



## **Acts of Kindness**

### My Yarn Group

Friendship is such a wonderful act of kindness both in the giving and the receiving.

I have become part of a new friendship group. We have come together as a result of attending a very special life movement class. I wrote about this class and the unique human who facilitated it in an earlier blog, *No man is an island*.

Due to health matters, our movement teacher has had to suspend her class, perhaps temporarily perhaps indefinitely. In the meantime, some of us have begun catching up for the type of conversations which sustain us in times such as these, but also for the everyday sharing of our lives that we do. We have called ourselves a 'Yarn Group' – nothing to do with knitting – using our peculiar Aussie vernacular.

We have a couple of agreed upon conditions for our group: each of us gets to speak for a few minutes, uninterrupted. Following the short 'monologues', any of us may ask questions, being curious and compassionate. We must resist taking the conversation over, pivoting it back to ourselves. The questions are about listening respectfully, showing interest and sharing a moment of the speaker's life.

This group was initiated by the life movement teacher. She had become disenchanted with the conversations she was having, ones in which the 'listener' seemed to be rehearsing their next comment, listening in name only but in reality waiting to make it about them. You know, "Oh that happened to me..." and "that reminds of when I..."

Without becoming too precious about these things, it was a timely reminder for me to be aware of the conversation as a two-way exchange. Was I actively being interested in their lives? Was I able to enter their world, however briefly or imperfectly? If not, if I was only ever interested if we were talking about me, what does that say about me?

Within my Yarn Group, I am practising a kind of mindfulness. It is not all hardship either. By practising curiosity and compassion, I *become* more curious and compassionate.