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Winds of Wellness

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"Courage doesn't always roar. Sometimes courage is the quiet voice at the end of the day saying, 'I will try again tomorrow.'" ~ Mary Anne Radmacher

Douglas Enjoys What Bisbee Has to Offer

For some members of Wellness Connections, relaxation is a key benefit of being a part of the organization. These creative and social outlets provide therapeutic benefits to members, reduce isolation and give members the opportunity to contribute and be more connected to their local communities.

That's what Douglas member Rudolpho enjoys most about his weekly leather workshop.

The 35-year-old is one of a group of members who travels regularly to Bisbee, with Wellness Connections, to participate either in the leather workshop at Bisbee Senior Center, or to volunteer at the Bisbee Animal Shelter.

"Working with the leather is kind of relaxing," said Rudolpho. "I've done some other art work with Wellness Connections too. It's cool,

and it's something to do."

A member for several months, Rudolpho has been working on leather coasters. He uses a hammer and pin to create indentations in the leather.



Rudolpho making a leather coaster

"Coming to Wellness Connections has helped me pretty big," he said. "It's really helped to open me up. I feel like I can speak my mind and they understand me."

Over at the Animal Shelter, Donald and Marisela were taking a short break after walking some of the dogs.

"I like the dogs and I like working with them," said Donald, 65. "We also pet the

cats and

check they're OK. It's enjoyable and relaxing.

When we take the dogs out we teach them not to jump on people, so I think it helps to find them homes."

Marisela particularly enjoys working with the cats, especially when there are kittens at the shelter.

"There are some really cute kittens here right now. I'm a real cat cover and I like petting them," she said.

Being a member of Wellness Connections, and being able to take trips, has been a very helpful experience for Marisela and other members.

"It really helps us to reconnect with society," she said. "It get us out of our isolation. I really enjoy coming here."



Donald & Marisela helping out at the Bisbee Animal Shelter



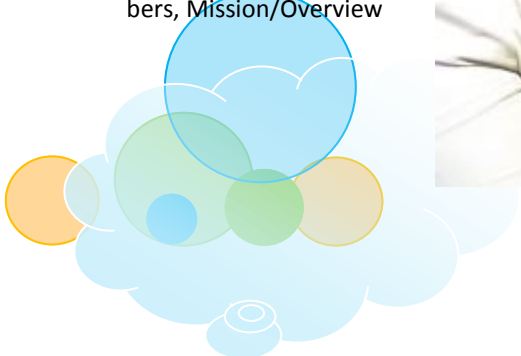
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Staying Healthy As You Age



Tips for coping with change

As you age beyond 50, there will be periods of both joy and stress. It's important to build your resilience and find healthy ways to cope with challenges. This ability will help you make the most of the good times and keep your perspective when times are tough.

Focus on the things you're grateful for.

The longer you live, the more you lose. But as you lose people and things, life becomes even more precious. When you stop taking things for granted, you appreciate and enjoy what you have even more.

Source:

HelpGuide.org

Acknowledge and express your feelings. You may have a hard time showing emotions, perhaps feeling that such a display is inappropriate and weak. But burying your feelings can lead to anger, resentment, and depression. Don't deny what you're going through. Find healthy ways to process your feelings, perhaps by talking with a close friend or writing in a journal.

Accept the things you can't change. Many things in life are beyond our control. Rather than stressing over them, focus on the things you can control such as the way you choose to react to problems. Face your limitations with dignity and a healthy dose of humor.

Look for the silver lining. As the saying goes, "What doesn't

kill us makes us stronger." When facing major challenges, try to look at them as opportunities for personal growth. If your own poor choices contributed to a stressful situation, reflect on them and learn from your mistakes.

Take daily action to deal with life's challenges. When a challenge seems too big to handle, sweeping it under the carpet often appears the easiest option. But ignoring the problem doesn't make it go away; it allows both the problem and your anxiety to build. Instead, take things one small step at a time. Even a small step can go a long way to boosting your confidence and reminding you that you are not powerless.

Staff Spotlight: Petra Paskevicius



When asked about the day she started her new job at Wellness Connections, Petra

Paskevicius will tell you it was the day her life became great.

"It was the day my new life began," she says. "I've been 21 months clean from drugs and alcohol and I've straightened my life out."

After experiencing many negatives, Petra began learning how to focus on the positives. Part of this process was volunteering at Wellness Connections through a University of Phoenix internship.

Petra then went through the Peer Support Specialist Training and landed her dream job this past February, at Wellness Connections Sierra Vista.

"It's awesome," she en-

thus. She is also assisting members with the Supported Housing program and training to be an employment specialist. "I love being versatile. This is what I've always wanted to do."

"I've been able to use my own personal experiences to help other people deal with their experiences. I think people feel more comfortable because they know I've experienced what they're going through. I love that I get to help members to empower themselves."

Fun in Photos

Douglas enjoys an art project

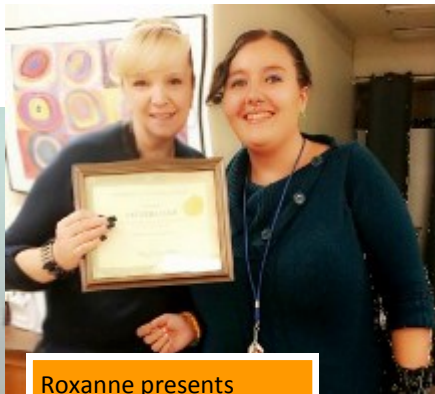


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Sean & Pricilla show off Douglas' new oven



Roxanne presents Savanha a certificate for her hard work on fundraising



Nogales holds peer support at the park

Sierra Vista Gals Show Off Their Moves

If Savanha took part in Dancing With the Stars, she would probably give the competition a run for it's money.

The 20-year-old loves to show off her moves – something she

Since the Sierra Vista center introduced a Learn to Dance class a few weeks ago, Savanha has been consistently winning the weekly dance offs.

"I like the interaction," she said.

Now she is using her talent to teach other members. She recently completed the Peer Support Specialist Training and is a co-facilitator of the weekly dance sessions.



Liz, Rebecca & Savanha

"A year ago I wouldn't even go on an outing," Savanha said. "It's really helped me with not being so isolated and I love coming here if I've had a rough day at work. It helps me to work through things."

But she also enjoys helping others.

"I think getting other people to dance helps their health and allows them to be more active. I think they feel better about themselves and I feel

would never have dreamed of doing a year ago before joining Wellness Connections.

"Throughout the day I can get really anxious, but when I dance it helps me get all my frustrations and anger out."

I'm doing something that actually helps others to help themselves," she said.



Wellness Connections

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Wellness Connections' Mission Statement & Overview

Mission Statement:

"Wellness Connections is committed to providing peer-led, life-enhancing opportunities for mental health recovery and wellness."

Overview

Wellness Connections has provided behavioral health and addiction recovery services based on a peer-led model since February 2002. Wellness Connections maintains a qualified staff of Recovery Support Specialists, Peer Support Specialists and Behavior Health Technicians.

The expected outcome for all Wellness Connections' program members is a significantly improved quality of life. Funding is provided through contracts with Cenpatico, the Department of Veteran's Affairs, Bridgeway and the DES Department of Vocational Rehabilitation. Fundraising and grant funding are also pursued in support of Wellness Connections' mission.

Newsletter Editor: Kari L. Ferrell

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