

MAY 2021

NEWSLETTER

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OUR PLACE COMMUNITY OF HOPE

1183 Davenport Road | 416-598-2919

info@ourplacecommunityofhope.com | www.ourplacecommunityofhope.com

May Birthdays

Our Place Birthdays

Jose c. – May 2nd
Rosa M.- May 4
Maryke O. – May 9
Gail B. – May 12
Amanda S. – May 19
Tim H. – May 22
Kirk C.- May 24
John S. – May 24
Donna H. – May 25
Christine F. – May 28

Famous May Birthdays

Adele- May 5, 1988
George Clooney- May 6, 1961
Billy Joel – May 9, 1949
Bono(U2)- May 10, 1960
Robert Pattison – May 13 1986
Tina Fey- May 18, 1970
Cher- May 20, 1946
Brooke Shields – May 31, 1965



If you want to celebrate your birthday with us, let us know!

Meals

Meals to-go are served Monday-Friday between 2:00pm and 5:00pm.

Reminders:

- To make sure that everyone gets a meal, we are not able to give more than one meal per person. Seconds will only be given between 4:45pm and 5:00pm, *if we have enough. They are not guaranteed.*
- If you have a dietary restriction, please let us know before 12pm on the day you are coming so that we can do our best to accommodate you.
- Please be patient with us as we grab your meal, snacks and drink... we are going as fast as we can!

In light of the increase in COVID-19 numbers, we are asking for your cooperation with the following:

- * Practice social distancing (maintain a 6ft distance from others) while waiting in line for your meal. We also strongly encourage you to wear a mask while waiting to protect yourself and those around you.
- * Please do not approach the table until the person in front of you has left.
- * *Masks are mandatory while picking up your meal.* Need a mask?? No problem! Just ask us for one.
- * If you are not able to wear a mask due to a medical condition, please wait on the "x" in front of the table. Your meal will be placed on the table. Once staff are back inside and the door is closed, please take your meal and step away from the table so that others can safely get theirs.

We *really* appreciate your patience and understanding during these strange times. We know that wearing a mask is not fun and is more difficult for some than others. Please be mindful of the fact that people around you may be more vulnerable to the virus than you are, and so by wearing a mask and keeping your distance, you are helping to keep them safe.

We want to do everything we can to stay open to continue to offer meals and support, which is why we have these policies in place.







Computers, WiFi and/or Phone Use

These services are currently *unavailable* until further notice.

Weekly Check-Ins

Let us know if you are interested in receiving a weekly supportive phone call from staff to check in and see how you're doing.

MAY 2021 PROGRAM CALENDAR

OUR PLACE PROGRAMS MAY 2021				
MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY
<p>TO-GO MEALS 2-5</p> <p>*CENTER WILL BE CLOSED ON MAY 24TH (VICTORIA DAY)*</p> <p>Virtual Name that Tune! 12:30- 1:30</p> 	<p>TO-GO MEALS 2-5</p> <p>Virtual Trivia/Card Games 3:30-4:30</p> 	<p>TO-GO MEALS 2-5</p> <p>Virtual Meditation 3:15 Online Peer Support 3:30-4:30</p> 	<p>TO-GO MEALS 2-5</p> <p>Virtual Anger Management Women: 2:30 Men: 3:30</p> 	<p>TO-GO MEALS 2-5</p> <p>Online Writing Group w/Peter 1:30- 2:30</p>  <p>VIRTUAL LIVE MUSIC w/Kevin & Chas 3:30- 4:30</p>
<p>To Go Meals</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> * Everyone welcome * Free of charge! * Seconds not served until after 4:45 & are Not guaranteed * If you have a dietary restriction, call before 12pm and we will do our best to accommodate you * Coffee served as we are able * Please wear a mask 				
<p>Virtual Programs & Appointments to Use Computers/Phone/Wifi</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> * Appointments to use Computer/Phone/Wi-Fi are currently unavailable. * All virtual programs use Zoom - see staff for sign-up information * If you need help downloading Zoom/learning how to use it, just ask us! * There is an option to <i>phone in</i> to all Zoom groups. 				

NOTE: Programs and hours may change without notice in response to Public Health's COVID-19 safety recommendations.

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Our Place Weekly Online Programs

Name that Tune! – Mondays at 12:30pm

This is an hour to talk about some tunes. We'll listen to music and try to guess the artists and song titles.

Link to join Name that Tune & Games via Zoom:

<https://zoom.us/j/92357132760?pwd=ZWltaXlsK3dQaXpnTTgydnNaWUd4Zz09>

Join by phone, dial: **647-374-4685**.

When prompted, enter in the Meeting ID: **923 5713 2760**

Trivia & Card Games – Tuesdays at 3:30pm

Casual, fun programs that will be rotated bi-weekly. One week will be trivia with friends! The other week will be time to gather and chat over Zoom while playing online cards together. Card games will be decided by consensus on the day of, with a focus on Euchre and Crazy Eights.

Link to join Online Trivia & Card Games via Zoom:

<https://zoom.us/j/93121462646?pwd=dJlxM2R1eEdSMElL3VTa0x2b0tBUT09>

To join by phone, dial: **647-558-0588**

When prompted, enter in the Meeting ID: **931 2146 2646**

Meditation- Wednesdays at 3:15 | Peer Support Group – at 3:30pm

Guided meditation will begin by 3:20pm. No experience is needed. Come as you are. All mics will be muted during the meditation.

Peer support meetings are a time to connect with others for support, encouragement, and hope. We'll learn from each other's experiences in conversations. We'll talk about relaxation, managing emotions, self-compassion, and self-acceptance. We'll look at positive steps that you could try to have a better life.

Link to join Peer Support Group via Zoom: <https://zoom.us/j/94221242340>

To join by phone, dial: **647-374-4685**

When prompted, enter in the Meeting ID: **942 2124 2340**

Anger Management – Thursdays at 2:30 (Women's) and 3:30 (Men's)

This virtual Anger Management course is for anyone who is interested in getting a handle on their anger and strong emotions.

The training utilizes Cognitive-Behavioural tools and techniques to help individuals navigate tough situations. With topics such as Communication, The Cycle of Violence, and Learning from Mistakes, participants can dive deeper into the root of their anger and learn more about themselves in the process.

There are also many opportunities for individuals to connect the lessons with their past and/or current experiences, as open discussion is encouraged. This group operates from a trauma-informed perspective, and aims to provide a safe, open, and non-judgmental space for individuals to explore their emotions and find new ways to grow.

To Sign Up: Email info@ourplacecommunityofhope.com or call the Our Place office: (416) 598-2919. To complete your registration, Tia or Clarence will call you to introduce themselves and have a quick chat with you.

Writing Group – Fridays at 1:30pm

Writing Group with Peter (a professional journalist!) is a time to connect with others, build friendships and get creative together.

Everyone is welcome to join in and no experience is necessary!

Link to join Writing Group via Zoom:

<https://zoom.us/j/93536287038?pwd=RVpzR1pMSGcxQ01UQXZ6YVBHTlI0UT09>

Join by phone, dial: **647-374-4685**

When prompted, enter in the Meeting ID: **935 3628 7038**

LIVE MUSIC w/ Kevin and Chas– Fridays at 3:30pm

Join us as we welcome back Kevin and Chas! Every Friday, come listen and sing-a-long to all their greatest hits!

Link to join Live Music via Zoom:

https://zoom.us/j/93816554001?pwd=ZEIibmNjQ214QXhhNFliUX_FkWFFnUT09

Join by phone, dial: **647-374-4685**.

When prompted, enter the Meeting ID: **93816554001**

Other Programs & Supports

Nicotine Replacement Therapy

Thinking of quitting smoking?? Talk to staff about how you can access support and free Nicotine Replacement Therapy with no wait.

Free Rapid-Access Psychotherapy

St. Michael's Homes is temporarily expanding their existing Psychotherapy program. They will be working with ten Student Therapists through to March 31, 2021 and are looking for clients ages 18 and up. Sessions can be done by phone, tablet, or computer and in-person sessions will begin when conditions permit. This is an amazing opportunity to access **free** one-to-one psychotherapy (up to 16 sessions per person). Please let the staff at Our Place know if you would like to register.

IA Mental Health support line

This line includes "ask the expert" assistance for people with schizophrenia and psychosis as well as their families. Support is offered by telephone, online, and in-person. This service formerly was provided by the Schizophrenia Society of Ontario.

The line can support you with a variety of mental health issues. There is supportive counseling as well as assistance with finding help from organizations. Whether you're dealing with increased stress and anxiety or experiencing challenges related to a different mental health or addictions issue, they're available to help. Personalized information is provided to individuals living with mental illness, to caregivers, and to the wider community.

You can reach out to one of their counsellors at 1-855-449-9949 or email them at support@iamentalhealth.ca. When calling the support line you can expect to have your call returned later the same day after you leave a voicemail.



"SMART Recovery" addiction support meetings

Free online support meetings for anyone with addictive problems. These meetings either support people with substances such as alcohol or with behaviours such as gambling. These self-empowering meetings assist with cutting down or stopping problem activities. SMART Recovery offers techniques and ideas to help people make constructive changes to have more satisfying lives.

Meetings can be attended via the Internet or by phone.

Meetings currently take place 7 days per week:

Monday at 7:00 pm

Tuesday at 1:30 pm or 7:00 pm

Wednesday at 3:30 pm

Thursday at 3:00 pm or 7:00 pm

Friday at 7:00 pm

Saturday at 7:00 pm
Sunday at 6:00 pm

For more information, visit <https://smartrecoverytoronto.com/get-started/>

Zoom links and phone numbers to connect with meetings are available on that web site



Mental Health Week



May 3rd to 9th is *Mental Health Week*! The Canadian Mental Health Association (CMHA) is reminding us that naming, expressing, and dealing with our emotions is important for our mental health.

Their web site has practical advice, articles and information about topics like calming yourself, talking about bad feelings to feel better, and understanding emotions -

<https://mentalhealthweek.ca>

Peer Support Lines

Need someone to talk to who has lived-experience with mental health issues?

Check out a Peer Support Line. A volunteer will listen to you talk about your day or what's happening in your life. These are not crisis lines so you can call if you're doing OK and just want to talk.

Krasman Centre: 1-888-777-0979

Available any time every day, 20 mins/call

Mood Disorders Association: 1-866-363-6663

Available 9:30am to 5pm. 30 mins/call

Progress Place:

416-323-3721 - 12pm to 8pm

416-960-9276 - 8pm to midnight. 30 mins/call



Mental Health & Crisis Resources

1. Call **911** if you are in immediate danger or need urgent medical support.
2. Canada Suicide Prevention Helpline: **1-833-456-4566**
3. Text **WELLNESS** to 741741 to access the Crisis Text Line. Provides immediate support.
4. Wellness Together: **1-866-0445** (24/7). Provides free counseling and support.
5. Gerstein Crisis Centre: **(416) 929-5200** (24/7). This is a community-based crisis service for adults age 16+ in Toronto who are dealing with mental health issues and/or substance use issues and are currently in crisis. Also offers online face-to-face support, wellness groups, short term follow-up support, and referrals to other services.
6. Crisis Services Canada: **1-833-456-4566** (24/7) or text **START to 45645** (4pm-midnight). This is support for people who are thinking about suicide.
7. Distress Centre of Greater Toronto: **(416)-408-4357** (42/7). They provide emotional and crisis support.
8. St. Michael's Homes: **(416) 926-8267 ext. 110**. Addictions Services for men.
9. Assaulted Women's Hotline: **(416) 863-0511 or 1-866-863-0511** (24/7 crisis line)

If you or someone you know is in immediate danger, call **911.**

Vaccine Information

If you have questions about vaccines, we advise you to talk to a doctor. At Our Place we have some information and we will answer questions if we can.

For information about booking a vaccine you can visit - <http://covid-19.ontario.ca/get-covid-19-vaccine>

Or you can call the vaccine booking line for information - 1-833-943-3900

You will need a health card to book an appointment.

The Ontario government has announced that all adults will be eligible for the vaccine by the end of May. Eligibility may first open up to 40+ and then 30+ in the first few weeks of the month.

Vaccine hot spot

The Our Place postal code, M6H, is a vaccine hot spot. This means that people over 45 in this area can book a vaccination through the provincial booking system. For ages 18-44, mobile and pop-up clinics will be promoted locally by community partners and public health units.

CAMH Clinic

CAMH has been providing vaccines to priority groups, including individuals with:

- Diagnosis of mental illness
- Diagnosis of substance use disorder
- Dementia

Up to one associated primary essential caregiver also can receive the vaccine.

When supplies are available, CAMH is booking up to 7 days in advance between Tuesday and Thursday, 9am-4pm.

A Primary Essential Caregiver is included for individuals with specific health conditions who require regular and sustained assistance with personal care and/or activities of daily living. Caregivers will need to book an appointment and present to clinic with the individual they are supporting as per eligibility group above.

For more information about the CAMH Clinic, visit -

<https://www.camh.ca/en/camh-news-and-stories/covid-19-vaccine-booking>



COVID-19 Vaccines: Frequently Asked Questions

This handout is to provide **accurate medical information** to help you make an **informed decision**. It has been reviewed by doctors. This is the most up to date information as of March 2021, and it will be updated as needed.



Were the vaccines tested in people of colour or other minority groups?

The vaccine studies had **20% to 38% people of colour and other minorities**.



Should I get a second shot of the vaccine if I had mild side effects?

Yes! Mild side effects happen to a lot of people. You need two shots for full protection - **one dose does not give you enough protection**. If you had a bad reaction, then it is best to talk to a medical professional about this.



I have bad allergies, should I get the vaccine?

If you are allergic to the ingredients in the vaccine or have had a bad reaction to another vaccine before, then you should not get the vaccine. If you have bad allergies to other things (food, medicines), then **speak to a medical professional**.



Will I get COVID-19 from the vaccine?

The vaccines are not “live” – this means they do not have any virus in them, so **they can not cause an infection in your body.**



Would I still need to wear a mask after getting my vaccine? Why?

Yes. There is a small chance you can still get sick from COVID-19 and then give it to others. **You still have to wear a mask and make sure you are social distancing after getting the vaccine.**



Do we have a lot of information about side effects?

The studies that were done show good results, with **few serious side effects.** Most side effects happen between 2-3 days after getting the vaccine and up to 6 weeks after. When the studies were done, they **checked people for up to 2 months after they got their vaccines.**



What about long-term side effects?

Even now, Health Canada is still checking people who get their vaccines to make sure there are no other side effects that come up. **If a new side effect does come up, it will be very rare and should not cause too much worry.**



What is “herd immunity” and how does it work?

Herd immunity means **people get protected from the virus indirectly.** By vaccinating as many people as we can, we make sure other people who have not been vaccinated do not get the virus and cannot get sick from it. We think **immunizing 70-80% of people will lead to immunity for everyone and provide herd immunity.**



How long am I protected for?

At this time, we do not know how long you will be protected for after a vaccine.

If you have more questions, you can speak with a medical professional who can provide you with more resources and information. **You can also visit the following Public Health websites:**

1. <https://covid-19.ontario.ca/covid-19-vaccines-ontario>
2. <https://www.canada.ca/en/public-health/services/diseases/coronavirus-disease-covid-19/vaccines.html>



From the Our Place Kitchen

Manisha's Quick and Easy Pizza

INGREDIENTS

- 1 (0.25 ounce) package active dry yeast
- 1 teaspoon white sugar
- 1 cup warm water (110 degrees F/45 degrees C)



- 2 ½ cups bread flour
- 2 tablespoon olive oil
- 1 teaspoon salt

INSTRUCTIONS

1. Preheat oven to 450 degrees F (230 degrees C). In a medium bowl, dissolve yeast and sugar in warm water. Let stand until creamy, about 10 minutes.
2. Stir in flour, salt and oil. Beat until smooth. Let rest for 5 minutes.
3. Turn dough out onto a lightly floured surface and pat or roll into a round. Transfer crust to a lightly greased pizza pan or baker's peel dusted with cornmeal. Spread with desired toppings and bake in preheated oven for 15 to 20 minutes, or until golden brown. Let baked pizza cool for 5 minutes before serving.

Emma's Vegetable Drawer Ratatouille

When life gives you eggplants, make ratatouille. Ratatouille is a vegetable stew that originated in France, and this recipe originated in my kitchen. As long as I have tomatoes and eggplants, I call it ratatouille and then use up whatever other vegetables I have. I never add mice (ha ha ha Disney joke) but sometimes I add a can of kidney beans or chickpeas for extra protein.

INGREDIENTS

- 2 tbsp. Olive oil
- 1 medium onion- diced
- 2 cloves of garlic – minced
- 1 large Eggplant – chopped into 1 inch cubes
- 1 can of diced tomatoes
- 1 tsps. Italian seasoning or herbs you have on hand (dried parsley, basil, oregano, herb de Provence, all work)
- Pinch of salt
- Ground black pepper to taste
- 2 cups of chopped vegetables- zucchini or whatever vegetables are wasting away in the vegetable drawer carrots, celery, bell peppers...
- Optional: chopped parsley for serving



DIRECTIONS

1. In a large pot, sauté chopped onion in olive oil on medium heat until onion begins to soften, about 5 minutes
2. Add minced garlic and sauté another 3 minutes
3. Add cubed eggplant and salt and cook until eggplant begins to tend about 8 minutes
4. Add herbs, pepper and the can of diced tomatoes including all the liquid. Bring up to a simmer.

5. Add remaining vegetables and let simmer for 20 minutes until all the vegetables are cooked through. The timing will vary depending on the veggies.

Serving Ideas:

- Serve as a stew with bread
 - Use the ratatouille as a pasta sauce
 - Serve with couscous
 - Serve as a side dish with anything.
- Enjoy!

Mental Health Tip of the Month

By Kathryn Dorrell



Walking may be the perfect exercise because it is simple to do, you can do it almost anywhere, it's not hard on our bodies and joints like running—and it's free (no equipment or membership fees required). The spring weather has motivated more people to get outside, which is great because walking is good for our mental health. Here is how walking helps keep our minds and brains in good shape:

- Walking boosts your mood and brain health because it increases blood flow and circulation to the brain and body.
- Walking may lessen anxiety and depression because it releases “feel-good” chemicals called endorphins in our brains and bodies.
- Walking has a positive impact on our central nervous response system; when we walk, we are calming our nerves.
- People with depression and anxiety tend to ruminate, or over think, things, and this contributes to sadness and worry. The good news is, walking can help take your mind away from stressors. It is a great distraction and gets us “out of our heads.”
- You can also practice mindfulness while walking and pay attention to each step and breath.
- Walking is also a good opportunity to do gratitude journaling in your mind. As you walk, notice things that you appreciate and are thankful for, such as colours, flowers, grass, sounds, etc.
- Walking helps improve our confidence and self-esteem, which is a vital part of being mentally well.
- Research shows that individuals with social anxiety or agoraphobia, who fear certain places, situations, or are reluctant to leave home, may benefit from walking because it helps them overcome their sense of fear.
- Walking exposes us to natural daylight, which can help lift symptoms of seasonal affective disorder (SAD).
- In some countries, doctors write a prescription for walking in nature because it has been proven to help restore mental wellbeing and a sense of calm.
- Walking is easy to do with friends and the social connection is good for our mental health. (Wear a mask and/or social distance during COVID.)

Mother's Day

This year, Mother's Day falls on Sunday, May 9th.

According to the website, History.com, celebrations of mothers began with the ancient Greeks and Romans, who had festivals to celebrate the mother goddesses Rhea and Cybele.

In the Christian calendar, "Mothering Sunday" is celebrated on the fourth Sunday in Lent. Countries in the U.K. celebrate mothers on this day, which is different from Canada and the United States.

The first official Mother's Day holiday was celebrated in the early 1900s. It was started by Anna Jarvis after the death of her own mother. Anna created Mother's Day as a way of honoring the sacrifices mothers made for their children.

Did you know: More phone calls are made on Mother's Day than on any other day of the year.

Source: www.history.com/topics/holidays/mothers-day

Writing Group Submissions

Trustworthy
By Pedro Vallejo

I was born in Ecuador and raised Roman Catholic as this was the religion of my parents and grandparents. My mother tongue is Spanish and because of assimilation – I've also learned to speak, read, and write in English.

At 12 years old, I really immersed myself into the reading the Gospel also known as The New Testament. The book of John really impressed upon me the man named Jesus of Nazareth.

I then acquired a King James Bible (KJV) and quickly realized the dictionary was really helpful.

The KJV bible is composed of 66 books – The Old Testament which includes the TORAH, or the five books of Moses (The Lawgiver) is made up of 39 books. The Old Testament contains the law and the prophets. Moses is part of the mosaic that ushers in the Messiah.

The New Testament which basically sums up to - Jesus (Christ / Messiah / Anointed One) is made up of 27 books including the Book of Revelation. To me, Jesus Christ is the author and finisher of my faith just like scripture states. He is the authority in my life.

I truly feel that the book of Revelation is from Jesus Christ.

Revelation 1:1 The revelation from Jesus Christ, which God gave him to show his servants what must soon take place. He made it known by sending his angel to his servant John, 1:2 who testifies to everything that he saw – that is, the word of God and the testimony of Jesus Christ. 1:3 Blessed is the one who reads aloud the words of his prophecy and blessed are those who hear and take to heart what is written in it, because the time is near.

I've always looked at the world with a Christian world view. I feel other world views borrow from it - especially the secular.

I know the secular are articulate and sharp, but they don't realize their religion is scientism. I've gathered all religions basically have their own doctrine, ethics, rituals, myths, and symbols.

It's hard to be faithful as organized religions capitulate to the secular modern ideologues. Like many I've walked away from organized religion as going to mass failed to feed my soul; however, I still long for the gathering with true believers.

I've never considered it before, but to me a personal relationship with Jesus Christ makes a lot of sense. No one speaks to Father for me – it's between the father and I and Jesus Christ is the mediator and redeemer of my fallen state.

Reading scripture - Jesus of Nazareth is special and sticks out. He also says we all know the way. He says the road is narrow - The kingdom of God is within you ... You must go in!

I got to thinking - Old Testament, New Testament ... it sounds very legal to me. If there is a testament – there must be a beneficiary, which means there must also be a Trust and Trustee.

As the beneficiary of the New Testament, I claim the resurrection by being born again as a child of the living God. Trust in God is all you will find in me. I constantly ground myself by the thought - be still and know "I AM" God.

Who and where is the trustee?

The trustee is needed to administer the testament.

I get the feeling each one of us is a trustee and beneficiary.

God is before all things and in God all things hold together. It's better to trust in God than to put confidence in man. I guess the only questions left are Where does your Trust rest? Does it rest peacefully?

Schizophrenia

By Delannie Gallicano

Schizophrenia is like being haunted by the self. Voices pass through my body like unwelcomed ghosts. One voice is a demon and I find myself in bed pulling my hair and punching my face. The voice that comes forth is scary and sounds like growling. It tells me I'm not good enough for anything and I cry with great pain and sadness. I rest in my bed a short while before another voice takes me over. This one is a spider who travels through the universe. The dewdrops hang in her web like a star. My body felt like a ouija board as the voice of the spider came through. I found myself sucking in air as I spoke a strange language I've never heard before. After this I lay exhausted on the bed. Then another voice came. It was the voice of a fairy. I got out of bed and pulled down my shower curtain and layed it on the floor. There's a beautiful picture on it of forest trees. Poised like a ballerina I placed crystals all over the trees. When it was completed I balanced on one leg to look over the piece of art layed out on my floor. Exhausted I found myself in bed again and waited in silence for the next voice to come. This one was a large dark wolf and I heard myself growling and pulling my hair. Forcing my face into a pillow I growled with great rage with the will to rip the throats out of anyone who had done me wrong in the past. Exhausted and alone I lay on the bed. With schizophrenia I felt haunted within myself as if my body was like a ouija board and different personalities which spoke different languages came through. Since my breakdown I started taking meds which help me live a normal life.

What In the World!!!

By Kimberly Acevedo



What is happening with Mother Nature? She has no idea what she is doing. What I mean by this is she don't know what season we are in. When I heard we were getting snow in mid-April, I was trying to think of why she could be acting this way. We have had beautiful weather; double-digit temperatures, and awesome sunshine. Winter season was a harsh one. We deserve something good for a change. But noooo, she couldn't let this happen. My mother says "mother nature is into the booze and not the beer", or maybe "she isn't smoking weed maybe something stronger". I think maybe she has COVID-19 and maybe has dementia where she can't remember anything. Whatever she is on or whatever she is doing, I don't want any of it or a part of it. I hope she gets better soon, so we all can enjoy spring.



Springtime

By Teresa Carducci

In the Spring the children like to play in the sun. They usually have a lot of fun. The children usually like to go to a park and take a hike. This is usually when they ride their bikes. The children like to swim in the pool. In the Spring it is usually in the school. Soon the birds and the bees will fly into the flowers and the trees. In the Winter the grass stops to grow. In the beginning of Spring, it begins to grow very slow. The children will soon in the Fall go back to school. This is the golden rule.

The Shopping Cart

By Bill Bain

Josh the sculpture maker
makes art from sticks and paper
and mini marshmallows at the ends
when the sticks need to bend.

A big collection he surely has
but Mike is gonna give him razz
about his art cause it's lots of fun.

When John gets angry, Mike will run.
Then Josh will get back to his art
he's gonna make a shopping cart
for Kathryn to ride in.

We're all family, just like kin.
We get along but sometimes fight
but all's forgiven by the night.
And Josh's sculptures make us smile,
he has made a really big pile.

A Cry for Help - Part 2
(Part 1 is in the April 2021 newsletter)
By Josh Fogel



After I found Our Place and began art therapy, I also started going to writing class. I was writing small, little books and sharing them each week. One time I got an idea to photocopy the books and set up a library or a bookstore in Our Place. I was selling the books with my friend as a drama but then one son and one father came in to drop off a delivery and the son took out a dollar and bought a book for real. It was a wonderful feeling to sell a book and I wrote another book about the experience of selling the first book. I read that second book to a staff member. She said, "Ah, you can't sell books in here", and immediately my bookstore was shut down.

But I sold one book and it was as if I sold a million!

Then I attended peer support at Our Place, and one day I brought a problem I was having. I started to cry when I was talking about it: I said I had a confrontation at The Stop community centre and I can no longer go back there. I started crying because I love The Stop so much but I couldn't go there cuz I was being confronted by another community member. I was crying because I realized I had to stop going to The Stop and I didn't want to. It wasn't fair and I got encouragement from the leader and was praised for caring so much.

Well, then another community member shared something and they felt safe enough to also get emotional. Now when I see that community member outside at The Stop. We share a nice bond that has lasted for over a year.

One day before the coronavirus had taken a hold of us, there was an announcement at Our Place that said St. Michael's Homes is joining Our Place as a partner. I didn't know what that meant but it turned out that anger management was one of the programs that would be offered from St. Michael's Homes to the Our Place community.

I didn't think I needed anger management and never even considered going to it because I didn't think of myself as having an issue with anger. The only place where I got angry was when I was riding my bike and I would have road rage against the cars on the road.

One time I got hit by a car and the car stopped to see what it was. I went after the car and he saw me coming so he started to drive away. As he drove away, I punched his rear fender and I dented it. I learned that if you make a dent in a car, it doesn't hurt your hand and that was the first of three attacks on cars: I punched three cars over a year's period.

I had to tell myself to stop doing it because I knew this was a battle I couldn't win, but the road rage was intoxicating and I was finding myself becoming addicted to attacking cars. So, when I did sign up for anger management that was at least one thing I could talk about; one place where I knew I had some rage issues.

"I didn't think I needed anger management
and never even considered going to it."

Then, one day I got on my bike to drive to Victoria Park and Danforth. On the way, at University and Bloor, I hit a construction zone and, boom, I got a flat tire. So, I hopped on a subway at Bay and Bloor and took 16 stops east to Victoria Park. When I got into the store the owner said he wanted to charge me \$80 to fix the flat tire.

I said, "I just need a new tube. I don't need a new wheel." I said, "It's okay, I'll take the bike home with a flat and I'll get my guy to fix it for \$20." Then he said, "Okay, okay, I'll do it for \$40." I said "okay" and then as I was leaving, I said, "Do you need the key?" He said "no" and I left with the key.

The next day I got a call. He said he needed the key. I had to ride back to Victoria Park and Danforth on my Jamis bike, and on the way. I was thinking what to say. I wanted to use my anger and say, "You better give me a break in the price because you made me ride two hours extra out of the way after you told me you didn't need the key"; but instead, I used my anger management skills.

When I got into the store I said, "You did me a favor brother. I had such a wonderful ride here on Bloor and Danforth!" His jaw dropped open cuz he was expecting me to scream and yell. We left on good terms. I hoped that I'd get a good price in the end, but anyways I didn't use my anger.

A Message from Caroline Mah

I will remember that there is no use in thinking about a dark future when I am not celebrating my bright and beautiful present day. Be positive one minute of a time until the day is over! You can do it!

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**** A big thank you to Writing Group volunteer, Kathryn for her help with the newsletter this month and to everyone who contributed! ****

If you would like to contribute to the Our Place newsletter, please email info@ourplacecommunityofhope.com. We would love to hear from you!