

Care for yourself

From time-to-time carers share their stories with us and others at workshops and carer support meetings. Here is a story sent to us by a carer which we would like to share with you. It's about caring for yourself.

Too often as carers we believe that engaging in self-care is an indulgence, or selfish, without realising that its benefits extend well beyond the self. The person we care for finds us more relaxed, refreshed and patient when we have taken time to care for ourselves.

Author Anne Lamott, an advocate of self-care says "Radical self-care is quantum, and radiates out into the atmosphere, like a little fresh air. It is a huge gift to the world."

What is self-care, beyond a buzzword? Quite simply, like on an airplane: it is putting your own oxygen mask on first before you can help others.

Self-care is both an internal and external practice. Internally we must be kind, patient and loving to ourselves. We practice silencing our critics, those internal voices



Self-care is a huge gift to the world

that would speak unkindly and negatively about us. Externally, self-care manifests as managing our relationships and nourishing our bodies. It is learning to communicate our limits, how to say 'no', how to forgive, and how to end toxic relationships.

To make the most of self-care it must be a dual act: the act itself (respite for example) and secondly and most importantly: relieving yourself of any guilt related to doing so.

Self-care doesn't have to be a spa vacation; it can be as simple as fresh sheets and a good book.

Recently, a self-care checklist made the rounds, aimed at people who felt ready to give up. The list was simple: drink a glass of water, eat a meal, take a shower, take a nap, get dressed and go for a walk in nature. For many this might describe a regular Saturday, but for those deeply involved in the care of others, simple needs fall by the wayside leaving you emotionally and physically depleted.

Lamott describes an act of self-care after a day in which she had been particularly hard on herself emotionally and physically: she took a long bath, she moisturised



2 School holiday CHAMPS



3 Carer guest speaker



4 Dementia & intimacy



7 Vale Andrew Wingate

Carer South News is published quarterly by Alfred Health Carer Services for carers who live in Melbourne's Southern Region

Carer Support and Respite



1800 052 222



Alfred Health
Carer Services
Caulfield Hospital
260 Kooyong Road
Caulfield VIC 3162



Sign up for Carer South News via our website
www.carersouth.org.au



Service providers can request multiple copies by emailing
info@carersouth.org.au

We encourage carers, friends and families to tell us your stories so we can listen to what is most important to you and perhaps share them with others in our community. Phone us on **9076 6439** or email info@carersouth.org.au



Alfred Health Carer Services acknowledges the traditional Aboriginal owners of country throughout Victoria. We pay our respects to them, their culture and their Elders both past and present.



Our organisation values diversity and is committed to providing an accessible service and a safe and respectful environment for our staff and clients.

► from head to toe reminding herself of the journey that her body had been on, then she sat in bed in her robe and slowly ate a large plate of her favourite fruits, thinly sliced.

Acts of self-care will look different for everyone. I like to get one of my grandmother's bone china teacups out of the cupboard, and slowly dip biscuits into hot tea. It is a simple act, but one that conjures up good memories and a feeling of comfort and peace.

Take a moment to find yours fellow carers. ✕

Tell us your story of what it means to be a carer. Send an email to info@carersouth.org.au or write to Alfred Health Carer Services at Caulfield Hospital.

Building inner strength

On 22 June, join us at the Toomah Community Centre, Pakenham for a morning workshop (9.30am – 1.30pm) suitable for carers of an older person or a person with dementia. Building inner strength can assist you with daily stress and help you to bounce back from setbacks.

See more www.carersouth.org.au under Who do you care for > Carer Workshops.

Phone **9212 3000** to book. A light lunch is included.

School holiday CHAMPS program

At least 20% of adults in Australia are affected by mental illness every year. And to help, CHAMPS* is a supportive three day program that helps kids in families where mum or dad has a diagnosis.

Children aged 8-12 who live in the Frankston area can join the CHAMPS free July school holiday program and meet other kids in similar

circumstances. They will learn that mental illness is very common, develop wellbeing and coping strategies and take part in fun activities.

When: Monday 3 July, Tuesday 4 July and Wednesday 5 July
10.00am – 3.00pm

Where: Ebdale Community Hub and Learning Centre,
20 Ebdale Street, Frankston

For more information and bookings contact program coordinator, Suzanne Heppell on **0499 078 770** or email suzanne.heppell@anglicarevic.org.au.

Read more www.satellitfoundation.org.au.

* Children of parents who have a mental illness or mental health issue.



Young carer mental health mentor

Caleb, a young carer supported by our service is using his life experience to positively support others. He has recently become a carer guest speaker in the SKIPS (Supporting Kids in Primary Schools) program. SKIPS is a unique program for primary schools that educates staff and students about mental illness in families and how schools can support children in those families.

It gives grade 5/6 students the language to talk about mental illness and increases their understanding of people who live with mental illness. It also helps to reduce the stigma of mental illness in primary schools and in the wider community.

Caleb who is now 18 met with teachers at Mahogany Rise Primary School in Frankston North recently to share what it is like living with a parent with a mental illness and how the school community and others can help.

He felt it was important for teachers to understand that some young people have extra responsibilities at home, and may not have the time or resources to complete homework on time or join in other school activities.

He remembered some influential teachers who wanted to understand why his work was not being handed in on time; which opened up the lines of communication. As a result he



Caleb (front right) is using his knowledge to be a positive role model for other young people

came to trust there was someone at school who understood his situation and was willing to assist.

Caleb was excited to share his story with teachers of young students. He hopes it will give others the opportunity to receive support from agencies such as Alfred Health Carer Services at an early age.

Through our Young Carer's Program, Caleb has met many others with similar experiences to him which has been invaluable. He said if he had been involved with the program in primary school, it would have been a different story, as that mutual understanding with others would have been carried with him through to high school.

Liz Wrigley (SKIPS and Consumer Engagement Coordinator Mental Health Recovery, EACH), who helps coordinate the program says Caleb's contribution made

a big impact on the children and staff as hearing about someone's personal experience is often the most powerful way to increase understanding. "Prejudices are chipped away," says Liz. "Compassion, understanding and confidence replace fear, misconceptions and doubt."

If you or your school would like to know more about the SKIPS program email SKIPS@EACH.com.au or phone Liz on **9871 1800**.

For more information about mental health supports, including our Young Carer Program, phone Alfred Health Carer Services on **1800 052 222**.

Alfred Health Carer Services would like to thank Caleb and his family for sharing their story to support others.

Dementia and intimacy

Does your spouse or partner have dementia? Have you noticed changes in their sexual expression and attitude to intimacy? Are you confused and uncertain about how to respond? You are not alone.

Dementia can cause changes in personality. People may be more loving or more distant. It can be different for everyone.

On **Wednesday 21 June, 10.00am – 2.00pm** Alfred Health Carer Services is holding a workshop in our office in Frankston for a small group of female carers to help understand the impact dementia can have on sexual expression and intimacy. You'll meet other women and get to discuss this topic with an experienced educator from Alzheimer's Australia Vic (AAV). This is an opportunity to learn



about and share ways of coping with the changes in your relationship.

Bookings are essential.
A complimentary morning tea and

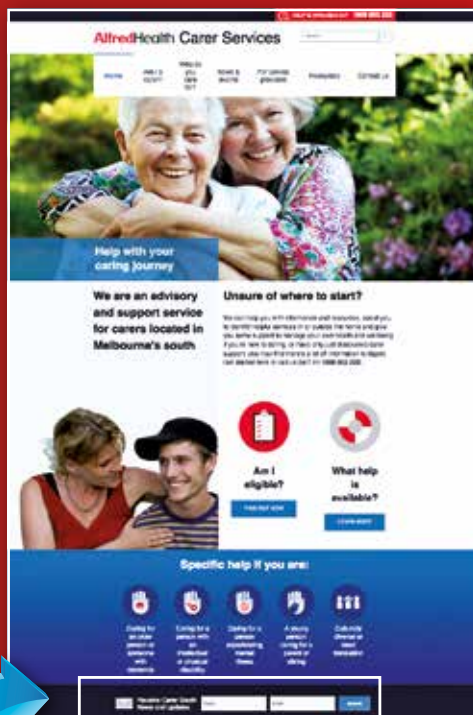
light lunch will be served.

Call Alfred Health Carer Services, 51 Playne Street, Frankston to find out more. Phone: **8781 3400**.

Stay in touch

If you would like to be notified of new workshops or hear from us when places at events become available, add your details to our electronic mailing list. All you have to do is go to our website and provide us your name and email and we will send you updates from time-to-time.

www.carersouth.org.au



Receive Carer South News and updates

Name

Email

Carer Support Groups in Port Melbourne and Narre Warren

Are you a carer for someone with mental health issues?

Would you like to be part of a monthly carer support group?

Mind Australia would like to set up monthly support groups run by carers for carers in both Port Melbourne and Narre Warren areas. If you are interested or would like more information, Mind would be happy to hear from you.

Please contact Mind's Family and Carer Services on **9686 4900** or Salma Mahari on **0419 783 595**.

In brief

Carers Australia: 7th International Carers Conference

Registrations for the 7th International Carers Conference at the Adelaide Convention Centre (4–6 October 2017) are open. Carers Australia encourages interested participants to register before the Early Bird period closes on 4 August.

www.carersaustralia.com.au/international-conference

Designing the new integrated carer support service

During May and June last year, the Department of Social Services invited carers and carer organisations to participate in a co-design process. Consultation will help to determine the types of services that could be delivered in the future to better support and sustain the work of unpaid carers. The Summary Report and individual submissions are now available to view online at

www.engage.dss.gov.au.

NAIDOC Week 2017

Carers, patients, families, volunteers and staff will celebrate NAIDOC Week 2017 at the Alfred Hospital in Prahran on Wednesday 5 July (9.00am – 10.30am). Local Aboriginal Elder, Carolyn Briggs will lead the ceremony with a Welcome to Country which will also include a traditional Smoking Ceremony. Morning tea will be served. Call Suzanne Corcoran for details **9076 2409**.

NAIDOC Week celebrations will occur nationwide with the theme “Our Languages Matter.” The theme aims to emphasise and celebrate the unique and essential role that Indigenous languages play in cultural identity, linking people to their land and water and in the transmission of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander history, spirituality and rites, through story and song.

“The preservation and revitalisation of the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander languages - the original languages of this nation - is the preservation of priceless treasure, not just for Indigenous peoples, but for everyone,” says National NAIDOC Committee Co-Chair Anne Martin.



Alzheimer's Association International Conference 2017

Alfred Health Carer Services' carer support worker Judy Allen will be a guest presenter at the AAIC Conference in London in July.

Judy has been invited to talk about the hugely popular and successful Creative Ways to Care - strategies for carers of people living with dementia education program for family and friend carers.

Judy and fellow educators from our dementia team have assisted hundreds of carers to better understand and respond to the changes of dementia.

Since 2010, Carer Services has delivered more than 20 Creative Ways to Care courses. During the seven week course, family and friend carers participate in workshops on music, reminiscence, creative activities,

and sensory stimulation.

These sessions are designed to help carers, not only understand dementia, but to equip them with the skills and knowledge to respond in imaginative and inspiring ways.

Judy is going to London to inform dementia experts from around the world about the benefits of Creative Ways to Care for carers. Evidence shows an increased confidence to respond to dementia, decrease in the occurrence of the symptoms of dementia, improved relationship between the carer and the person with dementia, and improved quality of life for the carer.

This program is now available for professionals to deliver in their local area. Resources comprise a facilitator's guide and workbooks in English along with cultural notes, DVD with voice-overs in seven community languages (Vietnamese, Chinese, Arabic, Italian, Greek, Polish and Russian) and translated participant resources.

It is hoped that after the London conference, Creative Ways to Care will be embraced by dementia educators in the UK and Europe.

Our next course for family and friend carers is starting on Tuesday 4 July in Pakenham between 10.00am – 2.00pm. Morning tea and a light lunch will be provided. Phone 9212 3000 for more information.



Carer support worker Judy Allen will speak at London conference

Write it down...Mental Health and the NDIS

A recent forum in Frankston hosted by Wellways Australia reinforced that communication and preparation are the keys for mental health families to be NDIS ready. It was suggested that open and frank communication between family members, including the person with a mental illness, is important to identify the needs of the whole family. If possible, this communication is best done when all family members are well so that everyone is clear about the reality of their individual situation. The forum encouraged the person with mental illness to:

- ✓ Be very clear about the functional, day to day issues associated with your psycho-social disability when completing the second section of the Access Request Form.
- ✓ Consider seeking help from

your mental health case manager and support workers to do this.

- ✓ Enlist your GP or treating psychiatrist to assist with the first section of the Access form.

Carers were also encouraged to prepare by:

- ✓ Noting the impact of your family member's psycho-social disability on your own health and wellbeing and your daily activities.
- ✓ Keeping some type of diary of all the support (including time spent) you provide daily to help the person you care for live as healthy a life as possible.

This will help you to develop your Carer Statement and clarify with the NDIA planners, at the time of the initial planning meeting, all of the support needs your family member really does require to function as

best they can.

Preparation will help to ensure that the full range of actual support options required are included in your plan and that people will be offered the choice and control that the NDIS has been created to provide.

Tandem is the Victorian peak body representing families and carers of people living with mental health challenges. They have compiled useful resources and tip sheets on their website

www.tandemcarers.org.au under the section Ready, Steady NDIS.

The website along with www.ndis.gov.au and www.carersaustralia.com.au are good places to start to understand what the NDIS might mean for your family.

You are welcome to call us to discuss any issues or concerns you may have on **1800 052 222**.

The NDIS Journey for people and families experiencing mental illness



Reproduced with the permission of Carers Australia

Vale Andrew Wingate

Alfred Health Carer Services is deeply saddened by the recent death of Mr Andrew Wingate, a respected and admired member of our leadership team, and an active supporter of carers. Andrew worked tirelessly and campaigned diligently for the carer community over many years.

Andrew was responsible for the management of Alfred Health Carer Services' Disability, Mental Health and Young Carer Programs from 2008 to 2017 and was a compassionate advocate for carers in Melbourne's Southern Region.

His strong connection with carers young and old, was greatly appreciated by them, as well as Andrew's colleagues who feel privileged to have worked alongside him. He was dedicated,

warm, humble, nurturing, positive and creative in his work. Andrew's team and others valued his inclusive, courteous nature, respectfulness and were witness to his keen sense of humour.

Andrew was also a catalyst in ensuring that carer voices were heard in the implementation of the National Disability Insurance Scheme. He was gifted at maintaining a people focused approach in a complex and sometimes bureaucratic environment. Making things a little easier for people was very much at the heart of his work.

Alfred Health Carer Services is aware of how much Andrew cherished his family. He enthusiastically volunteered countless hours to support and encourage his children and other young people in various community



Andrew Wingate

pursuits. We offer our sympathy and condolences to them. Andrew will be greatly missed by us all.

NDIS in the community

The national disability insurance scheme represents a big change in how disability funding will happen into the future. But responding only to an individual's need won't be enough by itself.

A new way of investing in local communities is being established through the government's Information, Linkages and Capacity Building (ILC) initiative (formerly known as Tier 2). The framework seeks to identify and fund activities in the community to assist people with a disability to live well and be connected,

whether or not they qualify for the NDIS.

Organisations of all shapes and sizes are assessing the potential to provide services. Small organisations, run by people with disability, through to large organisations, potentially delivering ILC activities for the first time are looking to be involved.

Funding is likely to be considered for services that support a broad range of goals promoting the social and economic inclusion and meaningful participation of people with disability. These may include quicker and earlier interventions, information and improved access to services, enhanced technology or innovative community activities.

On 21 May, some first round ILC National Readiness Grants were announced with a total of 39 projects funded from 36 organisations. Successful applicants were Inclusion

Australia's Mainstream and Me project which is a national activity that will enable conversations between mainstream services staff and people with an intellectual disability leading to increased opportunities for their participation. La Trobe University (leading a consortium) was also funded for a project to build the capacity of schools to make reasonable accommodations for children with disability by strengthening collaboration of allied health and education professionals and parents.

As these, and other projects are established, local area coordinators will help link people with a disability to services and supports in their community. Read more on the NDIS website.

ilctoolkit.ndis.gov.au

Hello, I'm Christina and I help care for my younger brother who has autism. My family is Vietnamese and Chinese. My recipe is very simple and easy, and I can whip it up in no time!

What I really love about my culture are our family values. We always prioritise the family and our loved ones. No matter what happens, we are always there for each other.

We can show love often in funny ways – like when mum forces me to eat. She often barges into my room to ask me if I have eaten yet. She doesn't really take yes as an answer because there's always more food to come. This is much like most of my family, who make sure me and my other siblings are full and happy. I feel like I am surrounded by positive and happy people, which really helps me out with my caring role.

Beef with green beans



Ingredients

- 500g beef stir-fry
- Green beans
- Salt
- Sugar
- Oyster sauce
- Fish sauce
- 2 cloves of garlic or more to suit
- Vegetable oil
- Tapioca or cornflour

Preparation time:

Marinating time 30 minutes

Cooking time 5–10 minutes

Method

Put chopped garlic, oyster sauce, fish sauce, sugar, a bit of oil and tapioca or cornflour in a bowl. (Quantities according to taste). Add beef. Let it marinate for 30 minutes or longer.

Cook the green beans and beef separately.

Place oil and garlic into the pan. The gas level should be high.

Put the beef in. Stir till cooked. (Should be very quick as if left too long it will end up chewy). Take it out and put aside.

Place more garlic and oil before putting in green beans, and fry.

Season with pinch salt, fish sauce and sugar to taste.

Once cooked, put the beef back in and stir until it is fully mixed and to your taste.

Serve with steamed rice.



Diary date

21 September, 2017 is World Alzheimer's Day; a day on which Alzheimer's organisations around the world concentrate their efforts on raising awareness about Alzheimer's and dementia.

The Peninsula Dementia Action Group, in collaboration with The Village Glen will host a free public forum at "The Hub" at The Village Glen in Rosebud 9.30am – 12.30pm on World Alzheimer's Day. The forum, "Dementia in our Community", will feature guest speakers, entertainment and free refreshments.

Put the date in your diary and look for more details in the Spring issue of Carer South News.