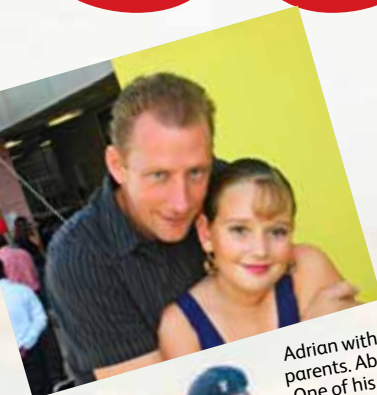


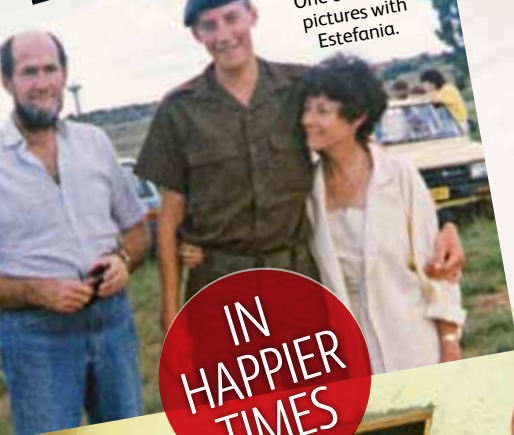
AUSSIE DAD'S BRAVE CRUSADE

Scientology

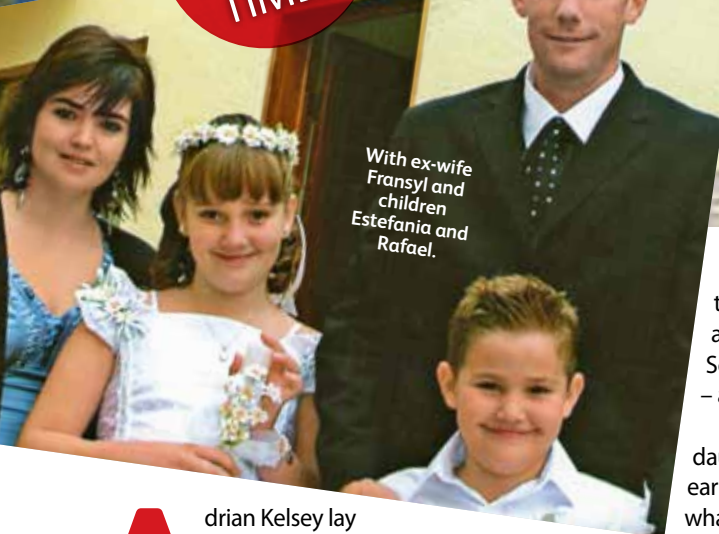
tore my family apart



Adrian with his parents. Above: One of his last pictures with Estefania.



IN HAPPIER TIMES



With ex-wife Fransyl and children Estefania and Rafael.

This Queensland father of three pays a heart-breaking price for turning his back on the controversial cult, writes JAMES GRAHAM

Adrian says that in cult parlance, this means he is officially labelled as a "suppressive person", and no Scientologists – his children included – are allowed contact with him. He says hearing his once defiant daughter Estefania renege on her earlier promise to love him "no matter what", left him shattered and shaken.

"My heart was lying on the floor," says Adrian, his voice breaking at the recollection. "It's the most difficult thing I've had to deal with in my life. You have to wonder what happened. What did Scientology tell her to make her change her mind? The manipulation and lies must be off the scale."

Adrian, a former staff member at the church's Florida headquarters, is now revealing his own experiences with Scientology.

Little by little his belief in the religion was eroded by his research. The final straw was the

way his parents were treated by the church. Although both were long-time Scientology "employees" in Sydney, Adrian says his father was gradually demoted to a \$50-a-week gardener post as his Alzheimer's worsened. When his dad needed skin cancer treatment, Adrian says Scientology refused to help.

A tragic loss, a daring escape

Adrian's father died last December – he found out through a brother – and he's still had no contact with his mum.

"Scientology is like a plague; it has affected our whole family," he says. "That is the power of a 'disconnection'. Not even for a family tragedy like this will they break the ban on all contact."

There has been one victory for Adrian, however, since he officially left the church in 2010 and began speaking out. Soon after his daughter's devastating call from Mexico, Adrian engineered the escape of his elder son, Shane,

Main picture: Phillip Costleton.

"NOT EVEN FOR A FAMILY TRAGEDY WILL THEY BREAK THE BAN ON ALL CONTACT."



Adrian helped his elder son Shane escape from the cult.

from his first marriage – helping him flee from the church's Australian headquarters in the Sydney suburb of Dundas.

Frantic plea from a phone booth

Shane had been enrolled in Scientology's highest core by the age of six. At eight, he signed a contract committing to volunteering, or servicing, for the next billion years. He was already working 35 hours a week, and every morning had to march and salute the cause.

By the age of 15, Shane says he was living a nightmare he even now struggles to believe. He was working seven days a week, 14 hours a day in a commercial kitchen.

In the end, Adrian says he didn't have to use strong-arm tactics to convince Shane.

"I couldn't grab him by the hand and drag him out – I just visited him at the Dundas headquarters and gave him the correct information. I went back to the Gold Coast and

Estefania's last contact with dad

"Listen I am staying in Scientology, that does not mean I don't love you. I love and adore you and if Scientology tells me that I cannot speak to you again then to hell with Scientology, I will never stop talking to you. I love you and even if my whole family goes against me, I will never stop loving you as my father. Scientology is not that bad. I know it sounds bad but maybe you have bad information. Maybe Mom does not want to be with you but I do and if Scientology is that bad I will leave them. I started crying when I saw your letter but I will never "disconnect" never never never. I love [you] and in this moment I am crying. I cannot leave Scientology and less you. I adore you and I will never leave you and if any Scientologist tells me to "disconnect" I will never do it. I promise I love you and no Scientologist will tell me to "disconnect", I do not know why you think that. I am crying so much, I love you heeeeeeeaaaaaaapp pppppppppssssssssssssss. Please answer my response and tell me you will never stop loving me and that you know that I will never stop loving you."

a week later I had a phone call from him. He was in a public phone booth with no money, no ID, nothing, and needed my help.

"I got some ex-Scientology people in Sydney to pick him up and arranged to fly him up here the same afternoon," adds Shane, who invited Today Tonight along to document the rescue.

Adrian says he and Shane are now more like buddies than father and son, and he couldn't be prouder of the way Shane has adapted to his new world.

"He's gotten his life together. He's happy, has a job and a girlfriend and is enjoying life. He is always amazed at how bad Scientology painted the outside world – I am very proud of him."

Adrian hopes that sharing his story with Woman's Day and posting heart-felt YouTube messages of love will lead to Estefania and Rafael re-establishing contact with him.

"I do believe that one day I'll get a call because they've seen the truth and are not under the influence of a Scientologist who is spinning them a lie," says Adrian.

"It could be five years; it could be 10. But that's what I'm holding onto.

"Until then, you just have to bury it, be strong and carry on."



SYDNEY HEAD OFFICE

Scientology's Australian headquarters in Dundas.