



Spotlight on the CF community

Melissa Middleton: A true global explorer

A true global explorer, she is the first person living with Cystic Fibrosis to have travelled to every continent on Earth. She has just returned from filming a documentary on her most outstanding journey, to Antarctica. Other adventures involved rafting the Zambezi river in Africa, riding a motorbike in Vietnam to the Chinese border, and climbing to the highest point overlooking Macchu Picchu. She has written a travel guide for cystic fibrosis patients based on her own experience of travel.

Melissa's sister, Raeleen, also had Cystic Fibrosis, and passed away in 1989, at age 15. Melissa became quite disillusioned due to her own battle with the same disease and also watched the stress and pressure of grief affect her family. Melissa then lost her mother in 1997 to cancer.

As both a patient and a sibling, she realized that her destiny was with children and families like hers, thus establishing the new siblings programs launched Australia wide in November 2003.

Melissa is a qualified Grief and Loss counsellor and runs a small private practise for people who are bereaved due to chronic illness.

She has worked extensively in the recreation for chronic illness field in Ireland, USA, Canada, New Zealand, and Australia. She combines her passion for the outdoors with adventure based counselling methods in order to address the specific needs of those with chronic illness and grief.

As a founding director of Purple Soup's programs, Melissa delivers innovative, adaptive adventure programs, therapeutic camps and creates amazing theme days and "time out" programs.

Melissa has just won the Victorian Childrens Community Award for her commitment to the CFV Siblings program. She has innovated and directed these programs for over 5 years.

She was also nominated as an Outstanding Achiever in Career Chick magazine.