



NATIONAL WALK FOR VALUES PERTH

Saturday, 12 April 2008 – Perth

**Summary of Talk given by
Dr Fiona Wood**

Dr Wood opened by saying that every single one of us is unique and special and has a gift to give. In her case, as a result of considerable education and training she became a surgeon, but unless she operates, it is wasted. "I see suffering every day and it is my privilege to do whatever I can."

In 2002 her life changed. She believed that a window opened into our world and all of a sudden people wanted to know what she was doing. She hastened to day that every thing she has done has been in collaboration with others—that what they were doing was caring—and caring an awful lot. They cared with every ounce of energy they had.

The team treating those injured in the Bali bombing wanted desperately to ensure survival. When that was not possible, they wanted to ensure that every bit of information was gathered so that a death incurred was not in vain—that those in years to come might be helped through the experience and knowledge.

"In my mind's eye I can see those people when I close my eyes at night—those who have made an enormous difference—they have ensured survival to those who came behind them."

"After this, I started seeing things differently. I could see people doing things for people they would never know, just because they cared."

After this experience, Dr Wood said that she could see society changing. It was not just 2002, but afterwards. The response to the Tsunami was another example of people responding because they cared and because they knew there was a need.

She said that all change starts with people listening to this voice, deep in the soul – that we all have this voice deep inside. How many listen to that voice?

"Today we have heard beautiful music and heard drumming that stirred us as we walked along—all of us have gifts. How often do we make others around us feel

special? How often do we less than our best to make others around us feel more comfortable? Far too often, I would suggest. We can all be better people.”

Dr Wood said that we all have these core values—we all know genetically what is right and wrong, but we sometimes choose to over-ride that knowledge. We choose, as we go forward in life, many, many things. She said that we are all capable of spreading good news, good stories, but we often choose not to—that we hear that the media spreads bad news because of demand. Then we need to change that demand. If we want to hear good news, we need to tell good news.

If we want change we need to look inside – that change happens within each and every individual – that the only one who can change this is our self.

Dr Wood concluded by sharing an experience which had a profound impact on her.

She went to the north of WA, where she saw things which she never even imagined were real. “We were sitting on a beach with a big bonfire where we could smell the dry and there were just so many stars and it is just awesome—our country, all of our country. I was sitting there next to an indigenous lady whom I had been with all day – someone I had shared the problems with for a short, short period of time.”

“I was overwhelmed – more than by the problem - by the people trying their best to solve the problem. People actually doing their best. As I sat there in the dark I turned to the lady and said “What motivates you?”

She said “To do the best for my children. What about you?” She was everybody’s mother in a community of six hundred people where half of the group members were under eighteen years of age.

“Choices we make today make our history.

If we want a society based on the integrity of each individual we have to address the core values. If we want a society that is peaceful, we have to make that decision – each and every single one of us. We have to listen to that voice and allow others around us to listen to theirs.

We all have choice. We chose to be here today because we believe in people, believe in humanity. I think that choice is a good one. We will make many more choices – today, tomorrow and in the years to come.

All I can say is that you consider your choices and make them the best you can.”