



Newsletter

December 2024

AT YOUR SERVICE

HOME CARE

HOME CARE DONE RIGHT



75 YEAR STUDY ON HAPPINESS



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- PRODUCT SPOTLIGHT
- HOME CARE PACKAGES
MANUAL FOR CONSUMERS
- FREE EVENTS FOR CARERS
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Lessons from the 75-year Harvard study on happiness

The Harvard Study of Adult Development, one of the most comprehensive longitudinal studies of its kind, sought to answer what factors would predict happiness and good health in later life.

Beginning in the late 1930s, this fascinating study involved two distinct groups of 724 men.

268 Harvard graduates, and 456 men who grew up in some of the most troubled, disadvantaged and poorest neighbourhoods in inner-city Boston. Then they followed them as they grew up and all the way into old age.

They obtained medical records, drew blood, scanned brains, took DNA and did elaborate interviews which included talking to their wives and kids.

Current Director of the study, Dr Robert Waldinger, notes how rare this type of research is because most longitudinal studies end after a few years due to so many people dropping out or the funding drying up.

Subjects went into all walks of life, including factory workers, doctors and even one future US president - John F Kennedy. While some climbed to the top of the social ladder, some developed schizophrenia and some became alcoholics.

Once they followed the men all the way to 80 years of age, they wanted to see if they could predict who is going to be happy and healthy in their 80s and who isn't.

So they looked back at everything they knew about them in mid-life and discovered it wasn't their cholesterol levels at age 50 that predicted who was going to age well.

Nor was it their social class, IQ, or even their genes...



It turns out, what mattered most was how satisfied they were with their relationships! Those who were the most satisfied were the happiest and healthiest 30 years later.

What they learned from over 80 years of data was both surprising and obvious.

They found that people who saw more people in their lives each week, the people who had more connections in the world, stayed healthier through middle age. When some people were developing arthritis, heart disease or diabetes, people with the happiest relationships were less likely to develop those physical illnesses.

In addition, those with the happiest relationships were less likely to experience early cognitive decline as they got older. And it wasn't just the number of social connections that kept them happy, it was the *quality* of their connections.

As for those couples who seemed to bicker all day long? Well, interestingly, arguments were fine, as long as they each believed the other person was someone they could count on when times were tough.

And increasing social connections in later life has many benefits too

As Patricia Thomas, Ph.D., who conducted a study involving over 1,600 adults over the age of 60 years points out:

“Even if older adults weren’t socially active when they were younger, when they increase social activity later in life, it can still reduce physical and cognitive health issues.”

Trajectories of Social Engagement and Limitations in Late Life

With so many different options available nowadays for maintaining social connections and activities, we can see that it's never too late to make a positive change in that direction.

If you would like to explore some options to meet and spend time with others, please contact us for a chat about what would make you feel happier, better connected and more engaged.



Creating new social connections with Probus clubs

Probus is a National Association for active retirees that provides fun and friendship in retirement and later years.

Members join together in clubs, which provide regular opportunities to keep your mind active, expand your interests, stay healthy through activities, and enjoy the company of new friends in your local community.

Some of the opportunities include:

- Meeting like-minded people in your local community
- Listening to interesting guest speakers on a range of topics
- Monthly meetings and training programs

Not to mention fun social activities such as coffee groups, lunches, theatre, day outings and sport!

The transition from working life to retired life can have some challenges, especially when some of those social benefits of work also come to an end. Probus is a great way to develop new friendships and enjoy life together!

To quote a recent Probus Club member:

"The day I joined my Probus Club, I instantly had 100 new friends!"

You can also listen to experts talk at your club meetings on topics such as travelling the world, researching history, ancestry, and more.

If you'd like to join tens of thousands of people across Australia who have found meaningful and enjoyable social connections through Probus, you can get in touch with your local group via:

Ph: 1300 630 488

<https://www.probussouthpacific.org/>



Product Spotlight: One Touch Range

The One Touch range is designed for anyone who needs a little assistance to safely open jars or cans at home, without the pain of twisting or pulling. Especially if your strength or grip isn't what it used to be.

Speak to your care manager to make sure you get the right products for your needs, and whether these products can be purchased from your home care package funding.



Automatic can opener

This innovative can opener automatically lifts the lid off safely with no sharp edges. It's extremely easy to use and switches itself off automatically when it's finished. Fits most can sizes between 53mm to 153mm in diameter.

ilsau.com.au/product/one-touch-can-opener/

Automatic jar opener

This nifty jar opener opens stubborn jar lids at the touch of a button. It's battery operated and with just one touch, the strengthened jaws will twist off the lid.

ilsau.com.au/product/one-touch-jar-opener/



Cost of living pressures rising...

It's no secret that the cost of living is rising fast!

This can create stress and anxiety, particularly for people with fixed incomes and those who spend a lot of their time at home. We know that consumers sometimes hesitate to flick the switch to use electricity or gas to keep themselves at a comfortable temperature, because they're worried about getting the bill in a couple of months' time.

We have done some research to help you find any additional programs, concessions and rebates that you might be eligible for.

Each State and Territory provides financial support to the most financially vulnerable people in their communities, however there are also some State programs that are open to everyone.

These programs acknowledge that increasing cost of living pressures affect everyone, but they ensure the majority of the support goes where it is most needed.

Whilst some of these concessions and rebate programs are available all year round, most State Governments announced some additional programs that are currently available for eligible people.

We know that it can be tricky to navigate some of these websites and to make the applications, so don't hesitate to ask your support worker, family, friends or your care manager to assist you to apply for the relevant concessions and rebates.

For more information click the links below for your State or Territory:

[NSW](#) [VIC](#) [QLD](#) [WA](#) [SA](#) [TAS](#) [ACT](#) [NT](#)



**Concessions
and Rebates**

Understanding Dementia: free online course

Are you living with dementia or caring for someone who is?

The University of Tasmania's Wicking Dementia Research and Education Centre invite you to enrol in their free online short course: Understanding Dementia

Understanding Dementia examines the diseases that cause dementia, how they impact the person with dementia and provides knowledge designed to maximise quality of life across the trajectory of dementia for people with the condition, their families and carers.

The course draws upon the expertise of neuroscientists and dementia care professionals from both within the Wicking Dementia Research and Education Centre, and beyond.

With over 330,000 enrolments from around the globe since the course began, you'll have the opportunity to engage with the perspectives of a truly diverse community.

Plus, you'll be getting free university-quality education about the latest research, without requiring exams or assignments!

If you'd like to join their community and learn from home at your own pace, the course is held twice per year and you can sign up to be notified when enrolments are open via the link below:

<https://www.utas.edu.au/wicking/understanding-dementia>



UNIVERSITY of
TASMANIA

WICKING

Dementia Research
and Education Centre

Handy quick-fixes to make life at home easier and safer

Many of our home care clients tell us it's 'the little things' that can have the biggest impact on their day-to-day life at home. There are many ways that you can adapt your current home fittings and fixtures to assist you to manage more independently.

Some of the quick fix ideas include:

- Replace cupboard door knobs with pull handles
- Replace round door handles with the lever style handles
- Replace round taps with lever taps
- Elevate the toilet seat
- Lower the level of the bed; the bed should only be as high as necessary
- Install a hand-held shower
- Increase bulb wattage to light up dark areas
- Install light strips in cupboards
- Install night-lights and sensor lights, especially hallway and stairs.
- Add safety treads for stairs inside and outside
- Use magnetic door stops to hold open doors in place
- Apply non-slip safety tape in showers, bathrooms, outdoor steps and under rugs

Many of these quick-fixes are very low cost and easy to install. Depending on your personal care needs and risk situation, your package might be able to contribute to the cost.

We'll need to make sure your assessment and care plan reflect how these minor adjustments can positively impact on your health, safety and wellbeing, so give us a call to discuss your ideas on what might work best for you.



Animated dementia prevention videos for CALD communities

The team who first introduced the innovative multi media project Moving Pictures, have now released a multi-lingual animation about Dementia Prevention.

Developed in response to research showing up to 40% of dementia diagnoses can be prevented by addressing health and lifestyle factors, the National Ageing Research Institute (NARI) has co-designed a short animation about dementia prevention based on the most current evidence available.

Their new animation shows the simple choices you can make to help prevent the onset of dementia and is available in 9 languages to give CALD communities access to the knowledge and support they need:

Arabic, Cantonese, Mandarin, Hindi, Tamil, Greek, Vietnamese, Spanish, Italian as well as English.

By changing the way we live, 4 in 10 dementia cases could be prevented. And this new video gives an overview of the 12 things that effect your risk of dementia - including: physical inactivity, social isolation and depression.

Watch the free videos here: <https://www.movingpictures.org.au>

We are committed to supporting our consumers, families and carers in both preventative and active management of all stages of dementia.

Please get in touch with your care manager about any concerns you have about memory and cognition.

There are lots of services, products and supports we can assist you to explore that can have a positive impact on your life.



Home Care Packages Manual for Consumers

Home Care Packages are a large part of the Australian Government's Aged Care sector spending every year.

Did you know there are:

- over 275,000 people receiving a home care package
- over 815,000 people receiving Commonwealth Home Support Program (CHSP) services

That's well over a million older people who are receiving varying levels and types of supports to live more independently in their home.

Home Care is a highly regulated and complex system, so it's good to know that there is a Manual containing guidelines to help consumers and families understand all there is to know about receiving services and supports at home. The consumer manual covers everything including:

- understanding Consumer Directed Care
- how to access, and manage, a home care package
- individual budgets and other costs involved
- what's included in a home care package (spending guidelines)
- rights, responsibilities, and quality of care expectations
- other help available for you or your carer

The manual is a little out of date, but it can be very helpful if you want to understand how and why home care providers operate the way we do 😊

You can read the manual by clicking this link:

<https://www.myagedcare.gov.au/sites/default/files/2023-01/operational-manual-for-home-care-package-consumers.pdf>

Please reach out to family or friends if you need some assistance to view the manual, or call us and let us know how we can help.

Free online events for carers!



December 11th - Navigating My Aged Care

My Aged Care includes a wide range of services and supports available to support older people to stay at home longer, including respite. However, many carers find the aged care system to be confusing and difficult to navigate. Join this 90 min session to find out what's available. [Learn more >](#)

Simply Mindful - Guided meditations and mindfulness - (on demand)

In partnership with Carers Australia, Simply Mindful have created a series of on demand mindfulness sessions for carers. The sessions cover managing anxiety, sleep, 'on the go' mindfulness and self-compassion. [Learn more >](#)

January 17th - Activities to engage someone living with dementia

This practical session assists carers looking after someone at home to plan engaging activities. It promotes independence and wellbeing by focusing on what the person with dementia can still do. [Learn more >](#)

Carer Gateway services and supports - (on demand)

An overview of the supports available to carers including; counselling, in person peer support, planned and emergency respite and access to carer directed packages. [Learn more >](#)

January 31st - Dementia and your caring role

This program runs over four sessions and provides an understanding of dementia and how to care for someone living with dementia. [Learn more >](#)

****Need help getting online? The Good Things Foundation can help:**

<https://goodthingsaustralia.org/learn/>

Word Search: helpful aged care peak bodies and experts

O	K	C	O	T	A	K	G	H	H	Y	I	T	P
U	L	G	O	P	A	N	Q	A	M	L	Z	V	W
D	E	G	N	M	Y	A	R	N	C	U	C	Z	S
I	W	D	M	C	N	U	J	F	Q	B	T	A	L
V	I	Z	E	G	G	S	W	V	B	R	D	J	S
E	N	S	A	N	M	T	M	E	V	O	Q	R	L
R	S	A	N	I	G	R	Y	C	A	R	E	N	B
S	T	F	I	T	A	A	P	J	Q	D	O	N	Q
I	I	E	N	O	T	L	G	L	L	I	L	F	J
T	T	T	G	Y	E	I	O	E	S	Y	Z	A	W
Y	U	Y	F	G	W	A	S	I	M	B	X	U	N
K	T	J	U	C	A	T	V	F	Y	E	D	C	Y
I	E	P	L	Q	Y	F	A	O	U	U	N	C	M
L	S	Y	B	J	W	U	L	J	N	X	B	T	J

Find the 12 hidden words by searching for only the words/acronyms in bold

- OPAN** •Council of **Elders** •Dementia **Australia** •My Aged **Care** •Carer **Gateway**
- Aged Care **Engagement** Hub •**COTA** •Centre for Cultural **Diversity** in Ageing
- Vision** Australia •Aged Care Quality and **Safety** Commission
- Meaningful** Ageing Australia •National Ageing Research **Institute**

Visit the Engagement Hub: <https://agedcareengagement.health.gov.au/>

