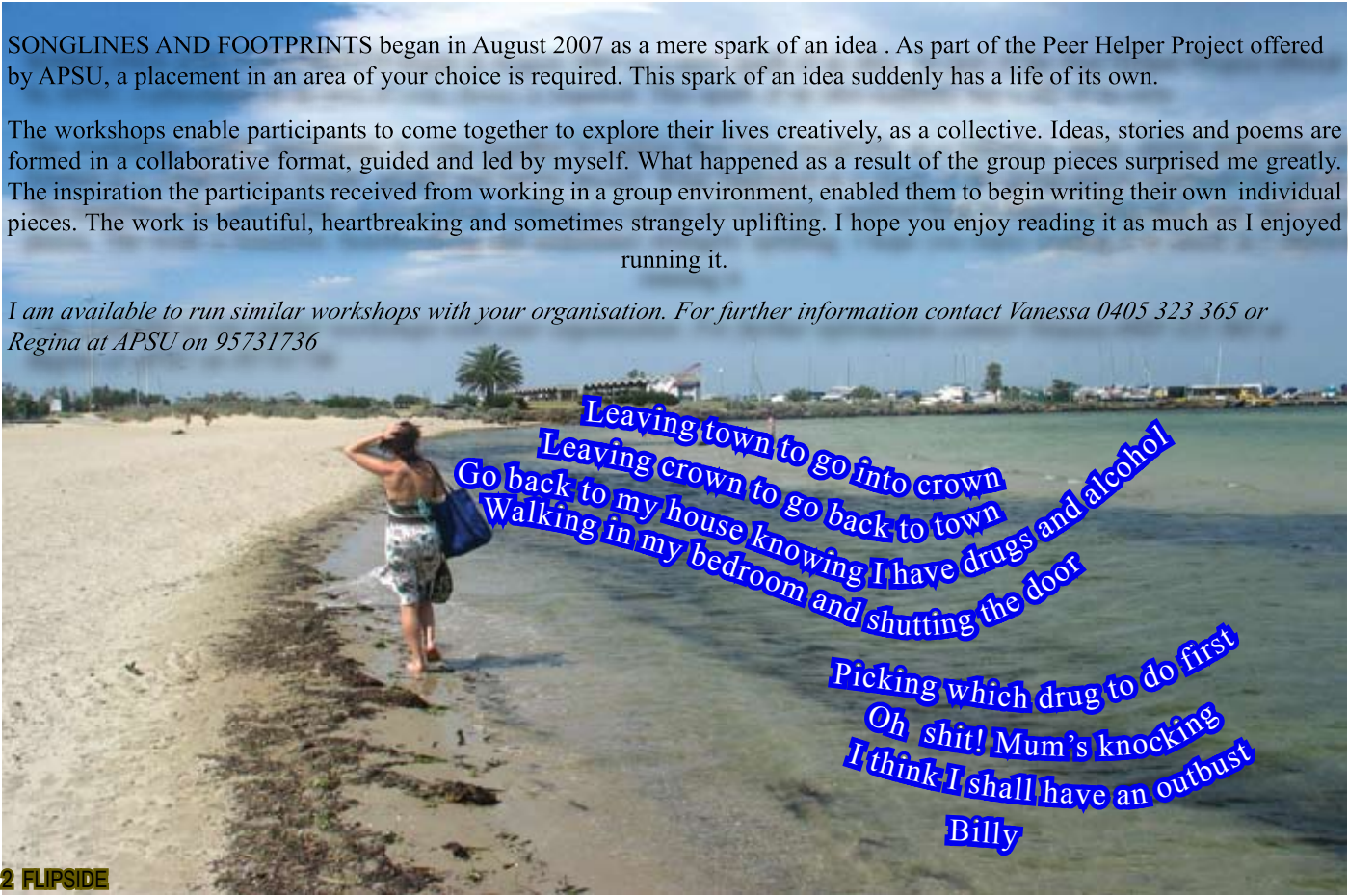
Flipside

Summer Newsletter 2008

SONGLINES AND FOOTPRINTS began in August 2007 as a mere spark of an idea . As part of the Peer Helper Project offered by APSU, a placement in an area of your choice is required. This spark of an idea suddenly has a life of its own.

The workshops enable participants to come together to explore their lives creatively, as a collective. Ideas, stories and poems are formed in a collaborative format, guided and led by myself. What happened as a result of the group pieces surprised me greatly. The inspiration the participants received from working in a group environment, enabled them to begin writing their own individual pieces. The work is beautiful, heartbreaking and sometimes strangely uplifting. I hope you enjoy reading it as much as I enjoyed running it.

*I am available to run similar workshops with your organisation. For further information contact Vanessa 0405 323 365 or Regina at APSU on 95731736*

A photograph of a woman standing on a sandy beach, looking out at the ocean. She is wearing a patterned dress and has her hand on her head. The background shows a marina with many sailboats and buildings under a blue sky with light clouds.

Leaving town to go into crown  
Leaving crown to go back to town  
Go back to my house knowing I have drugs and alcohol  
Walking in my bedroom and shutting the door

Picking which drug to do first  
Oh shit! Mum's knocking  
I think I shall have an outbust  
Billy

## **CYBORG - TERMINATOR**

**No jokes I wish I was a terminator  
With blood and skin on the outside  
And metal in the inside  
But why?**

**Terminators don't ever feel down  
Terminators never feel pain  
Terminators always lift the game  
They never feel shame  
To me, they are always up there on the wall  
of fame,  
If you mess with them they will tip your  
blood down the drain**

**They reach their goals  
To them there is no such thing as lost souls**

**They never worry about dying  
They are always trying**

**They are put on Earth for something  
It could be everything they aren't bluffing**

**Billy**

**I am in a dirty alley whacking up  
hammer,  
Two hours later I'm in the fucking  
slammer,  
With jail birds looking at me like a  
glamour,  
Hanging out like a dog,  
Call my mum she starts crying,  
And I start lying, I didn't do it,  
But they got you on camera.**

**I start reflecting on my life,  
It would be easy to grab a knife,  
But I need to stand up and fight in life,  
What am I doing and where am I  
going.  
All I know is my mind is flowing,  
I'm going to make sure drugs and  
crime is slowing,  
I want my skin to start glowing.**

**Ross**

**DEAD BEACH**

**THE LOUD MOUTH DRUNKS,  
THE SAND FEELS HEAVIER,  
SEAGULLS SQUAWKING, TRYING TO STEAL MY CHIPS,  
POLLUTION, THE RUBBISH, FITS, DEAD FISH,  
DARK CLOUDS.  
THE PEOPLE SEEM FAKE.  
THEY DON'T KNOW ANYTHING ABOUT LIFE,  
THE SOUND OF LAUGHTER LIKE A MOCKERY.  
JUST WANNA CURL UP AND DIE  
WASH AWAY  
CRY**

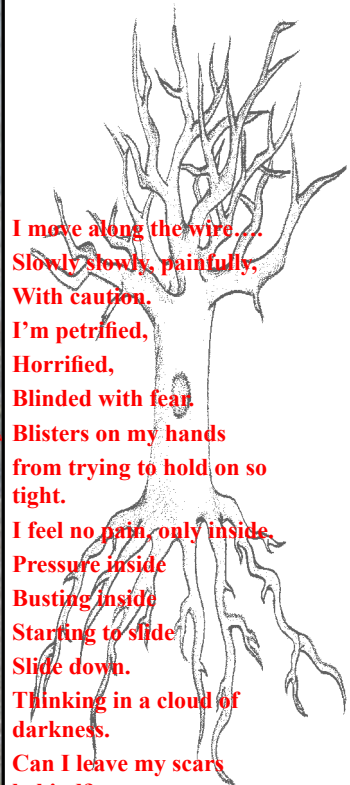


*People playing Frisbee,  
cricket,  
Laughter sounds contagious,  
Hazy broken sand castles,  
Children running back and  
forth.  
I just feel alive, free, it  
engulfs me.*

*Waves crashing on the shore,  
People, normal, sun tanned, lying in  
the sand,  
So hot, so beautiful  
Salt, cold beer, sweat.  
The smell of seaweed.*

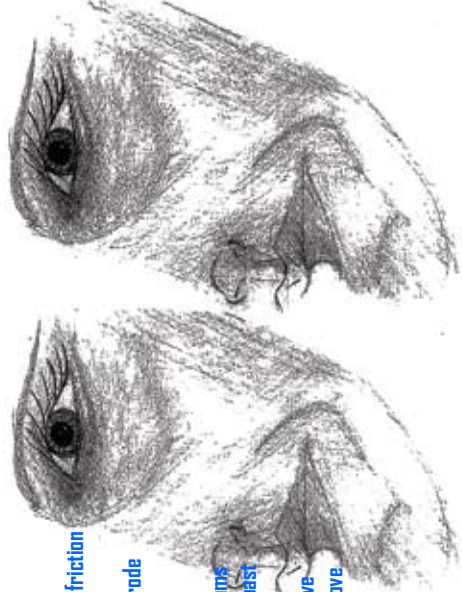
*Beach*

**I move along the wire....  
Slowly slowly, painfully,  
With caution.  
I'm petrified,  
Horried,  
Blinded with fear.  
Blisters on my hands  
from trying to hold on so  
tight.  
I feel no pain, only inside,  
Pressure inside  
Busting inside  
Starting to slide  
Slide down.  
Thinking in a cloud of  
darkness.  
Can I leave my scars  
behind?**



Every time my mind takes a grip  
I feel I'm going to flip  
Back to the old way of life  
Every consequence lands me in strife  
As I do battle with the links of addiction  
Stabbing me in the back, causing spinal friction  
I walk the long weary road  
Watching the landscape around me corrode  
Deciphering my hidden, untapped codes  
Breaking through the seams  
To discover a new life with fulfilled dreams  
Abandoning the violent screams of my past  
To torch vast fields  
That yield and yield my grace from above  
Expressing my willingness for a life of love.

Jimmy



# I WISH I COULD CONTROLL THE WORLD WA

# THAT'S THE PROBLEM I'VE GOT



I am a sandcastle. I can be built, but I can't fall apart.



But then I can fall apart.



Also a sandcastle cannot stand forever.

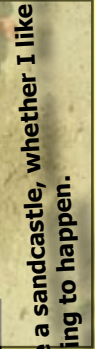


But

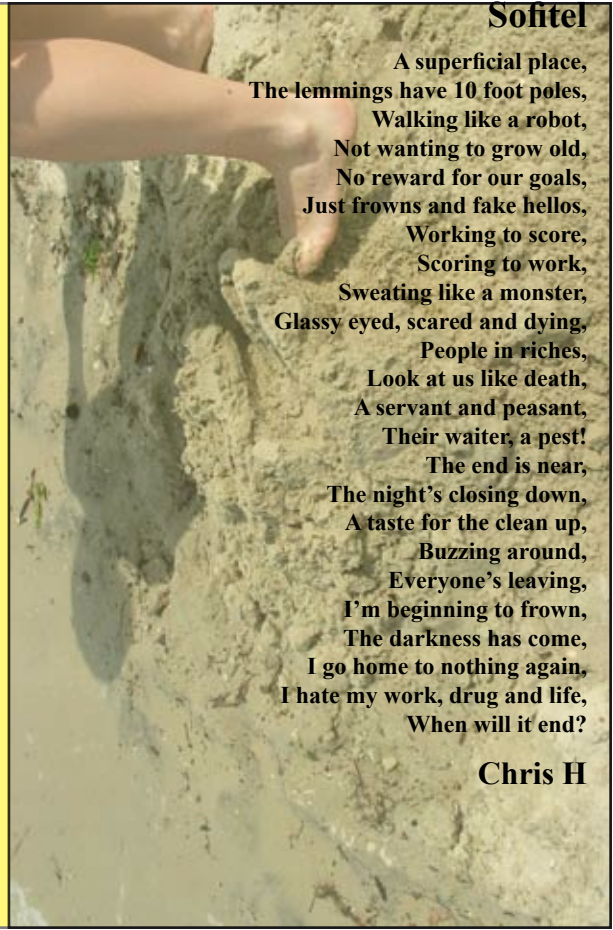
Also can be looked after,



You can also kick one over, which in turn feels like they walk all over me.



My life has to be like a sandcastle, whether I like it or not. Which means things are going to happen.



# Sofitel

A superficial place,  
 The lemmings have 10 foot poles,  
 Walking like a robot,  
 Not wanting to grow old,  
 No reward for our goals,  
 Just frowns and fake hellos,  
 Working to score,  
 Scoring to work,  
 Sweating like a monster,  
 Glassy eyed, scared and dying,  
 People in riches,  
 Look at us like death,  
 A servant and peasant,  
 Their waiter, a pest!  
 The end is near,  
 The night's closing down,  
 A taste for the clean up,  
 Buzzing around,  
 Everyone's leaving,  
 I'm beginning to frown,  
 The darkness has come,  
 I go home to nothing again,  
 I hate my work, drug and life,  
 When will it end?

Chris H

I would make everyone read *The Outsiders* and *Where's Wally*. They

Miles Davis. If I could rule the world



7 FLIPSIDE


would have to look at *The Kids* and watch

the trees and look at my stereos all day. Dance to Kylie and

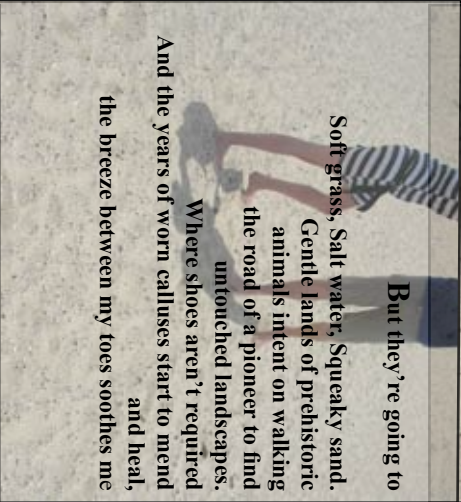
grave with pride up on the mountain with no crossroad or path straight there forward or back  
under sky's the limit

to a destination of your liking

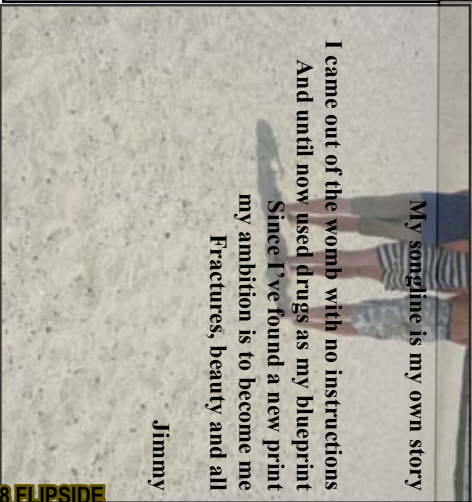
The flats are nowhere like home.



My footprints have been?  
Largely on a treadmill-  
Over and over  
like a conveyer belt  
of the beaten track  
to walk  
on the thistles, to take the same track, to tread  
the same thistles  
Sometimes I feel like a  
pioneer uncovering secret trails, other times I  
feel like a puppet pawn being  
herded by society being  
told how and where to walk



But they're going to  
Soft grass, Salt water, Squeaky sand.  
Gentle lands of prehistoric  
animals intent on walking  
the road of a pioneer to find  
untouched landscapes.  
Where shoes aren't required  
And the years of worn calluses start to mend  
and heal,  
the breeze between my toes soothes me



My songline is my own story  
I came out of the womb with no instructions  
And until now used drugs as my blueprint  
Since I've found a new print  
my ambition is to become me  
Fractures, beauty and all

Jimmy



**My footprints have been..... (where)**

**Laying there thinking where have I been**

**Laying there thinking how did I get here**

**Wondering where did I go wrong**

**Why me why me**

**But they're going to..... (where)**

**A whole new life**

**A whole new change**

**A whole new me**

**Where am I going**

**My songline is my new story**

**I don't feel I know yet**

**I feel lost**

**I feel pain**

**I just don't know**

My footprints have been....

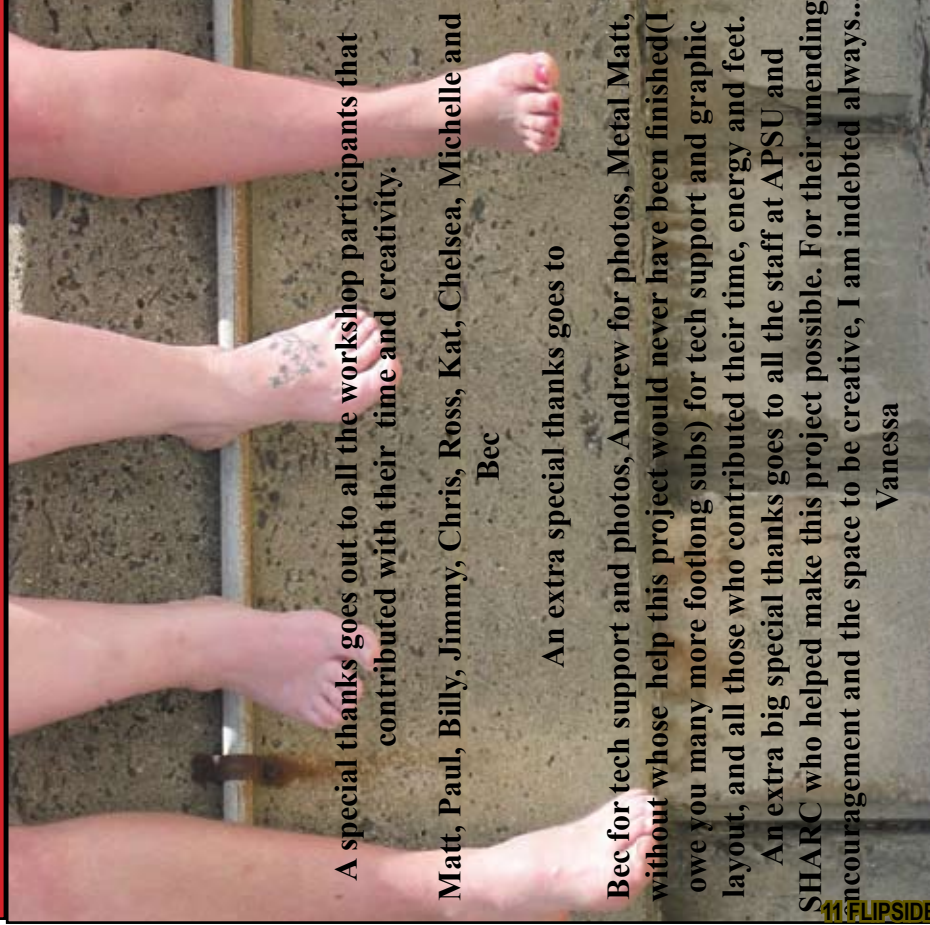
I have never been better, always worse  
Ridiculed for nothing, for being a girl  
Doing things to fit in, to become one of them  
I lashed out at everyone because of my sex  
Communication ended when sex begins  
My soul blackened when the drugs started to win  
I became an object of their fantasy, my nightmare  
Prowling the eerie streets at night  
Waiting for them, to get me high  
Feeling empty and lost, my body is now yours  
Been dumped from a car, harassed and robbed  
What happened to my identity?  
All those around me, I am your toy  
My needs don't matter, I owe you, I am yours  
Feeling broken, but still need that interaction  
To destroy me a little more  
I feel nothing, I am nothing, I am yours  
Not knowing how to change my world  
I get in deeper, deeper, darker, lonely  
This has been my box  
A sexual nightmare  
Where is my dignity?  
Where and what is my identity?  
But they're going to... where?  
It's hard to break  
Treating yourself like a saint  
Looking at life as if your life is at stake!  
I feel lonely, exposed, raw  
All my mirrored behaviors are now old and sore  
The box I was in felt so normal, it's weird  
I thought everyone was so rampant and free  
I thought I was free, but it was a lie  
I brushed everything off, but it still sticks to me  
deep  
My life as a night creature, now it feels sore  
I have connected with what I have done  
Just trying to fit in  
Please break this cycle I'm in

Chris H

**My footprints have been nowhere  
But they're going somewhere  
My life can be dangerous and full of strife. It's all like one big knife. Sometimes I run on the blunt side. And they can go on the  
sharp side  
But why haven't they gone on the flat side? - Billy**

These are a few of my favourite things and they're not raindrops on roses or whiskers on kittens...

...but if I could rule the world I would roll it up and smoke it, ash it in my hand then crumble it to nothing...



A special thanks goes out to all the workshop participants that contributed with their time and creativity.

**Matt, Paul, Billy, Jimmy, Chris, Ross, Kat, Chelsea, Michelle and Bec**

An extra special thanks goes to

**Bec for tech support and photos, Andrew for photos, Metal Matt, without whose help this project would never have been finished (I owe you many more footlong subs) for tech support and graphic layout, and all those who contributed their time, energy and feet.**

**An extra big special thanks goes to all the staff at APSU and SHARC who helped make this project possible. For their unending encouragement and the space to be creative, I am indebted always...**

**Vanessa**

## The Association of Participating Service Users

APSU believes that individuals who use alcohol and other drug treatment services are the reason the system exists; their needs, strengths and expertise should drive the system. APSU is run by and for people who use or have used services.

We invite you to join us in having a say. We need your help to give us all a fair go. If you would like to become a member, (at no cost), please fill out the form below

## Membership Application

**I wish to become a member of APSU. I would like to:**

- Receive the quarterly FLIPSIDE newsletter
- Be sent information about how to become involved.

Name . . . . .

Address . . . . .

Phone . . . . .

Email . . . . .

Signature . . . . . Date. . . . .

**Are you:**

- service provider    service user    family member
- other ?

## CONFIDENTIALITY STATEMENT

All personal details obtained by APSU will be kept confidential and will only be used for the purposes outlined above. Personal details will not be given out by APSU to other members.

Mail to:  
The Association of Participating Service Users, 140 Grange Road, Carnegie 3163.