

OAKE



TREE

HOLYOAKE ALUMNI NEWSLETTER ISSUE 2 2012



There has been a very positive response to our first issue from both current and former clients, employees and stakeholders. Thank you.

In this issue we share with you the personal stories of some clients who have completed programs at Holyoake.

One client continues to express her gratitude by providing stunning floral arrangements for our Victoria Park office. Another Noongar man will inspire you with his journey of determination and self-fulfilment.

The interview with Eric Nordberg will give you a glimpse of Holyoake's commitment to our current and former clients. He is the Manager of our Midland service which has just moved to a brand new office building.

I hope you enjoy this issue and, I welcome your feedback.

Angie Paskevicius
CEO

Learning to cope with the thorns of life

It's what most parents dread... discovering their son or daughter is dependent on drugs. Giselle* faced this devastating reality not too long ago. "My world seemed to collapse all around me" she remembers thinking.

The shame and stigma associated with substance use prevented her from talking about the situation, so she bottled it all and endured the consequences.

Eventually she could not cope any longer and, after much agonizing, decided to come to Holyoake for some counselling and support. It proved to be a turning point. "It was like switching on a light in a dark room" she says.

Giselle started with individual counselling and then joined a Parent Support Group. She soon discovered the enormous benefits of group therapy. "I found a place

to share my pain with others who had similar issues."

At Holyoake, Giselle realised that people with alcohol and other drug issues have a pattern of behaviour, often including loss of jobs, friends, money, cars and debt. After just a few sessions, she came to believe that it was possible to break this pattern through the power of the group.

She also realised that she had to let go of social pressures, the stigma, the shame, the guilt. She stopped judging her son and noticed that it brought about a slow but noticeable difference in her son.

When Giselle started her journey at Holyoake, there were lots of tears and sadness. She is now able to laugh more with members of the group, many of whom have now become close friends.

She is considering a university course that will qualify her to do volunteer work with people affected by substance use.

Giselle compares her experience at Holyoake to learning to manage the thorns without losing focus on the beauty of the flowers. She has expressed her gratitude by creating some beautiful floral arrangements for the Holyoake reception – one of which is featured below.



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REFLECTING ON MY JOURNEY.

At Holyoake, I explored feelings of sadness and depression with my Counsellor.

I went inside the feelings, felt the emotional pain of being abandoned.

And acknowledged what I had missed out in childhood...

being nurtured, living without fear, being accepted and loved.

I sat with the feelings and they dissolved slowly.

It's an incredible journey, one I am grateful for the opportunity.

The journey is not over.

I feel I know parts of myself better. I feel more real. I feel more joy.

I feel I've been able to address some of the root causes of depression.

I feel more alive. I am blessed to have the life I have.

- HENRY *

"I would like to say to others who are thinking about joining the group programs to enjoy it and know that you will grow and help others grow."

- Mel*

"As men we don't talk as much as women do with their friends. So it's nice to have somewhere to vent with no judgement."

Tony*

"I have been a client on and off for many years here at Holyoake. What impresses me is the care, compassion and warmth this place gives me time and again. Thank you."

Bill*

"Holyoake is of outstanding benefit for the community because it helps people of all walks of life, young and old. It is simply based on getting the best out of all who have the courage to turn up."

Bonnie* xo

Opening doors to a better future

Eric Nordberg is Holyoake's Regional Manager of the North East Metro Community Drug Service (NEMCDS). He and his team have just moved to a new office site in Midland. Here are his thoughts about the move...

How do you feel about the move and how will it impact on Holyoake services at Midland?

This is a very exciting move and an opportunity to offer more services around groups, training and education. In addition, we will offer more medical services in partnership with Next Step Clinical Services. This wonderful new site will allow us to grow and be of more service to the North East Metro region. It is more centralised than our previous site and will offer better access to a wider range of services.

Do your clients inspire you and your team?

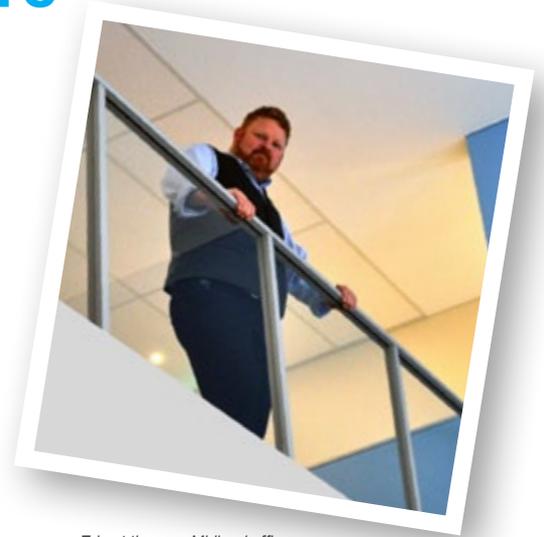
Yes always. People come to our service determined to change what they are not happy about in their own lives. This takes

great courage and commitment.

When a client makes progress - no matter how small - it inspires individual staff members and the team. We consider ourselves very fortunate to be able to witness and hear those stories. It helps keep us moving forward.

How important is continued support after clients complete their programs?

Very important. The journey does not stop when the program is completed. Many clients may think "Well what next?". Sustaining long term change takes commitment, support, and mutual give and take. For a person who has just started the journey of self-discovery, nothing is more inspiring to hear someone on the same path say "If I can, you can - and this is how I did it". Ongoing support can help people sustain a focus on what they have identified as the priority for their lives. It also helps them stay connected to caring, supportive and like-minded individuals.



• Eric at the new Midland office

What message would you give former Holyoake clients?

That you are very brave and courageous. That your journey is worthwhile just as much as you are. That you can be inspirational in your own lives, families and communities. That you have the power to achieve so much more than you ever realised - as you discovered at Holyoake. Thank you for allowing us to be part of your journey.

A journey from teenage drug use to health graduate

Holyoake's Wheatbelt Community Drug Service Team (WCDST) has helped make a significant difference in Northam and Narrogin for over 13 years. The team works with individuals and communities who inspire them with their remarkable stories. Here is one of them...

Tom* was just 17 years old when he started drinking alcohol with his Noongar mates. Very soon he spiralled to injecting amphetamines and heroin.

The next 13 years went nowhere fast, and Tom doesn't remember too much of it. Then at age 30, he decided to stop using drugs and attended counselling. While he managed to stop the drugs, his alcohol

consumption increased dramatically. He drank a carton of full strength beer every day, got into trouble with the police and had numerous court appearances. By this time his relationship had broken up and he became homeless.

In 2011 the court ordered him to participate in counselling and he came to Holyoake. During his initial appointment he stated that his drug and alcohol use had taken over his life and he wanted to make changes. His goal was to reduce his alcohol consumption significantly and find full time employment.

The counsellor at Holyoake developed a treatment plan around reduction with input from Tom. Over the following months

he reduced his alcohol consumption significantly. Encouraged by his counsellor and his own progress, he began working part time. At the same time he enrolled for an Indigenous Health course at CY O'Connor Institute.

Following his graduation from CY O'Connor, Tom began to look for full time employment. Earlier this year, he commenced a traineeship with a government agency and looks forward to each day with great enthusiasm. He has maintained his goal around reduced alcohol consumption and is now reunited with his partner and children.

Congratulations Tom and thank you for sharing your journey with us!

Programs@Holyoake

We offer a range of programs not just for people with substance use issues, but for their partners and significant others as well because evidence indicates that an average of 5 people are affected by 1 person's dependency. If you've already experienced the benefits of our programs, perhaps you would like to refer someone else?

Relationships in Focus

(For partners and others who are affected by someone else's problematic alcohol and/or other drug use):



Change from a different perspective

Alcohol and/or other drug use can significantly impact families and social networks. In Holyoake's experience, working with significant others can have a positive effect on not only their own lives, but on the lives of the people they care for who use alcohol and/or other drugs.

The Relationships in Focus program is specifically designed for those affected by, and having difficulty coping with, someone else's problematic alcohol and/or other drug use, or other dependent behaviours, e.g. gambling. Many of our participants have a partner who is attending a program for their own alcohol and/or other drug use, but people are welcome even if their loved one is not seeking help at the time.

The program works to address the following issues commonly faced by significant others:

- Trust issues in the relationship
- Conflict and communication breakdown
- Frustration and anger
- Grief
- Self-esteem issues
- Stress, anxiety and/or depression.

Individuals attending the program gain knowledge, skills and strategies to help them respond more effectively to these issues. This enables participants to make positive changes in their own behaviours and to work through the difficult emotions that can occur on a daily basis. If participants choose to attend the group component of the program, they will connect with others in similar situations and gain a network of support. Past participants have experienced an increased sense of wellbeing, quality of life and sense of self.

If you would like to know more please call Client Services on 9416 4444 or visit our website www.holyoake.org.au

For more information on any of our programs please go to www.holyoake.org.au

Men's Program

Women's Program

Parents Program

Relationships in Focus

Childhood in Perspective (for adults)

Couples Counselling

Creating Choices

Adolescent Program

Young People's Program

Art and Play Program

Prison & Justice Programs

Building Resilience Through Play

OAKE TREE SUBSCRIPTION

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and send us names and contact details.