

Vision impaired Perth Hills 'wonder woman' releases the inspirational memoir of her transplant journey and beyond

Book Release - 'I Can See Clearly Now: the soundtrack of my life' by Colleen Ashby

Type 1 diabetic, fitness fanatic, dancing queen, Canasta champion; only some of the tags to describe Colleen Ashby. Daughter, sister to five brothers, wife and mother of three sons further define her. Add to that, she is a heart transplant recipient who is now visually impaired with only 5% sight and you realise there is much more to learn.

Colleen grew up in the Perth Hills, enjoying a safe and 'privileged' childhood, particularly with five brothers always looking out for her. Surrounded by a bunch of boisterous, competitive boys, it's no surprise Colleen developed a passion for sport and fitness and a confidence she could do anything.

Although physically fit, problems with her heart began to plague her and slow her down. Twelve stents later, the 13th was unlucky and resulted in open heart surgery. It was soon obvious her heart was not going to last much longer and after much discussion, serious consideration and convincing the 'grumpy old witchdoctor', Colleen was placed on the transplant list. Colleen was given a new heart but due to severe blood loss during the surgery, Colleen lost 95% of her vision. "I'd have been really pissed off if I'd lost it all but 5%? I can cope." With a bucketful of hope, perseverance, gratitude and the unwavering support of friends and family, Colleen has navigated her new normal.

Funny, down-to-earth, harrowing and at times, heartbreaking, I Can See Clearly Now is the rollercoaster ride of a woman who continues to defy expectations.

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