

# Speak Out Loud:

## Stories of Strength from the Southern Downs

**EPISODE:** DECISION-MAKING TOOLS

**GUEST:** Helen Lewis, Picot's Farm

**PUBLISHED:** 21<sup>st</sup> March 2022

### SUMMARY OF EPISODE

Today's guest is Helen Lewis who shares valuable insights and tools to help you manage tough times. Helen is a primary producer from Picot's Farm near Warwick on the Southern Downs. She has a keen interest in educating communities about chosen change and unchosen change as well as decision-making for your farm, your business, your family, or your personal life that's based on your values and your longer term vision. Helen also shares some information about the Outback Way Project which highlights the benefits of connections within and between communities and the power of collaboration.

Listen to the podcast conversation to hear Helen share:

- the story of her connection to the Southern Downs
- the emotional, physical and landscape impacts of bushfires, droughts and floods
- natural disasters are “unchosen change”
- the process of managing “unchosen change” includes denial, blame, acceptance, resolution and exploration of possible actions to take or “chosen change”
- the process of “chosen change” includes relief, excitement, self-doubt and resolution which leads to another action or “chosen change”
- it's important to be aware of and avoid getting stuck in the stage of blaming
- having a supportive community around you can help you manage self-doubt
- how a local farmers' group has helped her manage her business through the drought
- the importance of improving your landscape function to mitigate the impact of natural disasters
- focusing your energy and attention on your Circle of Control can grow your Circle of Influence and diminish your Circle of Concern
- the value of early decision-making in land management practices, knowing your “drought trigger point” and being clear on your risk level profile
- land management practices such as planned grazing helps prepare the soil for future weather events
- values-based decision-making begins with identifying your life context:
  - how you want to live your life and what matters to you
  - attributes when the land / community / yourself is at its best

- your life context is a reference point that can be used to help you make decisions in your land management, business and personal life
- an example of values-based decision-making when choosing whether to feed animals in the drought or destock the farm
- taking responsibility to ensure values are maintained throughout the whole supply chain
- tools in the land management toolbox include technology, time and living organisms
- the importance of understanding how nature works so you know which tools to use
- the Outback Way project is a collaborative initiative that uses values-based decision-making, connects remote communities and empowers people by improving access to choices that lead to improved health, education, economy and general well-being
- the Southern Downs Food Map connects local producers with consumers and businesses adding value to their products
- adopting the mindset that you're either winning or learning is a powerful, positive and pro-active space

## CONTACT HELEN LEWIS, PICOT'S FARM

W: <https://picotsfarm.com.au/>

## RESOURCES MENTIONED IN THE PODCAST

Decision Design Hub <https://decisiondesignhub.com.au/>

The Outback Way <https://outbackway.org.au/>

Southern Downs Food Map <https://southerndownsfoodmap.com.au/>

Landcare Australia <https://landcareaustralia.org.au/>

Condamine Headwaters Landcare Group <https://www.facebook.com/CHLandcare/>

Jamworks <https://jamworks.com.au/>

REKO Warwick (online farmers market)

<https://www.facebook.com/groups/583980342763808/>



The Speak Out Loud: Stories of Strength podcast has been produced by Kathryn Walton Consulting [www.kathrynwalton.com.au](http://www.kathrynwalton.com.au)



This project has been jointly funded under the Commonwealth and State Disaster Recovery Funding Arrangements (2018).

*The information shared in the podcast conversations and associated handouts is intended for general information only and is not necessarily the opinion of the producers, host and funding bodies. To the best of our knowledge, this information was correct at the time of publishing. Please consult with your doctor, health provider and relevant trained personnel for professional advice and support based on your individual needs.*