

Community Mental Health Australia



**A SNAPSHOT
OF
D2DL STORIES**
5th Edition





Introduction

INTRODUCTION

This document contains a snapshot of the diverse activities provided by Day to Day Living (D2DL) programmes across Australia. D2DL is a structured activity programme for people living with mental illness funded by the Australian Government, Department of Health. The initiative recognises that meaningful activity and social connectedness are important factors that can contribute to people's recovery.

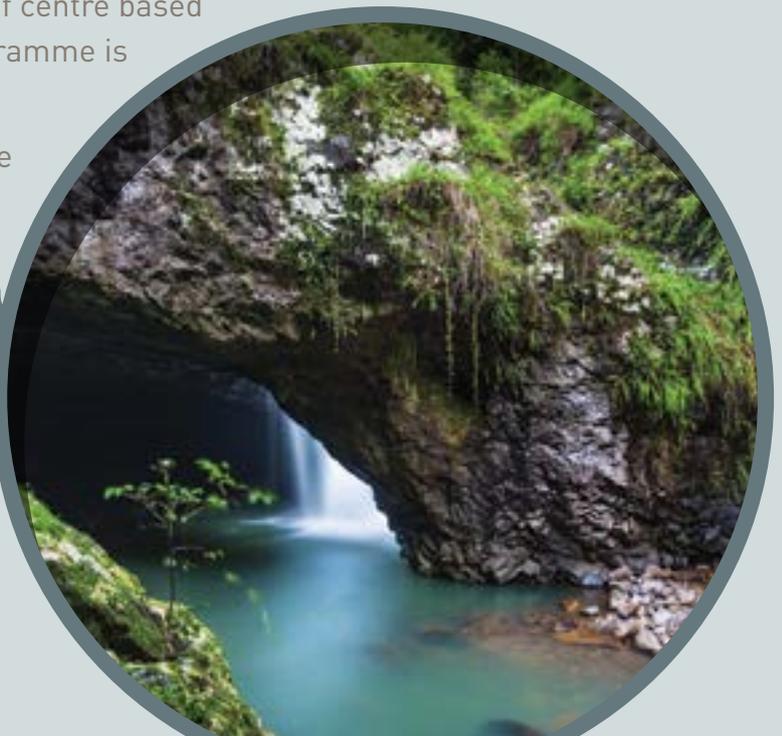
Each snapshot is written by a D2DL participant and demonstrates the impact of the D2DL programme in their life. D2DL participants give their consent to share their experience and most consented to use their real name.

Each D2DL programme is different with a range of centre based and community based activities. The D2DL programme is available in over 60 locations around Australia.

To find out more about the D2DL programme see the website:

<https://www.health.gov.au/internet/main/publishing.nsf/Content/mental-d2dl>

Please share this document with people who may find it useful.



Contents



Camping



Art Group



Drum Making



Healthy Lifestyle



Mt Kosciuszko Excursion



Art Therapy



Mindfulness



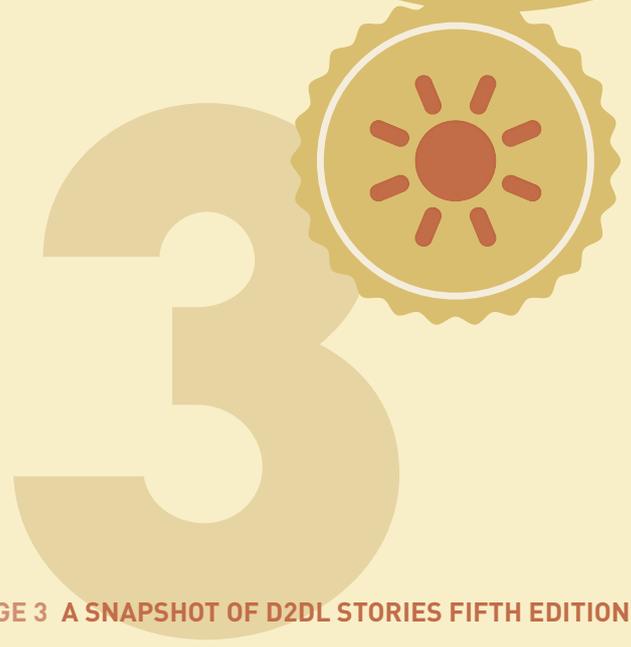
Market Stall



Peer Support



Engaging





Steve

CAMPING

What I gained by going to the Toowoomba Clubhouse Camp in 2015

As part of the Toowoomba Clubhouse D2DL program we conduct a camp each year. As a driver I chose to use my own tent and sleep behind the camp so I could get enough rest to drive home safely. On the second day we did a low ropes course which I hammered by going really fast across the course, then we checked out the waterfalls in the local creek as well as going for a bit of a hike. After this we went canoeing. I went with a camper who hadn't been for forty years. We got out on the dam and had a few good paddles and we ended up in the dam when he lost his balance.

I took him in to shore so he could dry out. He was very impressed with my concern for his safety. The experience was worth it, despite getting wet. I really enjoyed the camp because it has shown me the importance of giving it a go, supporting others so that they can grow, and the value of doing things together, even if it means getting wet.



Mary

ART GROUP

I participate in the weekly art classes. The classes are structured so that there is a balanced mix between the art theory and art practice, which keeps things interesting and informative. I found out about the program through my Mental Health Worker who provided me with a flyer that described what the classes were about and when and where they were held.

I enjoy being able to participate in an art activity where I can explore my creativity and learn new things. I like that all art supplies are provided which enables me to try out new mediums and art tools that I would not normally have access to. Also, the class facilitator is very knowledgeable about art, believes in us as artists in our own right.

I particularly like that each class has a mental health worker in attendance for additional support if needed. The art activity is held in a welcoming environment that has allowed me to participate in an activity where I can safely explore my creativity. It has also provided an opportunity for social interaction with other like-minded people. Through attending the classes, I have re-discovered my love of art and have been reminded of how important doing art and being creative is to my overall mental health and wellbeing.





Maureen

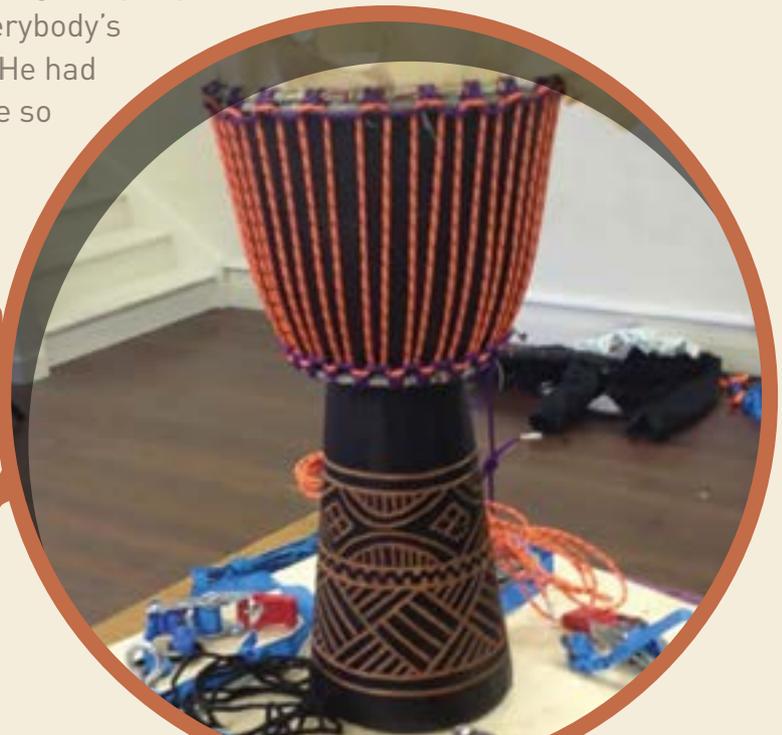
DRUM MAKING

I have been a participant of the MIFSA program for years. I couldn't decide whether I wanted to participate in drum making so I 'hummed and hawed', and went onto the reserve list. Just before the Workshops started, I was told there was a space left. I made the decision to participate. When I started making the drums it was the greatest experience I have had.

Trevor was amazing, very gentle and so very encouraging. He was very tuned into people. He picked up whether they were coping or if they were needing help. At one stage I was starting to panic because I thought that I couldn't do it. He came and sat down beside me and talked me through it. He gently told me to relax and that I could do it.

I became very excited and was really enjoying going every day. I looked around the room and saw smiles on everybody's faces- even a man that hadn't smiled for years. He had a huge smile the whole time. That also made me so happy to see other people so happy.

I love my finished drum, it is so beautiful. I am so proud to show everybody my hand-made drum. They think it is amazing.



Andrew

HEALTHY LIFESTYLE

New Moves is a fitness activity which focuses on healthy living and provides information about diet and exercise. It is great for all people as exercises range from low intensity to high intensity, therefore allowing everyone to join in. It is designed to accommodate to everyone's needs and is set up as different exercise stations each focusing on something different.

This includes circuit training, bicep curls, boxing and wall push ups. This is followed by healthy cooking which involves everyone cooking and sharing a healthy meal together.

I first heard about the New Moves program from attending Hercules House and Pioneer Clubhouse. There are many things which I enjoy about the program including the various exercises that are set-up at each station. I also like the motivation that comes from working out together and in a group; this provides me with the ongoing motivation and support I need. I enjoy cooking together and sharing a healthy meal which keeps me motivated to eat healthy as well.

New Moves has encouraged me to adopt a healthy lifestyle in all areas of my life and has motivated me to quit smoking too. It has taught me that any exercise is good exercise even if it is low intensity. It has helped me realise that I too can live a healthy lifestyle.



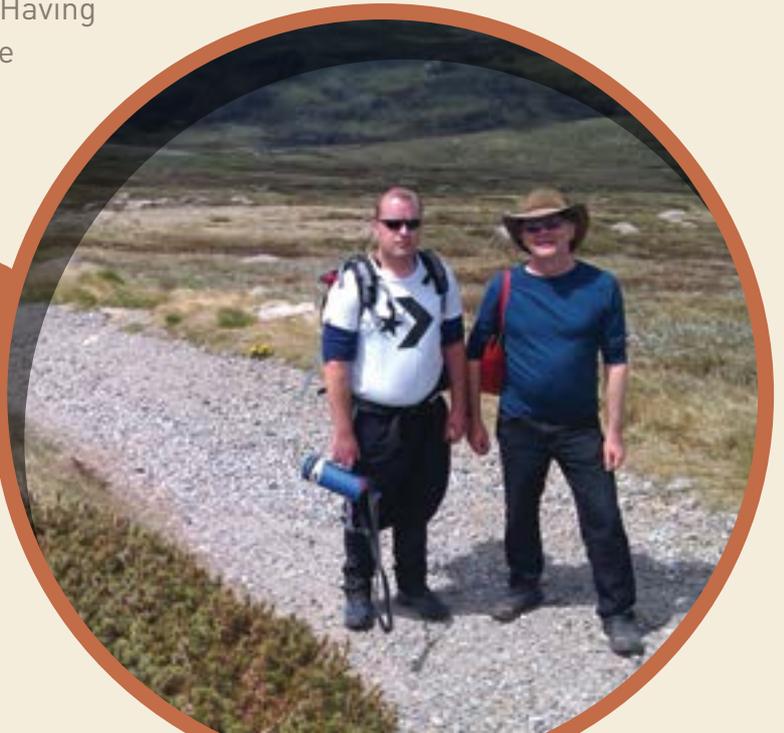


Sean

MT KOSCIUSZKO EXCURSION

I found out about the D2DL program through my case manager at Woden Mental Health (Canberra ACT). Since then I've been involved in a number of different groups and activities, but my favourite is the Kosciuszko excursion that the D2DL program runs each year in the spring.

It gives me something special to look forward to. I get a certain feeling from the high country and that's a special feeling – and having the trip gives me the chance to experience this with my friends. These excursions have allowed me to discover that I can interact with people – people that I don't know as well as people that I do, and that I can share this time with them. It is a good break from my problems, a chance to get away from the world. Having this break recharges the batteries and I would be devastated if this was taken away.



Georgios



ART THERAPY

My name is Georgios, I was diagnosed with schizophrenia and delusional disorder.

I enjoy participating in Art Therapy at Flowerdale Cottage, as it gives me a place to escape to and work with a clean slate with a view to creating.

My NSW Health case manager referred me to the D2DL programme, which gives me a sense of belonging as I live on my own. Participating at the Cottage enables me to socialize and form friendships. At the same time nurturing my creativity. As recovering and maintaining one's mental wellness can be a lonely and often isolating journey.

Through the art therapy group my style of art has broadened and blossomed, my creativity is growing, along with my life skills and confidence. This is a photo from a recent art exhibition at Liverpool Library from the "Hear Me, See Me" exhibition in December 2015.





Sarah



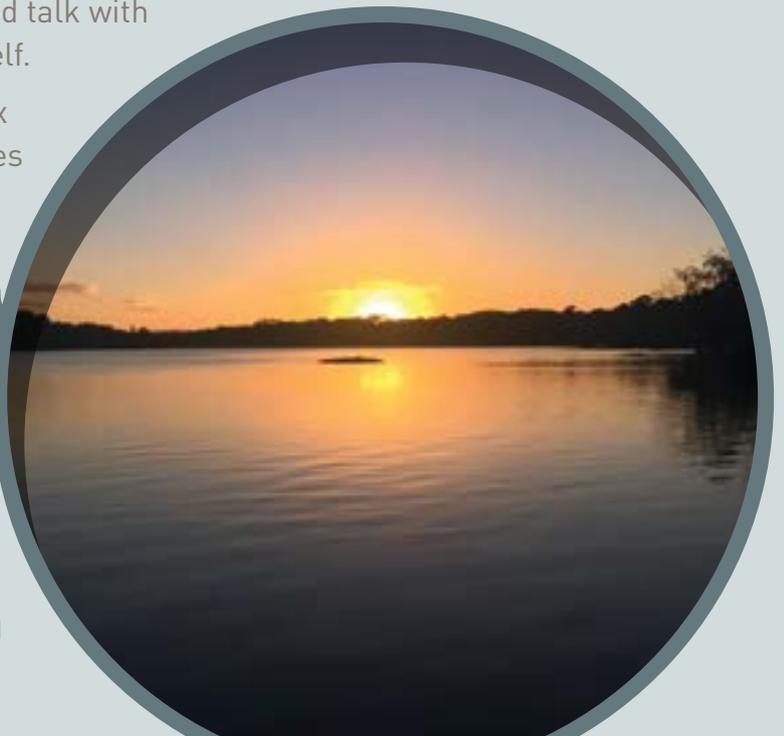
MINDFULNESS

I have participated in two Neami mindfulness groups. The groups are designed to develop strategies to combat anxiety and depression in daily living and I decided to join to find ways to reduce the anxiety that I was experiencing on a daily basis. I liked the fact that the groups were medium size so I didn't find it too frightening going along the first week.

I found out about the Mindfulness group through my support worker who suggested that this group might be useful in dealing with some of my anxiety issues. The six and eight week programs were really interesting and informative. Each week had its own theme which introduced us to different practical activities. We were even given exercises to take home and try on our own. Both Mindfulness groups were great fun and the facilitators were really caring and helpful. It was really good to meet and talk with other participants with the same issues as myself.

The Mindfulness groups have helped me to relax more in my life and to employ breathing exercises to calm me when I am stressed.

Other participants said they found the groups useful and that practicing mindfulness does make a difference in their lives.



Donna

MARKET STALL

Changing one's life journey is an ongoing process. But without it, one remains stagnant.

Having learned that I can achieve something has inspired me to go further and challenge myself to be more than my mental illness.

So, one year on from sharing my Market Stall story, I am now living with self reliance.

I am more able to seek the support I need, when I need it, knowing that I don't have to struggle alone.

With support from MIFNQ's Arts project, my market stall has grown beyond all expectation and I bought myself a laptop computer, a gazebo and foldable tables and my very own car! Being invited to have a permanent set-up in an Art & Craft shop, has boosted my confidence. WHAT? People like MY creations? I am accepted as an Artisan, instead of a strange person with Asperger's and mental illness.

I am also branching out from teaching art at MIFNQ, to teaching art in the wider community and my next goal is to teach art to children and adults, on a permanent basis.

I am over halfway through my Diploma in Business, which I once would have thought impossible!

Stay tuned – the best is yet to come!





ALLY



PEER SUPPORT

'Peer Worker' support at D2DL is literally that: support from people who have been where I've been dealing with mental illness, who have an intimate understanding of where I'm 'at' and why I might react the way I do.

A lot of people with mental illness, myself included, rarely have a network of friends or family to whom we can turn for support when we hit a rough patch. It is difficult to think clearly when you feel stressed. We are often reluctant to approach professionals for guidance because it can be financially costly. At times professions have a 'I know what's best' approach.

Having someone there who can draw upon their own experience, knowing what may work and what doesn't, and who have come to know me on deeper personal level – through interaction in social situations at Pathways, enables them to develop trust and a deeper understanding of me as an individual, and are able to act as a non-confronting sounding board.

I'm becoming more independent and empowered (even if some choices retrospectively were poor), because the responsibility of choice lies entirely with me. With each difficulty overcome, I feel less overwhelmed and less challenged. My confidence is growing and I can face new challenges in a safe way for me knowing I have peers supporting and cheering me on.



Stefano

ENGAGING

For many years I have attended the D2DL program. I like mixing with people, socialising and have made friends. We can talk about things; share our issues, our stories about life. I share my insight with people, talking and laughing. I am proud to come to this place, we encourage each other; we appreciate each other's works and craft.

I can feel compassion in sharing and in doing so I can feel joy. Yes I am a man with a creative side, I write, I paint and draw and attend the group programs. This gives me an opportunity to express myself, through my art and evolve over time as an artist. I would like an audience to view my crafts and hear me sing in the D2DL band.

I appreciate the workers' help and support as coming here has been a journey, which has developed me and clarified my identity.

I hope there will be more times in the future to gain new insights, moments of joy, being able to do what I can do. To just find meaning, a new reason to enjoy life.





ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Thank you to people from the following D2DL services for their input into this document:

Toowoomba Clubhouse

<http://www.toowoombaclubhouse.org.au/>

CoHealth

www.cohealth.org.au

Mental Illness Fellowship South Australia

<http://www.mifsa.org/>

Schizophrenia Fellowship New South Wales

www.sfnsw.org.au

Belconnen Community Service

<http://www.bcsact.com.au/>

Richmond PRA

www.richmondpra.org.au



NEAMI

www.neaminational.org.au

Anglicare Tasmania

www.anglicare-tas.org.au

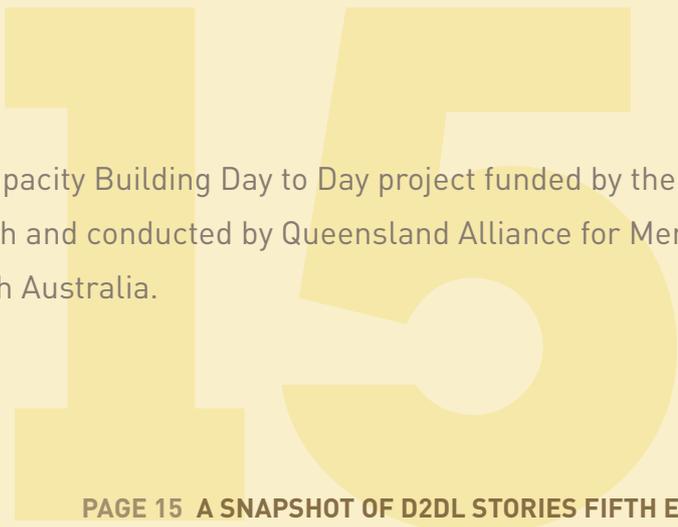
Mental Illness Fellowship North Queensland Inc (MIFNQ)

<http://www.mifnq.org.au/index.php/services/living-with-mental-illness/day-to-day-living-program>

Merri Community Health Services

www.mchs.com.au

This publication is produced as part of the Capacity Building Day to Day project funded by the Australian Government, Department of Health and conducted by Queensland Alliance for Mental Health on behalf of Community Mental Health Australia.





D2DL



The Support for Day to Day Living in the Community (D2DL): A Structured Activity Programme provides funding to improve the quality of life for individuals with severe and persistent mental illness by offering structured and socially based activities. The initiative recognises that meaningful activity and social connectedness are important factors that can contribute to people's recovery.

The aims of the Support for Day to Day Living in the Community programme are to:

- support people with severe and persistent mental illness who experience social isolation
- increase the ability of people with severe and persistent mental illness to participate in social, recreational and educational activities
- assist people with severe and persistent mental illness to improve their quality of life and live successfully at an optimal level of independence in the community
- expand the capacity of the non-government organisation sector to offer structured day programmes for people experiencing social isolation through severe and persistent mental illness and
- increase community participation by assisting participant to:
 - » develop new skills and/or relearn old skills
 - » develop social networks
 - » participate in community activities
 - » develop confidence and
 - » accomplish personal goals.



Australian Government
Department of Health