



The Connector

Summer Newsletter 2022

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**Empathy & Change
Moving Forward**

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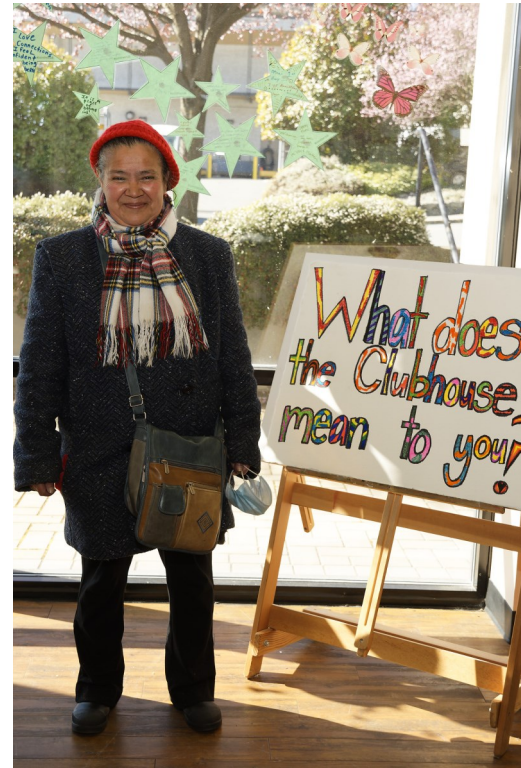
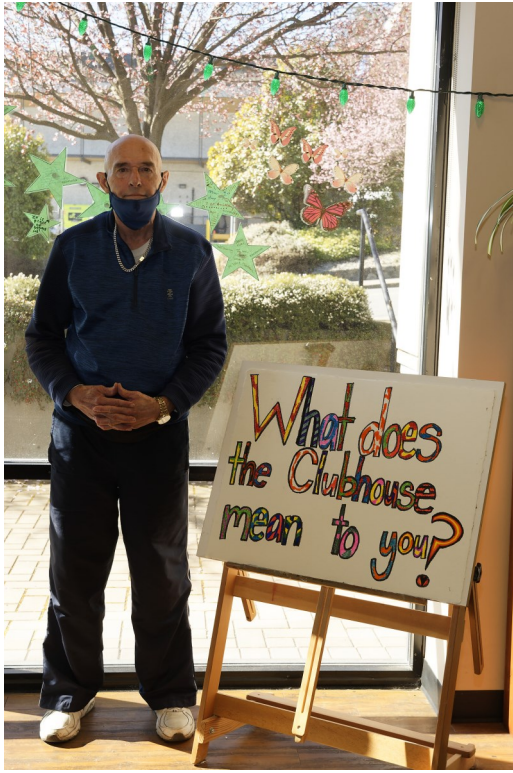
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**MENTAL
ILLNESS**
Wellness



With continued support from the community and members at the Clubhouse, we are making progress in our goals and programs here at Connections Place. We lift each other up through our ups and downs, staff, members, and visitors each having their own challenges at times. Achieving mental wellness does not have to be done alone, but with support from the community we can create a brighter and more connected place.

HAPPY ANNIVERSARY



Wellness & Employment Programming





August 2022

MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY
9:00am Open & Breakfast	9:00am Open & Breakfast	9:00am Open & Breakfast	9:00am Open & Breakfast	9:00am Open & Breakfast
9:30am Morning House Meeting	9:30am Morning House Meeting	9:30am Morning House Meeting	9:30am Morning House Meeting	9:30am Morning House Meeting
10:00am Free Food Market	12:00pm Lunch	11:00am Queer Education	10:30am Muffin Talks	10:30am Employment Meeting
10:30am Tech Support	12:30pm Afternoon House Meeting	12:00pm Lunch	12:00pm Lunch	12:00pm Lunch
12:00pm Lunch	1:15pm Wellness Walk	12:30pm Afternoon House Meeting	12:30pm Afternoon House Meeting	12:30pm Afternoon House Meeting
12:30pm Afternoon House Meeting	3:00pm Mental Wellness Speaks	1:15pm Baking	1:15pm Clubhouse Decision-Making Meeting	1:30pm Community Kitchen
1:30pm Communications Group	4:00pm Closed	1:30pm Art Club	2:30pm Music Group	2:00pm Communications Group
2:30pm Mindful Movement		2:30pm Book Club	4:00pm Closed	4:00pm Closed
3:00pm Goal Setting		4:00pm Closed		
4:00pm Closed				

- **House Meeting** — At our House Meeting, we check-in, discuss clubhouse business, and volunteer for work tasks. Our House Meeting occurs twice daily, at 9:30am and 12:30pm. Members help prepare meeting agendas and facilitate the meeting.
- **Free Food Market** — Various food and household items are free for all members every Monday. Items are picked up from the Mustard Seed Warehouse in Esquimalt by staff and occasionally a member will join. Food at the weekly market may vary based on what's available at the Mustard Seed. Bags can be borrowed to transport the items, so come on down!
- **Tech Support** — This time is set aside for any members who need help or support with technology — such as computer training, websites, phones, and more. Members who are able to provide that support are encouraged to join Sage, the facilitator, and share their expertise.
- **Communications Group** — Join us in this twice-weekly meeting that invites members to collaborate on Clubhouse communications. This includes social media, newsletter, brochures, posters, our monthly calendar, and more. We also engage in creative writing and utilize a variety of mediums — fresh ideas are encouraged!
- **Mindful Movement** — A space to explore various relaxation strategies including guided imagery, progressive muscle relaxation, and engaging in guided yoga via YouTube. Members may choose to do the activities seated or standing based on their ability and comfort level. No mats or materials are required to participate.
- **Goal Setting** — SMART goal-setting for our members hosted and facilitated by our member Shauna. Come drop by!



Wellness & Employment Programming

- **Wellness Walks** — Each week the location for the walk will be determined by group consensus. In the past, we've walked Swan Lake and the Galloping Goose. Enjoy the beautiful scenery Victoria has to offer — suggestions are welcome!
- **Mental Wellness Speaks** — This program explores fun and exciting ways to be expressive through speaking and draw inspiration from each other. We'll watch TED talks, learn how to public speak, and build confidence and leadership skills.
- **Queer Education** — This weekly meeting is a space to learn more about LGBTQ+/Queer topics. Leave questions anonymously in the drop box or ask them at the meeting. Any questions are welcome, nothing is off-limits. Among other topics, you can ask about: language and identities, coming out, being transgender, sex/sexuality, or anything else you're curious about!
- **Baking** — We bake goodies on Wednesday afternoons in preparation for Muffin Talks on Thursday mornings! If you'd like to gain or develop your skills in the kitchen, this is an opportunity to do so.
- **Art Club** — Join the art club! It's a space to explore your creative side in a low pressure, friendly environment. Totally at your own pace, and an opportunity to gain experience in group facilitation. Members take turns guiding various art projects utilizing any materials they're interested in.
- **Book Club** — Join the Book Club for some literary fun and lively discussion! Each month we choose a new book to read together.
- **Muffin Talks** — For those who enjoy discussing current events over coffee and baked goods! Enjoy a muffin and coffee for 50 cents — yum!
- **Decision-Making Meeting** — Our weekly Decision-Making Meetings are a place for all members to come together, discuss, and collaborate. We work on suggestions and any changes in how the Clubhouse is run, special events, new programs, and more.
- **Music Group** — Join us as we explore and enjoy music together, whether it be through YouTube or group sing-alongs! Members of all musical backgrounds and levels are welcome.
- **Employment Meeting** — This evolution of our Job Club is open for members to help develop our Transitional Employment Program, as well as receive support with resume building, interview prep, developing employment skills, and job searches. Transitional Employment placements are at the employer's place of business, are part-time (15-20 hours per week), and include a lot of on-the-job and off-site support from Clubhouse staff and other members. Contact us for more info!
- **Community Kitchen** — Join us to prepare nutritious meals for sharing. We will decide on a meal to make from the many cookbooks here or bring your own idea. Leave with some food for the weekend!

Many of our programs are member-led. Wellness is an ongoing effort. Thus, program operations may fluctuate.

Special Events

- **Movie Night** | August 23rd @ 6:30pm
- **Paper Airplane Contest** | August 24th @ 2:30pm
- **Accordion Performance** | August 25th @ 2:30pm
- **Barbecue @ Saxe Point — Clubhouse CLOSED** | August 26th (details TBD)
- **August Speaker Guest Speaker** | Date (TBD)
- **Queer Education + Tech Support — On PAUSE** | August 14th onward



SAGE M.

My life is like a river. I have to follow it, avoid getting stuck along its banks. Sometimes the river forks, and I must choose a path lest I be driven into the shore betwixt the options. Sometimes the river is narrow and turbulent, and I struggle to keep to the path. Sometimes it is calm and wide, and smooth sailing settles my soul.

Sometimes I wonder what's beyond the river, if I should choose to leave the water, but I am always convinced to stay.

By friends.

By chosen family.

By those who help me to stay afloat.

I've decided to stay in the river, and see



STUART K.

MORE PEOPLE, MORE LIVELINESS, A PATHWAY CLUBHOUSE CONNECTION

For a little while Pathways Clubhouse was closed due to COVID. Now we are opened to a bigger capacity. This means more members are back and can return to regular routine. There's also a bigger work ordered day. There's a different feel to the Clubhouse. More people, more relationships. We used to need appointments, but we don't need them anymore and we have had a lot of different staff over the last couple of years. For people who couldn't make it during the virus, this opening up is good as people can come back and do activities and socials again. As much as I enjoy



This year's mental health week focuses on empathy. In recent times many of us around the globe have faced a lot of anxiety, isolation, poverty, and overall hardship. Many locally and abroad have had their mental health impacted negatively. Achieving mental wellness doesn't have to be done alone in isolation. The ability to empathize with others has never been more important. Here at Connections Place Clubhouse, we strive to empower members of our community by providing support in a variety of areas through an empathetic lens. We are focused on creating a welcoming environment and supporting one another.





Welcome new staff

Leah Ralph Program Staff



Leah has volunteered in the social services sector for almost thirty years. When COVID hit, she decided to take the plunge and go back to school to pursue her dream of giving back professionally. While enrolled in Camosun's Mental Health and Addictions program, Leah was introduced to Connections Place through a practicum placement. The vision and values of the clubhouse were a natural fit for her and when an opportunity to join the team as part of an outreach pilot program came along, Leah excitedly jumped on board.

Hakeem Al-Zayyidi Program Staff



Hakeem Al-Zayyidi joined the Connections Place team to help develop a marketing and public education program. He has a degree Business Administration from Royal Roads University and a diploma in Business Marketing Options from Camosun College. Hakeem started sharing his personal story as a mental illness motivational and inspirational speaker to educate people about living with schizophrenia. Hakeem is hoping to help Connections Place members share their story as part of a public speaking group he hopes to develop to educate about mental wellness and recovery, and reduce stigma.

Neelam Pahal Program Staff



Hi, I'm Neelam! I've worked in mental health for many years now, and through my lived experience with illness, I bring forth passion and joy for supporting others. I believe in the power of healing through connection and using humor to add lightness. I'm so grateful to be a staff member at Connections Place, to further deepen roots in Victoria, and empower the people I share this community



Welcome back Katherine Howell & Louise Baert

Kat has returned! Kat is an integral part of the Clubhouse, who has helped develop Connections Place Victoria to be the beautiful space it is today. The impact she has made at the Clubhouse has been so powerful and foundational, Setting up Connections Place to grow even bigger and brighter than it is now. We're so glad to have her back!

Louise has also played an important role in establishing Connections Place since the initial opening in 2019. Her presence in the Clubhouse has been greatly missed by staff and members alike. We are all thrilled to welcome her back!



Ivy Gifford Program Staff

Ivy came to us as a practicum student from Camosun College's Mental Health & Addictions Program this past spring and has since been hired as Connections Places' first ever casual employee. She is passionate about supporting individuals in their recovery by focusing on their personal strengths and interests!



Welcome new Executive Director Michael Tibbles



Empathy Moving forward



A letter from the Executive director

Hello Connections Place community! It's been such a pleasure joining the team and getting to know members, staff, and the board. Coming from Pathways Clubhouse to Connections Place has been an exciting and challenging opportunity. Everyone has been so welcoming and encouraging as we embark on this journey together.

After a season of much change in the Clubhouse, we are looking to bring a time of calm and stability to our community. The members and staff have been incredibly resilient, and we share a positive outlook for the future.

We look forward to accreditation late in the year, and the work to get ready for the visit will provide many opportunities for members to participate in the activities of the Clubhouse. The learning and growth that accompany the accreditation will be a benefit to us all.

At the heart of the Clubhouse are the relationships between staff and members, and members with each other. Connections Place is such a warm and inviting place for people to gather and I am truly enjoying my time forming those relationships.

I invite you to come by the Clubhouse and say hello!

Mike Tibbles



THANK YOU to the following donors, partners, and funders for their incredible support and generosity!

- ◇ Michelle Cupit
- ◇ Beehive Wool Shop
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- ◇ Marian Paris of Paris Roka
- ◇ Isaiah 61 Foundation
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- ◇ First West Foundation
- ◇ TD Bank

