

## My lid fell off!

Today my lid fell off! Metaphorically speaking of course. Usually the bottle (me) can be shaken and dropped, moved and misplaced, forgotten or relocated, but the contents don't spill out or even leak. It seemed like any other day – began with school chaos, school drop off and coffee with some school mums. Not even a hint at this stage that the lid was coming loose? Laughing, chatting, drinking coffee and a light hearted debate amongst friends on a seemingly tame topic...slight turn of the lid at this stage but still no real indication. The discussion ended not on the best note but then all of a sudden POP, there she blew in front of not only 4 friends, but a whole café full of onlookers. I however was completely oblivious, as in that particular moment the entire contents of my bottle spilled out. Yep my lid fell off! Without any warning I am in tears and pronouncing to my friends some hidden thoughts that were meant to be spoken only in my 'disability world'. But here came the spewing of words, tumbling out faster than I could stuff them back in. Comments such as “ why do you all complain so much about the little things when we should be thankful for what you have. Your children are so lucky to have it all when others simply struggle to get through each day.”

Now these are my 'regular' friends – the ones that have no real inkling into the world of disability. They are lovely, caring, compassionate women with their own troubles, but are simply apart of a different world – my 'other' world. To me it's been important to maintain that other group of friends so that I don't get sucked into the vortex of disability. And usually I can keep my worlds far enough apart to function nicely. But not today.. Today they came colliding together with a bang and it was not a pretty sight. My poor friends sat there stunned at my collapse, one left while another apologised profusely. Obviously I had brought the coffee date to a sticky end and excused myself to go and to the groceries.

Ahh the groceries – a seemingly safe haven where I could numbly do the necessary. But no the lid was still in full flight and proceeded to bawl my way through Woolworth's for the next 30 minutes. Moments when I stopped and calmed myself were set off again by a carer doing the shopping with a lady who has Down Syndrome (today of ALL days?) POP...off it came again as I thought about a lifetime of caring for my daughter like that. The waters calmed again as I headed into the Baby Aisle only to be confronted by a goo-ing infant and it's mother. POP – why me..Why is it so hard? Look at them. By this stage I was also stunned that not one single person had even looked my way or asked if I was ok? I guess midday on a Tuesday is when the hard-hearted do their shopping? I made it to the check out and muttered the usual niceties and looked up to see I was being served by a girl with impaired hearing...oh my god! 'POP' and get me out of here!! \$ 350 later and no idea of what I had just bought I made it to the safety of the car, mentally slapping myself to get a grip. The radio comes on with some Pete Murray song about living a full life and being happy!

SO it was not the best of days, and as my 5 year old screamed at me all the way home from school pick up I consoled myself with the fact that its really important to have days where my lid falls off at least every 6 months. It's like the liver cleansing diet. Flush it all out of your system so that you can wake up the next day revived and refreshed (with a crying hangover)... and do it all over again. It may take a few weeks for my coffee date friends to stop looking at me with trepidation – scared of another outburst. But just imagine if I left it 12 months????