



## Finding support

Depression and anxiety in the legal profession



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## The Tristan Jepson Memorial Foundation aims to decrease distress, disability and the causes of depression and anxiety in the legal profession

### The story so far

The Tristan Jepson Memorial Foundation was set up in memory of George and Marie's son, Tristan, a former University of NSW law student, young lawyer and comedian. Tristan suffered from severe clinical depression and took his own life, just four weeks after his 26th birthday on the 28th October 2004.

The foundation exists in memory of Tristan's love of life, his passion for the law and social justice, his wonderful sense of humour and his love for and loyalty to family and friends.

Tristan's death came as an incredible shock to his family and friends. Few knew of his ongoing battle with depression. At a gathering of some of his friends after his funeral, a recurrent theme emerged. Some of the young women's boyfriends who also suffered from depression had sworn them to secrecy and would not seek help. George and Marie then decided to speak out about Tristan's death and his battle with depression, against the norm that they ought not mention his illness or that he had taken his own life.

The Foundation has gone from strength to strength capturing the support of the entire legal community. From all corners of the profession - law students, barristers, solicitors, academics, legal support staff, as well as members of the medical fraternity and so many more, the Foundation has captured everyone's hearts.

The Inaugural Tristan Jepson Memorial Lecture was held in the Banco Court of the NSW Supreme Court in September 2006. The annual lectures provide a forum for the legal community to come together and discuss the issues the profession faces regarding depression and anxiety. These lectures are aimed at creating education and awareness while also finding strategies to help improve the lives of those working in or associated with the profession.

### Accessing research

The Foundation has collaborated with the Brain and Mind Research Institute to produce important research into depression experienced in the legal industry in Australia. The research is a significant step forward in understanding the issues surrounding the alarming levels of depression and anxiety exhibited in those choosing to study and practice law.

The research can be found at:  
<http://cald.anu.edu.au/docs/Law%20Report%20Website%20version%204%20May%2009.pdf>

### New developments

- A new website for the foundation has recently been developed and can be found at [www.tjmf.org.au](http://www.tjmf.org.au)
- You can now register for the 2010 Tristan Jepson Foundation Memorial lecture through the website
- The Foundation's Board is reviewing a 4 year plan and a Working Party has been established to help drive the Foundation's initiatives

### We need your help

The TJMF is a voluntary organisation, and needs your help. If you are currently undertaking, involved with or planning initiatives related to depression and anxiety in the legal profession, please let us know.

For more information on the Tristan Jepson Memorial Foundation, or if you wish to become involved or donate, please contact Marie Jepson at [marie.jepson@tjmf.org.au](mailto:marie.jepson@tjmf.org.au).