

MCT MATTERS

003

STAY INFORMED - STAY CONNECTED - STAY ACTIVE APRIL 19

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BEHIND THE SEEN

What does every kid learn to do at school when they have a question or don't understand something?

They put their hand up and ask for help which is something Ross Beckley from Behind The Seen points out, as adults we don't do real well.

An on call retained firefighter with Fire & Rescue NSW for over 20 years, Ross was diagnosed with PTSD in 2009 and was medically discharged in 2014. Along with his partner Veronique Mosely, who has vast experience and qualifications in social work, they developed Behind The Seen to; 'heighten awareness of the effects of incident related and career specific stress on Australian emergency service personnel and their families.'

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WHAT ABOUT YOU?

When you spend a great deal of your day focused on the needs of other people there can be very little time to stop and think about the things you aren't doing for yourself.

Caring for someone who is unwell or lives with a disability can be one of the greatest things in life, making sure that person knows someone cares about them, helping to ensure that they have every chance and opportunity to enjoy life and to make them happy is a special thing.

It can also mean that your own life is changed in many ways, not better not worse just different.

We often forget to make time for ourselves and can even lose interest in those things we once enjoyed.

The enjoyment we once experienced might be cancelled out by feelings of guilt or selfishness, it doesn't seem fair to be out having fun when someone we care about might be struggling on their own with the simplest of tasks. For many, the priorities in life change.

Think for a minute about a hobby or

activity you enjoy doing, something that makes you happy while you are doing it. Now ask yourself, when was the last time you did that thing?

If your answer was anytime recently and you make time for yourself on a regular basis, that is great, well done.

If you're not sure when that was, don't worry it's not that uncommon. Life gets in the way and other responsibilities take over.

What is important now, is that while the hobby or activity you thought about, the one you enjoy doing, is fresh in your mind, make a deal with yourself to find some time in the next week to do it. Work out a day and time now and make a commitment to spend some time on yourself. Even better, make yourself accountable by telling someone else what you are going to do and when you are going to do it.

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BEHIND THE SEEN AT HEARTS AND MINDS BARBERS

Danny and Laura from Hearts and Minds Barber Emporium at Toukley opened their doors to the community once again to host a talk and discussion, this time about our emergency service workers and volunteers.

The well attended evening offered locals an insight into the world of first responders and their families during which Ross and Ronnie from Behind The Seen offered a number of ways to identify and manage the things in our life that can

trigger stress and anxiety.

True to the stereotypes and cultures that exist in workplaces and society, there is a lot of pressure placed on our emergency services personnel and their families. They are the people we rely upon to always be there, always be ready to jump into action and who are expected to never show any weakness or signs of fatigue.

Just a week after their talk, Behind The Seen hosted a RAW Challenge, obstacle course



event at Doyalson where it wasn't about how quick or strong you were, not about winning or losing, it was about working as a team to make sure everyone made it through and enjoyed the course together.

The important message MCT took away from these great events was that putting your hand up does not make you weak, it connects you to someone or something else and that makes you and those around you stronger.

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WHAT ABOUT YOU?

Taking time out for yourself is in no way selfish. It can in fact be the exact opposite because taking a break can reduce your stress levels, improve your mood and this flows onto the relationships with those around you.

Depending upon what your chosen hobby or activity is, you have a chance to connect with nature, get some physical activity or make important social connections to help reduce any feelings of isolation or loneliness that many people in caring roles experience.

If it has been a while since you spent time on yourself it can feel a bit awkward to begin with and you might find it hard to concentrate if you're thinking about other things but over time it becomes easier and you start to relax and enjoy what you are doing.

Another option if you're not

sure about jumping back into a hobby or activity can be walking. Not only is it great for your physical and mental health, it is free and gives you a good dose of fresh air that can help calm the mind when there is a lot going on. Take a short walk to explore your neighborhood or if you have more time there are many great tracks for bushwalking all around the country.

Take it a step further by getting social and visit some of your areas local clubs or associations to find others who share a similar interest. There are groups and meet ups for just about everything you can think of, from sports to chess, gardening, photography, cooking and of course Men's Sheds. If you can't find the club or group that interests you, start one yourself.

One of the best things about

spending time on yourself is the happiness it will bring the person you care about, it can be easy to forget that they want us to enjoy life and be happy also. How many times has the person you care for said 'What about you?'.

When you take a break and find time to relax, you come back refreshed and that is a good thing for everyone.



TAKING CHARGE OF YOUR CASH FLOW.

Do you check the bank account and wonder why the number always seems to be going down? Here's a couple of options for improving your balance



If you're providing care and support to someone with an illness or disability, the opportunity to earn, save & plan ahead financially is often limited.

They might not appear huge, but there are some supports and concessions available for carers around the country that could help keep a few extra dollars in your bank account each week and give you a chance to save for the future.

Human Services, more commonly known as Centrelink, have Carer Payment and Carer Allowance options available which provide income support based on a variety of factors including the needs of the person cared for and your existing income/assets. Your GP will complete part of the paperwork needed to apply for the payment answering questions about the level of support you provide and condition of the per-

son you care for. There may also be an opportunity to access financial or concession assistance with health, rent and education costs.

Contact Human Services by calling 132 717 Mon-Fri 8am to 5pm and have a chat about what is available.

A great initiative that can offer you and the person you care for a chance to enjoy more things in life is the Companion Card. The card is provided to eligible people who live with a lifelong disability and enables them to access complimentary or heavily discounted entry fees or tickets to events and attractions.

With a companion card the cost of attending sporting events, concerts, stage shows and many others is drastically reduced making it more affordable to enjoy some time out together.

A companion card must be applied for by the person with an illness or disability and their GP will be required to complete part of the application form.

To apply or for more information contact 1800 893 044 (NSW)

These are just a couple of examples and there may be more options available depending on your circumstances.

Contact the Carer Gateway to find out more on 1800 422 737 Mon-Fri 8am-6pm.



CUT TO THE POINT

THE RIGHT DOSE

Many family and friend carers help support others through managing or monitoring medications and where multiple medicines are taken, it is vital to have a good relationship with both GP and Pharmacy.

Sometimes however this can be difficult, whilst there are apps you can use on your phone, another way to stay on top of things is by contacting Medicines Line who can help if you have any questions or concerns when it comes to side effects or interactions with other medicines.

MEDICINES: 1300 633 424

MANAGE ANXIETY

Everyday anxiety can affect us all in one way or another and when those worries hang around for seemingly no reason there may be more to it.

Anxiety disorder is common and although there is no single cause, ongoing stressful events can lead to a greater chance of experiencing anxiety.

Managing the care of someone can often mean taking on extra responsibilities so knowing how to manage signs of anxiety can help minimise it's effects.

MINDSPOT: 1800 614 434

WELL MAN TOUR

During February and March, MCT was proud to be part of various community events held throughout North Queensland.

Kicking off in Mackay, the series of events presented by **Selecta-bility** and **Health Re-Imagined** provided an opportunity to bring people together and enjoy some food, comedy and music while we shared stories and initiatives that would encourage connection.

The most important message MCT shared during each of the talks was to ask everyone to think about someone, a mate, colleague or family member who might be going through some challenges, who might be feeling a bit left out or who

might want to ask for help but not know how. To think about how they could help in some way and let that person know someone cares about them.

If your reading this newsletter, you can do the same thing for someone in your life. Take what you learn or know and share it with others where ever you can. Part of being a well man or woman is being able to start a conversation that could make a difference in someone's life and often when you think you are helping someone else, the reality is, you're helping yourself.



KEY DATES IN 2019 ...

JUN 10-16 | Men's Health Week

JUL 7-14 | NAIDOC Week

SEP 1 | Fathers Day

SEP | Prostate Cancer Month

SEP 10 | Suicide Prevention Day

SEP 10-12 | Men's Shed Gathering

OCT 5-11 | Mental Health Week

OCT 13-19 | Carers Week

NOV 19 | International Men's Day



**"I'M NOT IN THIS WORLD TO LIVE UP TO YOUR EXPECTATIONS AND
YOU'RE NOT IN THIS WORLD TO LIVE UP TO MINE." – BRUCE LEE**



NSW Central Coast LHD Carer Support Unit - 43 205556 (9am-4.30pm, Mon-Fri)

MensLine Australia - 1300 78 99 78 (24/7)

Lifeline - 13 11 14 (24/7)

Carer Gateway - 1800 422 737 (8am-6pm, Mon-Fri)

National Carerline - 1800 242 636 (9am-5pm, Mon-Fri)

QLife (GBTI) - 1800 184 527 (3pm-12am 7 days)

Suicide Call Back Service - 1300 659 467 (24/7)

Open Arms (Veterans and Families) - 1800 011 046 (24/7)

GriefLine - 1300 845 745 (midday to 3am)



ELDERSLEE FOUNDATION



Growing our Community

Visit **www.mencaretoo.org** for more information

All photos from **MCT** and **www.unsplash.com**

Men Care Too is proudly funded by **The Elderslee Foundation**
and auspiced by **The Iris Foundation**



Lakes
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true print solutions

Proudly distributed to the Central Coast community through the support of