



## Media Information

Speech by Professor Roger Packham, 24 March 2007

### Why a Walk for Values?

We want this walk to promote the advancement of values in all facets of our society – personal, family, work, sport, governance and the like.

We see values as aiding our achievement of a just and sustainable society in the face of complexity and change.

And we will also be walking today to celebrate the diversity that we enjoy in our Australian nation, and the unity that human values enable to emerge from this diversity.

In Australia today, the word *value* has several meanings, but generally its meaning has come to be dominated by its *economic* sense of:

*The quality of being most useful*

A fuller meaning of the word, but one that cannot be measured or judged quite as easily, is:

*A principle, standard or quality considered worthwhile or desirable*

Somehow it seems easier for us to think about and agree on what is *useful* - even though this is generally short-term - than it is for us to agree on what is *worthwhile* - which tends to require a longer-term view: But we know when we are achieving something *worthwhile* by the sense of peace that it generates within us.

All are seeking this peace.

Values are important as they affect our individual learned behaviours, and it is all these individual behaviours combined that give rise to a particular community's culture.

To improve our society, and for individuals to lead worthwhile lives, we each need to think about the values we hold, and how we apply these Human Values in our daily lives to help us act and make decisions

This is what this walk aims to promote – a personal reflection on the values we hold, and how to better live by them.

The walk is promoting five universal human values – *Truth, Right Conduct, Love, Peace and Non-violence*. The power of focusing on these five values is that they can be described and interpreted by a language and behaviour suitable to any cultural context, and can be practiced in everyday life.

They celebrate the diversity of Australia through a unifying theme.

### **What is the National Walk for Values?**

This walk is occurring simultaneously in Brisbane, Melbourne, Adelaide and Perth, providing an Australian-wide context. The walks are the opportunity for each participant to particularly focus on one of the five human values.

We want the walk to remind you, as Mahatma Gandhi said, to *Be the change you want to see in the world*

As you walk, you can think about what the value you have chosen means to you, and how it can be used to help you make decision on actions to better live your life, and to help others to improve their lives.

At the end of the walk we will hear some very short stories from speakers to elaborate on what values mean to them. This will further aid our own reflections. Then we will return to our homes, our families and our friends with the aim of practicing over the next year this value we each selected, and to watch how this affects our life and the lives of those with whom we interact.

Hopefully most of you will then be able to join the walk again next year, and do the same with another of these inspiring five human values. Let me leave you with the words of Nelson Mandela, who said *The construction of that house of peace needs my hand. It needs your hand.*

Thank you – and enjoy the walk!

Roger Packham  
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