

Newsletter

Issue 5/ JAN 2020



CentrePeace – a place of belonging



From the very start, volunteers have played a central role in the charity's development. So many gave their time, skills and energy to creating the caring space that is now CentrePeace.

Some of the long-standing volunteers can be seen supporting the café and the shop. Matt, Von and Tracey recalled the hectic building work – digging, laying floors, building walls, creating the toilets, fitting lights, painting and decorating. Everyone working together to transform the building and welcome in residents.

For the photo history:

<https://www.facebook.com/CentrePeacePaignton>



<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=utPE5CeUP0M>

Meet Greg Pike and his furry entourage: Booger, Kitty, and Mousey. Every day he walked around State Street with Booger, the dog, on a leash. On top of Booger sits Kitty, who holds on to the harness around Booger like a saddle. On top of Kitty sits Mousey (who is really a rat), wrapped closely around Kitty's neck. It's obvious the bond between these animals is deep: they all accept one another as members of the same family, regardless of their species. Greg has been spreading this message of peace, respect, and tolerance for years in the USA, and became an integral member of Santa Barbara society, known and loved by the community.....

2020 JANUARY DATES:

JAN 4-hr WORKSHOPS

- MOTIVATIONAL FISH!
- OCCUPATIONAL PROFILING
- TRANSFERABLE SKILLS & CV CREATION

TUESDAYS

MOSIAC WORKSHOPS

WED/FRI

NATURAL HEALING

Tapestry of life

Stuart first came to CentrePeace in 2014 on a month's work programme through the job centre. He really wasn't sure about coming here and didn't like mixing at first and used to stay on the periphery of things. Stuart really didn't want to be here and clearly resented being made to "volunteer". He only committed to 5 days a week because, *"it gave me an extra £10 a week in dole money"*. Long term unemployed and having been living in self-enforced isolation for the previous 12 years following the decision to change his lifestyle, Stu locked himself away in order to beat his drug and alcohol addiction. *"On December 7th, 2006 at 5 to 8 in the morning, I stopped taking drugs"*. Previously, he had been using heroin, speed and cocaine for many years. Between 2006 and 2014, Stu spent most of his time alone in his flat, sometimes night fishing and, more recently, caring for his brother who lives with him and has been ill. *"I became a loner. I had to do this on my own. I've never been comfortable in groups. It was hard. Everyone I knew was involved with drugs"*.

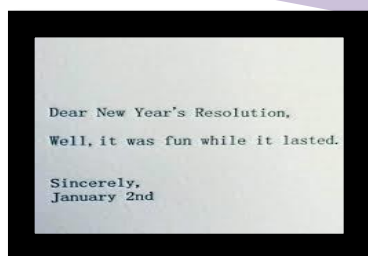
By the time Stuart's official work programme placement had ended, he had begun feeling differently; was feeling much more comfortable about being involved in a community project. He left the placement, but within 3 months he had returned, voluntarily, *"I missed it so I came back one day a week. It's just expanded from there. I need this place more than anyone needs me"*.

Stu has received ongoing emotional support from the CentrePeace team. He often expresses his gratitude, *"I love this place. It's my life now. Without it, I'd be dead"*.

Over time, Stuart's role in the café has grown and he has been a key volunteer, often working 4 days a week and manning the café single-handed. He loves to cook and is a real grafter who is popular with everyone; staff, volunteers and visitors, alike, *"all I do here is what I'm supposed to do – and a little bit more besides. I can never repay what CentrePeace has given me. Your trust in me"*.

"I feel comfortable here, at home. I love the people and it's given me a purpose. It's a place of belonging. Just being listened to was the biggest help – getting the hurt out."

Stu is now living a healthier lifestyle and has a purposeful routine to his week; he has meaningful work here, is valued and knows that his contribution really makes a difference. He also has a new social life, *"I couldn't wish for better friends"*. He's joined others from CentrePeace and goes to bingo once a fortnight, *"I've even got my own bingo pen!"*



Dear New Year's Resolution,
Well, it was fun while it lasted.
Sincerely,
January 2nd



Laughter – the best medicine



Happy New Year!



Monthly riddle:

YOU CAN BREAK ME WITHOUT EVER HOLDING ME.

WHAT AM I?
(answer hidden in articles)