

NEWSLETTER

November 2021, Volume 1



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A word from the Chair

No doubt you've been asked,

"What does Mindful Margaret River actually do?"



Martin Ringer, Chair

Sometimes I still take a breath before answering that question, because it's not simple. That is partly because we have evolved a great deal since our inception in 2019 and partly because what we do has no precedent anywhere in Australia.

How do you describe an organization that doesn't fit any existing categories?

But any organization is guided by ideas, values and principles and so I'll articulate in the following paragraphs what I think guides our work:

A major factor in a positive community wide sense of wellbeing is the degree of interconnectedness and level of participation of community members in social and civic events. A catch-all term for this is 'social capital' or 'social and relationship capital'.

"Our volunteers have been working hard over the past year in building our social capital"

Mindful Margaret River strives to enhance the social and relationship capital in the communities that we serve. As you will see in this newsletter, Mindful Margaret River and its volunteers have been working hard over the past year in building this social capital in many areas.

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Promoting wellbeing messages and information (Team 1)

In September 2021, Mindful Margaret River launched the new [website](#) which features a helpful and easy to access directory of local supports for our Shire. This [website](#) was unveiled and shared with residents seeking help from financial advice to bereavement supports.

This project was the blood sweat and tears of many MMR volunteers and our hats go off to Peter Griffyn for pulling it all together and making it so functional as well as beautiful.

A key function of this site is that as a member of MMR you can login using your profile and connect with your teams. This is where updates, notes and progress on each teams actions will live. If you have not logged in already, please do. If you need help, please contact [Erin Statz](#) or [Peter Griffyn](#) for some support.



Peter Griffyn

The partnership with the **Mail** sits under Team 1. This is much loved by our community and if you missed an article, you can find them all on the MMR website in the [NEWS](#) section. Yet another reason to go and have a look.

If you are interested in writing an article for MMR to appear in the Mail, please contact [Jacqui Barnsley](#), our editor for more information. We are specifically looking for more male contributors so don't be shy, please share a story with us.

Facebook seems to be a major way in which we can engage in wellbeing support for our community. Our [Facebook page](#) promotes evidence based social and emotional wellbeing information, promotes community capacity building events and activities and is a way to get messages out to community.

The biggest hit for a single post in the last year to date was over 2.9k on the 6 June which was a post reminding people where help was available locally, closely followed by one about the Soup Kitchen at just over 2.3k views on the 30 August.

The most views for a single Facebook post was 2,900k on a post of local supports!

In short, through various mediums, we are pumping out wellbeing messages and information into our community.

Follow us on [Facebook](#) and if you are aware of an activity, event, workshop, training or information that would benefit our community, please contact Erin Statz so that it can be shared amongst our networks.

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A word from the Chair

As members of Mindful Margaret River, we believe that social and emotional wellbeing is enhanced by listening to, engaging with and connecting to people. This is the foundation of our work.

Our function in the community is to act as a connector and catalyst. We work to support community to respond to local needs, provide support to community that want to expand or build on their wellbeing and help seeking literacy.

We also promote starting and staying with 'the conversation' on wellbeing; how to stay healthy, how to get healthy and where to go when you need more help. We work at the community level and do not provide or duplicate 'mental health services,' rather we compliment and support our community to better understand the support networks available locally.

As a member of Mindful Margaret River, we encourage you to make it a part of your daily life to be open to and support conversations that encourage people to bring to the surface the daily business of managing their sense of wellbeing.

Just taking time to talk and listen is solid gold. With world kindness day approaching (13 November) let's all be inspired to incorporate the daily act of checking in with, and being present for others.

Increasing Community Awareness

Increase community awareness of local support services and ways to be connected (Team 2)

The volunteers in Team 2 have been busy! On the 14 October, Monica McGrath with Erin, the MMR officer met with the senior staffing team at the Settlers Tavern to talk wellbeing, connection, local supports and ways to support each other in the work place in stressful times. This session was an informal discussion on the importance of wellbeing in the workplace. This is the third workplace that Mindful Margaret River has provided this type of facilitated discussion.

Previous workplaces include the local Bunnings and the Shire of Augusta Margaret River for RUOK day. Team member Debbie George facilitated the Shire discussion with staff at the works depot in the morning followed by all staff at the main Shire building for a BBQ lunch. There are over 200 staff at the Shire. Starting the conversation in a safe and supported way is what Team 2 is all about.

Feedback received from all three sessions have been overwhelming positive and related to increased understanding on how, where and when to get further help for self or others.

Since June 2021, we have facilitated wellbeing discussions in three workplaces with over 200 employees attending these events. That is over 200 people in our community that now know where to get help and when to get help.

Debbie also volunteered to speak with Radio Margaret River during mental health week and did a great job on promoting ways to access support and services as part of Mental Health Week in October.

This team will continue to provide this service to local clubs, employers and community groups wanting to increase their own understanding of local supports and ways to keep connected.

If you know of a work place or community group that is interested in learning more about wellbeing and when and where to get local help and support, contact [Erin Statz](#).



ASIST training group

Building Capacity

Build community capacity for wellbeing and mental health (Team 3)

This team is focused on building partnerships to support training in Margaret River.

October 21/22

Applied Suicide Intervention Skills Training, MMR partnered with Open the Gate, St John of God (SJOG) with sponsorship from Margaret River Holiday Homes. 21 people register for this training, five of which are MMR volunteers!

November 4

Conversations About Suicide - hosted by MMR, sold out all 25 places!

November 29/30

Youth Mental Health First Aid - MMR partnering with St John of God, use promo code MMR2021 and get \$100 off the cost of this training.

December 3

Conversations About Suicide, register now as it will sell out quickly.

Please encourage your friends and family members to consider the importance mental health first aid could make in their life and those of their loved ones.

All our training is listed on the MMR website under [EVENTS](#).

Eco Health - Nature and Nurture

Support the Eco Health pilot program to increase mental health and wellbeing of youth (Team 5)

This year, selected young people from Margaret River Senior High School participated in the innovative Ecohealth program that aimed to stimulate, educate and provide hope and passion for future endeavours in the environment. The Ecohealth project provided nature-based work experience as part of the Education Departments Workplace Learning Program for twenty-four (initially) upper school students.

Students worked on a variety of local environmental projects under the direction of the Wadandi traditional custodians, four passionate teachers and a plethora of volunteers speaking to students about their nature-based occupations and aspects of local biodiversity.

Work experience included surveying local land sites, planting tubestock and other re-generation tasks, maintaining the Cape-to-Cape track and clearing our local beaches of marine debris to protect the marine environment.

Industry-based workshops included presentations from Government, non-government organisations and volunteers, that included topics such as careers in Ranger



Boodja crew 2021

Work, Environmental Research, Permaculture and regenerative agriculture.

The students participated in the project each Wednesday during terms two and three to extend and diversify work experience, workplace skills and opportunities for the future. Preliminary focus group results from the UWA research team assessing the project indicate that this experience has been very beneficial for many of the participants.

EcoHealth is a Mindful Margaret River project imagined and created by local environmentalist, Nanna of the Forest and Mindful Margaret River volunteer Suzanne Hicks, in collaboration with community nurse and MMR member, Sandra Robertson.

Support sporting clubs

Support sporting clubs to incorporate mental health, alcohol and other drug messaging (Team 4)

Our sports teams all form part of the Sport and Recreation Reference Group (SRRG). The Sport and Recreation Reference Group has identified the importance of mental health and wellbeing within our community sporting clubs.

However, like many sectors of our community, sports clubs are also stretched in time, volunteers and resources. In order to support our community and sporting clubs, the SRRG has partnered with Mindful Margaret River. The next steps are for clubs to self-identify a representative who wants to work with Mindful Margaret River as a liaison to support their clubs in improving overall wellbeing of their members.

In the meantime, the SRRG promotes all available training opportunities promoted through Mindful Margaret River.

If you are a member of a sports team and interested in playing this role for your club, talk with [Dylan Brown](#) as soon as possible. Watch this space!

Build strong relationships - YOUTH

To build strong relationships to increase youth connectedness and resilience (Team 6)

Team 6 is our biggest team by far! There are 16 volunteers in this group and what a dynamic group it has become! At the moment, volunteers are supporting two major upcoming projects.

Hard Talk Helps is a community workshop aimed at parents and community members to discuss the *'hard to talk about'* topics of death, suicide and mental health.

This project was initiated by YouthCARE and will be co-facilitated by Laurissa Knowles and Jacque Tarrant (St John of God).

Mindful Margaret River has supported this event through venue grants, advertising, ticketing, catering and collaborating with all parties involved.

Local professional support services are invited to attend to be able to provide cards and have chats with locals on the night.

Services that are invited include GP Down South, South West Counselling, Community Adult Mental Health, CAMS, Headspace, 4Families and others.

All are welcome and invited to attend this important community event. Tickets are free but RSVP is needed for catering. If you are interested, please register here today.

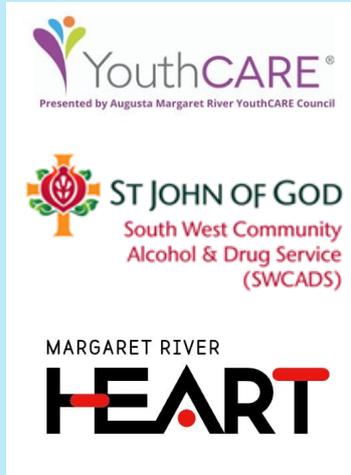
Hard Talks Help
Date: Thursday 11 November 5pm
venue: MR HEART
RSVP: bit.ly/hardtalkhelps



Laurissa Knowles



Jacque Tarrant



Big Ten Day, Margaret River Senior High School, Friday 12th November.

This event is focused on the Big 10 positive emotions:

Joy, Gratitude, Serenity, Interest, Hope, Pride, Amusement, Inspiration, Awe and Love.

Starting from 11:45am, students in years 7-11 will break into the four houses of Aquarius, Pisces, Scorpio and Taurus.

Each house will rotate through four activities: Motivational Speaker, Fete, Activity and a Fun Run.

Mindful Margaret River will be hosting an activity within the Fete segment of the day. Rotating through the four houses could see us coming into contact with over 1000 students!

Gianna Cavalli has kindly put up her hand to lead the Mindful Margaret River contingent. If you are free on the 12th of November and available to help, please come along as the more the merrier given the possible numbers we may be seeing!

Please email Erin if you are interested.

Likewise, if you run a business or service that could host a fete activity, please contact [Melanie Chapell](mailto:Melanie) with your support immediately!



Caring through Connecting

Support the wellbeing and mental health of isolated and hard to engage community members through connection (Team 7)

Dr Peter Durey invites you all to attend an evening of learning. The purpose of this workshop is to increase awareness of the benefits of improved communication and listening skills to support better connection with, and care of, people with mental health needs.

This workshop is aptly titled [Caring Through Connecting](#), put on by MMR on the 25 November.

Joining us for the evening are Professor Geoff Riley AM, Emeritus Professor and Honorary Senior Research Fellow at the Rural Clinical School of WA and previously Professor of Rural and Remote Medicine at the University of Western Australia. He has promoted quality general practice, and has practiced kindness throughout his career.

Debbie George who is a Mental Health Professional with 27 years experience in Drug and Alcohol, Family and Domestic Violence, Homelessness and with Youth and Women transitioning from prison to the community. She has recently retired from her position as Clinical Coordinator with South West Counselling where she worked for the last ten years. Debbie is an original Mindful Margaret River member.



Top L-R

Geoff Riley, Debbie George, Martin Ringer and Peter Durey

Martin Ringer, Chair of Mindful Margaret River. He is a retired socio-analyst whose work involved a combination of psycho-analytical and systems theories as applied to teams, groups and communities. Until moving to Margaret River three years ago he was a sessional lecturer for the Masters in psycho-analytical and psychotherapy course at Edith Cowan University.

Snacks are provided, come along and bring a colleague or friend. Numbers are limited. Please register for catering purposes today by clicking the link [Caring Through Connecting](#). HEART, 25 November, 5.30 pm-7:30 pm

Family and domestic violence

Support and resources for family and domestic violence local initiatives (Team 8)

The volunteers on this team have created a very small and close working group. As a matter of priority, this team undertook to provide logistical and practical support to a group of community members wishing to start a peer support group.

This commenced in October and is professionally facilitated with logistical support in place to help this community group self-define and develop in a safe and supported way. This is a major achievement as it is the first peer support group of this kind in our Shire.

Another area of focus for this team is on exploring the idea and practicalities behind a men's refuge in our shire. This is in early stages, however, where there is a community will for change, there is a way. If you would like to learn more about how you can contribute to this group, please contact [Erin](#) directly.

Women's wellbeing

For women in the AMR community to proactively look after and prioritise their social and emotional health and wellbeing across all life stages. (Team 9)

This team has three moving parts at the moment.

The first area is focused on connecting with and building women's overall wellbeing through financial and legal literacy and supports. Mindful Margaret River volunteers led by Lydell Huntley will continue to explore a workshop series for women through the Community Centre, partnering with as many of our local services and supports as possible.

MMR has also proactively promoted '[Ladies to the Front](#)' and look forward to partnering with other local community minded services in the future.

The second area has been a women's wellbeing group within the Shire. A **Women Together** inaugural event was held in September as part of Jean Hailes Women's Health Week.

Around 20 women from the Shire took time out to get together and focus on the wellbeing benefits of connecting with other women from the workplace, outside of the workplace.

We had Almendra Travaglini come along and speak to the women under trees at Giniversity and provided a safe space to connect and identify ways in which we can remove connection barriers and strategies to prioritise women's friendships and supports.

We hope to follow this on with another **Women Together** event in the near future.

The third area of focus and passion for our volunteers was on exploring ways to get perinatal mental health support in place in Margaret River.

Radiance, which is a community network connecting parents to local services to support emotional wellbeing during early parenthood currently supports families in Busselton, Bunbury and Collie. Connecting with Radiance was the most logical first step and identified in the Team 9 Action Plan.

Also supported by Lotterywest, Playgroup WA has partnered with Radiance to support the First 1000 Days at Playgroup.



Judith Maechler at 1000 Days Launch

The aim is to connect families to a supported playgroup during those important early years.

One of the main goals is to reduce social isolation during pregnancy by establishing opportunities for local peer support as well as creating opportunities for dads to connect during pregnancy and beyond.

Mindful Margaret River hosted the launch of the **First 1000 Days at Playgroup** on the 3 November as a way to help **Radiance** expand to Margaret River to fill a gap in local service for perinatal peer support and advocacy for families experiencing post natal depression or psychosis.

As a result of working together, connecting key community services and contact, Radiance has felt supported enough to take the leap. They announced at the launch that they will expand service to Margaret River in Term 1 & 2 of 2022.

This is an amazing outcome and achieves the mission of this sub group in getting local perinatal peer support into our community. Well done to Judith and Helen Melville from MR Consulting for initiating contact with Radiance and all the wonderful volunteers within Radiance itself. We are so excited and welcoming of this very important service into the Shire of Augusta Margaret River in 2022.

More information will be shared about both the First 1000 Days and Radiance peer support as it establishes via our [EVENTS](#) page.



L-R Martin Ringer, Erin Statz, Jason Cleary, Stuart Hicks, James Shepherd, Stacey Hutt

The Shire of Augusta Margaret River was awarded most innovative partnership with Mindful Margaret River in September 2021. There is no other model like the Mindful Margaret River and Shire of Augusta Margaret River partnership. Congrats to all our volunteers and the hardworking staff in our local government.



Honorable Jackie Jarvis MLC, Miriam Avery and MS Jane Kelsbie MLA

Miriam Avery, our Deputy Chair has met with Jane Kelsbie, our new MLA for the Warren Blackwood electorate and the Honorable Jackie Jarvis MLC.

Ms Kelsbie is also passionate about mental health. Mindful Margaret River is looking forward to building relationships with our local members going forward.



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SAVE THE DATE TO CELEBRATE!

All our members are invited to attend an end of year celebration.

Thank a Volunteer is an annual celebration of all the amazing work volunteers do in their community.

Please come along and join in with your fellow MMR volunteers to celebrate a very productive year.

Drinks and nibbles provided.

Date: Thursday 9 December

Time: 6pm - 8pm

Venue: Margaret River HEART

RSVP: Eventbrite [Thank a volunteer](#)

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