

Supporting Others - looking after our carer friends.mp3

Gretchen [00:00:10] Hello there and welcome to Wildlife Heroes Caring for the Carers. The podcast that takes care of wildlife volunteers. There are over 15,000 wildlife volunteers around the country. So the Foundation for National Parks and Wildlife is aiming to start a mental health conversation around the five key topics that worry you the most. Being a climate warrior, personal wellbeing, community conflict, catastrophic events, and today supporting others: how to help those around us who are crying out for help. In each episode of Caring for the Carers, we'll get to know an individual wildlife volunteer around a particular theme. And then with a guest psychologist and counsellor, we'll look at how that situation might reflect broader experiences in the care community. I'm Gretchen Miller, an audio documentary maker and podcast. With a longstanding passion for discussing how we as humans intersect with our natural world. With us in the studio, volunteer Tilly Gray, a wildlife carer from Sydney. She loves all animals, humans included. And she's currently working on the Wildlife Care, a rehabilitation manual, How to Care for Human Beings, amongst other things. And Sally Gillespie joins us on the line. She's a member of Psychology for a Safe Climate, the Climate Wellbeing Network and the Climate Psychology Alliance, a former psychotherapist and past president of the Young Society of Sydney. Sally now presents talks and workshops on climate psychology and eco psychology. We're recording this in rather unprecedented times, just as the COVID-19 virus is really taking hold in Australia. So in some ways, our conversation might date, in other ways we're really diving deep into some essences of the human condition and human experience. We're at a tipping point. Around the world and the pressure is on for everybody.

Gretchen [00:02:19] And so that's why we think it's really imperative that all of us start talking about our mental health. Wildlife carers are particularly on the frontline. I hope you enjoy our conversation. And if you find yourself getting distressed at any point, don't forget you can call Lifeline on 13 11 14. Tilly let's go to you first. Tell me a little bit about yourself as a carer.

Tilly [00:02:45] Well, I really, really love the animals I look after. And I see them all as individuals who have their own personalities and their own wants and needs and I detest thinking of them as numbers. I will always name them, or rather, I always kind of let them tell me what their name might be. As a carer one of the things I do is I guess I cry a lot when I lose an animal. I don't try to stop those tears. There was a time when I did when I thought, oh, I have to really be strong if I want to keep doing this. And then I realised that I'm doing this for the very reason that they are worth crying about. And it helped me a lot and it helped me to keep going with this because their lives are so meaningful. And I accepted that.

Gretchen [00:03:28] When did you start? Two years ago, I think. How old were you then?

Tilly [00:03:31] Oh, 24. I suppose 26 now.

Gretchen [00:03:34] What was your situation?

Tilly [00:03:36] I was working as a horticulturalist, so a gardener. And I used to watch the ducks around my work have ducklings and where I worked it wasn't a great place for ducklings. There were lots of walls by the waterway. So they get in and they get stuck. And that happened one day in Sydney Harbour by the Opera House, six ducklings and their mum stuck in the harbour. They'd gotten through when the tide was off and they were

stuck there. And yeah, so we called a rescue group and eventually they came and we got a police boat out there on the water. And that is what got me started in it. You know, I realised how important it was, how there weren't enough people who were able to do this even if they wanted to.

Gretchen [00:04:18] How do you see yourself in the natural world in relation to the animals you care for?

Tilly [00:04:24] As nature, as not just sort of an element of it, nor above it or below it? I see myself as doing something so fundamentally normal to being a living, warm breathing animal. I am always interested in the like biological, evolutionary aspect of altruism and always questioning how that works. And just really, I think it's amazing that we do that and that that just feels so normal. And so I guess I look after them simply because I can and because they need me.

Gretchen [00:04:58] Tilly you've got a couple of social media groups that you've started with the intention of supporting others, which is the topic of this episode. Why did you feel it was necessary?

Tilly [00:05:08] Well, I'm very honoured to be the 'supporting others' person, and I felt it was necessary because we're all animals, too. And often we sort of put that thought to the side. I mean, I remember saying recently to a friend who's also a wildlife carer that we're animals, too. And she said, no, that's an insult to animals. And, you know, it's funny, I laughed, but I also said, but I love you and I love what you do. And I'm just really proud to be a human animal a lot of days.

Gretchen [00:05:40] How does this work?

Tilly [00:05:41] Well, it's early days and I think often it's just creating a platform or a space or just showing intention and so showing others both that you struggle, which is a really important part of being that person, and also that you are interested to know if they struggle. And if they do, then how that manifests and what ways that they go about feeling differently.

Gretchen [00:06:06] And what are these places called?

Tilly [00:06:08] They're both specifically for wildlife carers. There's a Facebook group called 20/20 Hindsight. And then there's actually, a Reddit sub Reddit community called Wild Aussie Carers and 20/20 Hindsight is by far the busiest one. I posted a live video and I said this is the first I've done this. I feel uncomfortable. And here's some things I've done to look after myself in the last week. And I encourage other people to share as well. And they did in comments. And some people also they messaged me and sort of said, how's stuff, and it opens up a lot of conversations and disconnection. Really, really good.

Gretchen [00:06:47] Wonderful. So anyone who's listening could join those groups and participate. Yeah. Okay. Sally, coming to you now. The Australian Psychological Society strongly recommends reconnecting with others, but it also suggests not to have high expectations of yourself that that would be easy. What sort of thing can one do to support other carers?

Sally [00:07:12] Well, I love what Tilly's been talking about. And two things I want to pick up on. One is embracing the sense of ourselves as an animal. And, you know, I love the

way that you responded to your friends, probably quite despairing comment, I think. And she said, oh, I think that's an insult to an animal, because I think whenever we're working within the ecological field, environmental field, and particularly with animals, we can get rather despairing about human actions and the human agency in the world. And yet, when it comes to caring for ourselves, it's so important to understand that all those instincts that I think a wildlife carer knows very intimately through the process of caring others very instincts we have in ourselves that for ourselves have also been harmed by a particular forms of culture or society behaviours, expectations and values and so on. So I think that bringing back that nurturing of basic instincts and needs and sharing that as human carers is a really lovely basis to come from. And I also really loved Tilly, the way that you're inviting people to share what works for them because there's no manual right way of how to care for ourselves. Yes, there's lots of ideas and list, but you don't care for yourself just by ticking the boxes. It's a process of learning about yourself and learning about what works for you. But it's great to hear from others to get some ideas about the particular things that work for you, whether it be around managing the work, ways that you might need to debrief if you have been involved in a situation that's been particularly distressing. And where can you put that distress? Is there someone you can phone? Do you have a de-brief journal? And would you share it with someone? Can you set up a specific Facebook group just to talk about that coming out of the field at the end of the day? Or is it about, you know, taking a walk or taking a bath? These little rituals that we can make for ourselves. So share in exchanging what you find work for you and encouraging each other to try and find different responses. Once you understand perhaps the basic things you might need how to draw some boundaries at times, how to step out of the intensity of the work, when you're wanting to step into socialising with friends, you know, all these sort of different things that you learnt you might need to negotiate what to do if you felt particularly traumatised by an experience with an injured animal and how you might soothe yourself to learning some breathing exercises through walking barefoot and really noticing the sensations through your feet and so on.

Gretchen [00:10:08] So this particular episode is about caring for others. And I think caring for others also means observing what you need and perhaps then being able to see in others what they might need. What kind of signs might we look for in our caring community that somebody needs help?

Sally [00:10:27] I think that's important point you make, because if we're not caring for ourselves, it's easy sometimes to perhaps see our own distress in others and then respond to that in ways which may not necessarily be helpful to the other person. So it's first of all, to be checked in with where you are and especially around your own levels of distress. I think, first of all, is to make it as conscious as possible and to set up the sort of things Tilly's talking about, where people can really talk about how they're feeling and that you set up buddy systems and so on to do regular check ins.

Gretchen [00:10:59] Sally, how might a buddy system work?

Sally [00:11:01] Well, it can be set up informally. You'll find one or two other people in your field that you feel particularly easy with. And you make an arrangement perhaps to meet up with in person or online once a week. Once a fortnight, whatever seems to be the situation to check in with how you're doing generally to be able to talk about any experiences that you have had and perhaps not to be so much focussed on the expertise side of how you respond, but where you were emotionally with that. I'm sure there's always some animals that nestle into your heart in the way that others don't. And that can be particularly a big experience when it's time to let go of them or if they don't make it. Some I

imagine you move from one caring situation to another with relative ease. Other times it might be much more difficult. And we need to have open and safe and not judgemental kind of conversation where we can talk about all of it, not just the professional sort of side of it, so to speak.

Gretchen [00:12:00] Tilly, however, it is a bit of a difficult fact about the wildlife caring community, that people are very self focussed because they're often in a state of ongoing trauma with the pressure that they feel under to rescue animals. It can be quite hard to get others to support one another in the rescue community. Can you talk a little bit about that?

Tilly [00:12:27] I'll talk about it and say that I don't really want to in a funny way, like, I will. I hope that I don't have to in five years. And I hope that having this conversation can help us to not be having the same conversation later on. I think it's very difficult to trust other people. Full stop. There's a lot of responsibility as a wildlife carer. You're responsible for lives. And these lives are very important to you. Very important to the people around you. And there's all these different ideas about how it should be done. And there are certain practises that we have to follow. And sometimes the line between practises we have to follow and things that we prefer in technique or perhaps some certain attitudes towards which life is more valuable than others. I mean the native versus non-native debate. There's a lot of double think I find, and it makes it difficult for people to have trusting connections. We're talking about things that are very significant to each of us. And then I think people find it hard to put it behind them for a start and to say this is now, you know, I feel this way, but this is right now. And that would be a helpful mechanism for a connection, which we really do need as social animals. I think often it can manifest in people isolating themselves. It can manifest in sort of tribalism, hierarchies, things that aren't just normal, healthy sort of hierarchies like excluding people or excluding ideologies. And it's difficult. That's not the primary thing that I experience. That isn't the primary thing. But I have a negative bias, human beings in general.

Gretchen [00:14:07] So, Sally, can you expand a bit on what Tilly's talking about here? How can we get past that frustration with the way others practise or our own anxieties in order to reach out to one another and support them?

Sally [00:14:25] I can hear the level of emotional intensity that's often brought into these kinds of discussions. And I think for many wildlife carers, that identity as a wildlife carer would be a very major one. So that the arguments when they come will have a kind of intensity that seems much larger than perhaps the particular incident or viewpoint that might have triggered it off. I think there's one thing to be aware of, too, with the social media. It's fantastic for getting people together. It's not very good for ongoing discussion in terms of being out to deal with the nuances and sensitivities. So these kind of flaring up, that can happen very easily on the social media. So I guess one thing I would say is to encourage as much as possible for people to meet face to face as well as to use to social media, because it's a different form of communication that happens if you're sitting down in the same room and actually there. The body language and the full facial expressions and things don't flare up quite so intensely in that way.

Gretchen [00:15:31] Would it be worth, Sally, thinking about when you feel the urge to argue with somebody, consciously say, okay, I feel that urge. How can I reach out instead and support that person? Remembering that there is likely to feel frustrated as you are? How can I reach out and be supportive?

Sally [00:15:53] It would be well worthwhile for the various groups to look into perhaps getting a bit of training around communication and particularly active listening. And this is the thing. If we can train ourselves or just be open instead of waiting to have our quick response, but to really listen to what the person is saying and rather than perhaps thinking, oh, this is a different kind of approach to me, and I need to it sounds like there's quite a lot of defensiveness going on in these sorts of exchanges that, of course, quickly turns into a form of attack. And so being able to encourage a form of active listening where even just at a basically an agreement not to interrupt one another, an agreement to listen fully to a person's really finished what they're saying, because often people lead off with something contentious but once they really listened to up comes the feeling. And as soon as we start to hear the feeling, we realise we're all the same. Yes, we might have a different viewpoint about a particular way of going about things, but we all carry the same feelings. And I imagine Tilly that you meet over and over again, many people are incredibly sensitive and really feel very deeply the pain of the world, and particularly because we are in a time of ecological collapse and climate crisis and so on. There's a rawness there and there is that underneath what may come out is that anger and defensiveness. There may be despair or grief. And if we can give that bit of extra listening at the same time, as you're saying, Gretchen, to listen to what we have experienced to ourselves and to perhaps even have a focus on conversations about identifying what you hold in common or common experiences, whenever we get too much into the ideology, it's easy to see all the differences. But whenever you talk about the on the ground, what you're doing, how you're feeling, now you're responding, what you have to negotiate there, you'll find the commonalities. Which reminds you why you're all doing this and why you're also passionate about tell in terms of caring for others.

Gretchen [00:17:57] What do you personally offer yourself to another carer in support and what can a broader social media group offer to others in terms of support?

Tilly [00:18:10] I mean, I'm 26, so I grew up without social media. I didn't have a phone. I didn't use messenger. And then when I was about 12, 13 and we started using these. So I grew up with that face to face. And then during a significant period of social development, I got that screen connection. And I actually wonder if the data coming forward is going to show that we are getting better neural feedback from screens, my generation. And I think we certainly need face to face like all animals do. I do think that for me, those platforms are really good because they have a level of anonymity. And I think Reddit, for example, getting that sub Reddit going, getting people comfortable to share. It's not anonymous. It's pseudonymous. I think I said that right. So it's only really anonymous until you start to give lots of key indicators of who you are. So basically, you can be anyone. And I think that that's important sometimes just for starting this. And to show, just like Sally said, have so much more in common than we have apart.

Gretchen [00:19:15] That's really interesting because the anonymity of social media has long been sneered at as being a problem, because if you hide behind your anonymity, you can go in for the attack. But what you're saying is with anonymity, you can be true to yourself. You can expose your vulnerable feelings without compromising yourself, because vulnerability is seen to be a weakness. But if you have the right environment and you have the right person leading a group who is nurturing and caring like you are Tilly, then you set the tone and the anonymity allows you to say, okay, I am feeling really vulnerable here. I lost an animal, which you may not feel that you could admit when your name is attached to it. Is that what you're saying?

Tilly [00:20:01] Definitely.

Gretchen [00:20:02] And so you play this role of online mother in a way to these communities that you've set up 20/20 hindsight and the Reddit group when you're working with your friends as a supporting, caring friend. What kinds of things do you offer to them personally in terms of support?

Tilly [00:20:22] Well, I don't think of myself really as a mother or a mom or anything, even for the animals I look after. I mean, they have mothers. I think of myself more as kind of like a cool aunt. And then when it comes to friends and people who are just experiencing this life with me, I guess I just share it with them. That's a big part. It's kind of not trying to be above it or below it and trying to just say, like, if that hurts. Wow, that really hurts. I feel how that would hurt. And actually, often the conversation just becomes what ways are you trying to make it hurt less or what ways are you feeling that? And sometimes I guess in a way, it's just trying to help people to tolerate discomfort. And I think wildlife carers have accepted that they'll tolerate great discomfort for the well-being of other animals. And so for that example, it's about saying, I know I know that the loss of animal is an incredible thing, and we go through these different stages, as Sally was saying, when you start caring and you lose an animal. I remember being so sort of I wasn't outwardly angry, but I remember someone saying, oh, that's very sad. And I kind of wanted to scream them. It's not sad. It's terrible. It's a terrible thing that has happened and desperately wanted it to be someone's fault. Such a hard thing to resist wanting it to be someone's fault. Often when there is death or there is hardship, one of our coping mechanisms is to have a source of that hardship, to have a thing to blame. And it's so often that person was right. It's so sad. It's just so sad.

Gretchen [00:21:54] Sally, what other ways can a carer support other carers? What kind of structured ways might our listening carers adopt to help one another?

Sally [00:22:04] One of the ways I suggest to communities to be able to hold together and to bring that element of both wellbeing and reflectiveness into their practise is to participate in dialogue or sharing circles. It's best done face to face, but there is ways of doing it online and in these kind of circles people take their time to speak and an agreement is here to really listen to one another, not to have a debate or an argument, or you have to sort of set up a contract for safety that there'll be no interrupting, that there will be confidentiality, that there will be talking to one's own experience and not using the space to criticise or critique other people. We're very rarely listened that deep way. And of course, that's what happens in therapy. But when you do it as a community and commit to doing it as a community, it is very bonding.

Gretchen [00:23:05] Can I also suggest perhaps talking about some of the things one can do together that doesn't necessarily invite speaking because some carers may not feel the need to do that every single time they meet. What are some of the things you can do to support people where you don't dive in deep but you just sit lightly in the world?

Sally [00:23:26] Well, obviously, people wouldn't be wildlife carers unless they didn't care deeply and feel deeply connected and hopefully at the most home and most safe being in outdoor areas with the natural world allowed to do its own thing. So I think meeting in those areas, maybe just having a little light meditation where you might all sit and just say, let's just sit and listen to see how many sounds we can hear. Let's feel the quality of the air. Maybe drawing together, you know, finding a bit of creative or deciding you're going to put a little sculpture together out of the stones or driftwood could be a fun thing. It could be as a marker or a memorial. But, yeah, I imagine that many wildlife carers are deeply

practical people. So perhaps meeting to make something together, whether they are creative, gardening, exchanging cooking recipes for all the different kinds of things you have to get, you know. So, yes, a bit of a practical emphasis is a good one.

Gretchen [00:24:20] I can imagine that even just offering to come and help clean up and clean out where you don't need to necessarily speak could be just a tremendous support organising a working bee to support somebody who is particularly struggling where other carers just come along or non carers mobilise the larger community, just come along and and do a bit of basic maintenance. Might be something that one could do. What do you think, Tilly?

Tilly [00:24:47] I think they're all fantastic ideas and I think we do try and practise things. I mean, we were talking before about buddying and we do actually have a mentoring system, certainly in my group. And I know there's some in all the various other ones as well. Interestingly, I found the follow up isn't particularly good. Wildlife carers, I find I mean, some people really jump and like, love the opportunity to be a mentor. I probably would say that I'm one of those people now and I've learnt enough to feel comfortable listening. That's such a funny thing. It's like I've learnt what to say enough that I'm now comfortable to hear. I think you have to. In a way, learn to hear without judgement or fear. I think we revolt from each other's discomfort sometimes, even when it comes to people who are wildlife carers. I find there's actually it's interesting some of the people who've been doing it longer, they resist the softness of the newer carers. They resist seeing the discomfort of people losing their animals and those first few. And some part of me understands that. Some part of me also just thinks that that love is so beautiful that it's in a way like I feel like in order to keep doing it, I have to see that and remember how much we love these animals and our friends and our little world. Well, our big world. And I think group work would be really, really good. I have tried a few things. I think training is one of the things we do quite a lot, and that does bring people together. I think actually saying why we want to catch up would be a good thing. And I don't know if we're ready to do that. I think that if we actually said, okay, I struggle being a wildlife carer let's say that, do you? The other person says yes, sometimes. And then so do 10 other people and we say, well, why don't we all just say once every month or once every two months, we're an hour with any distance from each other. Why don't we get together? We could have a beer or we could do something that's not about drinking or not about food, but it's really hard to get people to actually just show up, like physically and emotionally really hard. I wonder, though, with wildlife carers, the practise of being a wildlife carer has come about in the last 50 years. I'm sure there was more of it before. And I think one of the first sort of training events, formal ones in Australia, was like 80s, 90s. And you've got to look at the technology we had for coping with mental health at the time as well. And actually, I need to stand here or sit here and say that all this thinking and this processing, rationalisation and connecting with others like this is necessary. But I also do use medication to cope. I am comfortable saying that and doing that now. And I think that that's worth putting in because it's not like I woke up this morning, my hair was perfect. Like that's after years of working at it.

Gretchen [00:27:42] Tilly, how do you protect yourself as the cool aunt from big demands so you don't become the person who becomes overwhelmed from giving all the time?

Tilly [00:27:53] Well, sometimes I think what would nature do? That's a kind of one mode I have. And usually nature isn't constantly trying to overcompensate to save every other animal in the world. There's a level of balance. I also remember that I am trying to do something incredibly difficult, very, very hard. Wildlife carers are doing something very challenging.

Gretchen [00:28:16] So when you're talking about looking after other people, how do you support other people without then really carrying their whole body?

Tilly [00:28:27] Imperfectly. A good way I find is I reach out and I'll often have the real support through private messaging or through calling the person and then noticing I've been on my phone for half an hour and I feel really hot, like that's probably related to me needing a bit of a break. And there are very few times where it's just for that person largely there has to be balance. You know, if they really need to share something, I'm there and I'm listening. And sometimes I'll give them I don't say this. Well, I sometimes I do. It depends on the relationship. But, you know, I give them space to just sort of vent and be. And then there's a point where I recognise I could be anyone, I could be their dog or will probably have a better conversation with a dog, to be honest, a lot of the time. But I could be anything or anyone and they could be saying this. And then I remember that I actually need to be embodied, you know, I need I need them to see me. And sometimes I'll go or could do this could do that. Really, though there's no true resolve until they've done it for themselves.

Gretchen [00:29:37] What do you think, Sally?

Sally [00:29:39] I think you're such a wise young woman, Tilly, and it's wonderful to hear how much you've been out to bring into a conscious kind of process of reflection through what you've been doing over these last few years. Look, I think one of the big things that comes up in caring communities is there's a lot of caring people they like to help. They're also very, very sensitive people. And so finding those sort of boundaries and that awareness where you can both be a support and hopefully role model, how to be a support to others so you can build up a culture of care, but also knowing how to step back and encourage and support people to find their own perspectives and their ways of dealing with the situation. And I was thinking about caring for an animal who's injured or very young and how I imagined that part of that process is not stepping in to do it all for them. You know that you do step back and know that the more they can develop their own strengths and resources and often just those simple things of turning questions, what do you think would work here and encouraging people to do that, trying out for themselves? So I'm talking here for someone like Tilly, who I think has explored this very well for herself at a remarkably young age about how to move in and out of that role without being pulled into trying to do all the problem-solving and the helping or being the endless ear of comfort and at the same time to actually be open for support and the sense of accepting and listening to where people are at. And I think this is a very dedicated, committed and also very stressful and heartbreaking role to take on the well-being of wildlife carer. And it is appropriate to talk about for everyone involved what can you do to look after your mental and emotional well-being? Here's some ideas from what we've learnt. What's going to work for you and to really support encourage that process?

Gretchen [00:31:41] Sally, Tilly mentioned earlier the idea of asking, well, what would nature do? And I think one of the tricks to being a support to others is also knowing when to leave people be. So one has to be careful in deciding that you're going to be a bit more supportive to your fellow carers not to be too insistent that they must need help and that you're there to help them. How can you recognise that urge in yourself to offer help when perhaps that person really wants to just go and hide in a hole for a while?

Sally [00:32:14] Yeah, and you'd hope with wildlife carers that understand the healing that can come from going and retreating and giving yourself a bit of space to recuperate

somewhere that feels safe and hopefully beautiful. And I think whenever we get a particularly strong urge to be caring and it feels quite compulsive, that is the time we often need to sit down and say, what is it that I cannot bear here? Because often we see someone else going through something and we cannot bear their pain or the pain we perceive they're going through. And it may be because we have something similar happening for us that we're not really consciously recognising it. We need to know our motivations and caring, and we need to know what the emotional energy we're bringing to it. And if there's a kind of a compulsion or an urgency or a distress, it won't be a helpful energy for the other person. That's often when we need to step back and retreat a little bit. Remember, we live in a system and that system of social and natural ecologies and that it's never just up to us, that there's always other systems of care that can come in here and often can't come in if we're too insistent that this is our role alone to be this particular carer in this particular situation.

Gretchen [00:33:28] So, Sally, let's say you have a carer friend who actually always seems to be in trouble and needing help, but is less inclined to step up and help you when you call for it. How do you set boundaries in order to protect yourself without pushing them away entirely?

Sally [00:33:46] Yes, I'd say also in terms of protecting what friendship is there, because that's such a recipe for resentment and that sort of thing happens sometimes. It's only a subtle change in energy. I think often you have to decide in yourself that this isn't right and it's not working for you. And if it's not working for you, it won't be working for the other person. It might seem to be but in fact it's falling into a kind of an enabling situation. In some way you're kind of supporting them to be dependent or to always be turning to you, which then can unconsciously leave us as the helper feeling like we're the one who knows what to do and we've got the strength. But then it can quickly flip to where we just feel very weak and tired. And that's when we notice our friend is not really tuning into that because they've kind of got plugged into this. Well, you're always here for me and you'll always listen for me. So the reciprocal nature of the friendship has got undermined in some way because one person's been doing so much of the helping and caring and the other hasn't. And it disempowers the person who is being helped or responded to because all good human relations need reciprocity. And that's true. And any kind of relationship, that's an eco systemic thing. So we kind of interrupt that cycle of reciprocity then. And we get so caught up. How to step back, decide you need to decide it's the right thing to do. Don't do it abruptly and with big, major ways. It might be just a small one. I'm not available now or I can't talk right now. Can we talk and schedule it for a day or two? So gives them time for a person that's there. Don't come up with solutions.

Gretchen [00:35:28] And Sally. Just finally sometimes a member of the community, perhaps like Tilly will become known as a problem solver or a good listening ear. And that might be you listener or it might be someone you know. How can the community then come in to look after that person who does often carry the community burden?

Sally [00:35:49] Well, the very best thing they could do is to start picking up on that very work and to learn from from Tilly. And I was just listening to what Tilly does. I was just thinking how it only takes one person to start making the change and for it to actually bring the possibilities of others starting to pick up that behaviour. So the very best thing is not to say oh Tilly is so brilliant at that and we'll leave her to do all the feeling work or the relational work or the communication work but to actually go? Well, perhaps if we could all do some of this, we'd have a very different kind of culture. So the best thing would be to go to Tilly and say, hey, I'd like to be able to do a bit more of what you're doing. Can you just

help me to understand how to go about that? And then that might involve doing some more communication, training or something that I think, yeah, it's very much about not letting that person be the one who does it all. And understanding that it's a learning process that we're all capable of to some extent or another.

Gretchen [00:36:50] That is a very strong place to leave it. Thank you both, Sally Gillespie and Tilly Gray for taking the time to join us. And for such generous sharing with everybody. Listeners Lifeline is always there if the discussion today has brought up some strong feelings. Do call them on 13 11 14. Wildlife carers can find a range of mental health resources and support on the Two Green Threads website twogreenthreads.org. Keep up to date with what's happening with Wildlife Heroes at wildlifeheroes.org.au. And don't forget to check in on our other episodes as well. Let your community know about us and let us know what you think. We'd love to hear from you. I'm Gretchen Miller and from us at Wildlife Heroes Caring for the Carers. Catch you next time.