



Center for  
Community Dialogue  
& Training

A program of Our Family Services

## ELDER CIRCLES September 2019

### *Travel guide for the Wisdom Journey*

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#### IN THIS NEWSLETTER

- \* Guest Blog *"Living with Parkinson's I Feel Your Kindnesses"*
- \* New Elder Circle in Marana!
- \* Elder Circles Facilitator Training on September 5
- \* Elder Circles Schedule for September 2019

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*The following column by Tucsonan Sharon Kha originally ran in the Arizona Daily Star on April 11, National Parkinson's Day.*

#### LIVING WITH PARKINSON'S I FEEL YOUR KINDNESSES

"Counting one's blessings is a highly overrated activity when one has an incurable disease like Parkinson's. It is so much easier to count the things we've lost: We've lost our balance, our strength, our voice, our independence and our mobility. New losses accumulate like flakes of snow that drift across the landscape of our future. I've been living with those losses for nearly 20 years.

## CORRECTION: LGBTQI ELDER CIRCLE

The first version of this newsletter incorrectly listed the LGBTQI Elder Circle as "on summer break". Please note that the next Circle will be held as usual on Sept. 21 at 1 pm.



## MARANA ELDER CIRCLE BEGINS AT LIBRARY IN SEPTEMBER

Those interested in "aging with intention," and who would enjoy sharing this Wisdom Journey with like-minded seekers, have a brand-new monthly Elder Circle to attend.

The Marana Elder Circle will gather in the Community Meeting room of the Wheeler Taft Abbet Sr. Library, 7800 N. Schisler Dr., on the second Tuesday of September and October 10:30-11:30 am.

The first meeting will be September 10.

The Circle will be guided by experienced facilitator Carol Massanari, and is made possible thanks to the hospitality of Patti Lang and the Marana Public Library.

Carol has experience facilitating group conversations in a variety of settings as part of her professional career. Now fully retired and conscious of her own aging process, she looks forward to using her experience to facilitate conversations that explore the various joys, challenges, insights, and journeys associated with



Parkinson's disease is a progressive, incurable disease that attacks the body's ability to move. April 11 is Global Parkinson's Awareness Day, a good day to reflect on the impact Parkinson's has had on my life. To my surprise, it isn't all bad.

There are many ways in which it has become high on my list of blessings. It helped me get my priorities straight — I don't waste my energy on petty squabbles and I don't procrastinate — well, not as much. I appreciate my friends and family more. Having an incurable disease illuminates the widespread kindness human beings show one another. I didn't always know this. There were times in my life when I was suspicious and cynical. Living with Parkinson's gave me a new perspective.



I've had Parkinson's for a very long time. It is a devastating disease to be sure, and there is no cure. It is also a slow-moving disease in which new symptoms add up over

aging. Through these conversations, she hopes participants will gain new insights, inspiration, and enlightenment to support their own aging journey.

No reservations are needed to attend the Circle, and there is no charge. **Mark your calendars for the opening Circle at 10:30 am on September 10** and help this new Circle get rolling!

*Note: In **November**, the date will change to the third Tuesday of the month from 10:30 to 11:30 am.*



## ELDER CIRCLES FACILITATOR TRAINING

*Are you an enthusiastic supporter of Elder Circles and wondering what goes into leading a Circle?*

Join us

Thursday, September 5, 2019

12:30 - 5:00 pm

Our Family Services

3830 E. Bellevue St.

Fee: \$65\*

Take your Circle experience to the next level and join this enriching training that teaches you how to facilitate an Elder Circle. Graduates are eligible to facilitate Circles through the Center.

[Register Here](#)

\* **Special Offers:** Bring a friend and save 20% on both registrations. If you have participated in this training before,

time, and the old ones don't go away. If I had broken a leg, friends would have sent get-well cards and come to visit and brought gifts. With Parkinson's, the symptoms add up slowly, and no one sends a "Sorry You Have Parkinson's" card.

Even family members may not recognize the change until a visiting relative sees a difference in walking or lack of facial expression. Gradually, the family takes on what used to be all the housekeeping responsibilities — cooking, cleaning, driving and more, and they do it without expectation that you will be able to take care of them in the future. There is an unspoken contract among humans of every culture saying that healthy people take care of the sick.

Once it became obvious that I had Parkinson's, however, it wasn't just family and friends who treated me with compassion. People I had never met reached out. They held doors open for me, offered me their arm when I was walking across rough terrain, and carried trays of food for me in a buffet line. If I walk in my neighborhood and stop to rest, people ask if I'm OK. Once I was crossing a busy intersection when I fell face down into the right turn lane. Two young men stopped their car, jumped out, helped me up and offered to take me home.

When I go to movies or basketball games, people step aside and urge me to go to the front of the line. Once I had stumbled and was clinging to my walker to keep from falling when out of nowhere, a car came around the corner, screeched to a halt and a man jumped out. He said, "I've got you." He reached me before I lost my grip on the walker and went down with a sickening thud—it was exactly that scenario that caused me to break my shoulder three years ago.

you save 50% if you take it again. Please contact [Melanie Rudolph](#) to make use of these offers.



## SEPTEMBER 2019 ELDER CIRCLES SCHEDULE

### NORTH TUCSON

#### **St. Francis in the Foothills**

4625 E. River Rd. (at Swan)  
Second Fridays at 10:00 am  
Sept. 13

#### **Ellie Towne Flowing Wells Community Center**

*This Circle as moved to:*  
**Flowing Wells Library**  
Study Room C, 1730 W Wetmore  
Third Wednesdays at 10:30 am  
Sept. 18 (*day/time unchanged*)

### CENTRAL TUCSON

#### **Jewish Community Center**

3800 E. River Rd. (at Dodge)  
First Sundays at 1:00 pm  
Sept. 1, Oct. 6

### LGBTQI Elder Circle

Cornerstone Fellowship  
2902 N. Geronimo Ave.  
Third Saturdays at 1:00 pm  
Sept. 21

### EAST TUCSON

#### **Udall Senior Center *Restarted!***

7200 E. Tanque Verde Rd., Media  
Room  
First Tuesdays at 12:00 (noon)  
Sept. 3

### GREEN VALLEY

#### **Casa Community Center**

780 S. Park Centre Ave.  
Fourth Mondays at 3:00 pm



Each act of caring is like a fragile silken thread, not significant in and of itself. But then a second thread clings to the first and a third and fourth until the threads of kindness become a cocoon that cushions the rough edges of the disease. When the threads have woven themselves into the fabric of our society, we call it "common courtesy."

In this world of mass shootings and insults and hate speech and fear, it is reassuring to see total strangers reaching out to one another with kindness.

So, on Parkinson's Awareness Day, don't underestimate or trivialize those small gestures that are evidence of your care and concern. Reach out!

~Sharon Kha, April 11, 2019  
Originally posted in [the Arizona Daily Star](#)

*Sharon Kha has lived in Tucson for 48 years. She reported television news for KGUN for 10 years and was the spokeswoman for the University of Arizona for 22 years. Sharon was a speaker at Gather the Elders 2018, and with her "homemate" Deb Knox, promotes "persons of similar sensibilities sharing living quarters" or [POSSLQ](#).*

*On hiatus*

## MARANA NEW!

### Wheeler Taft Abbet Sr. Public Library

7800 N Schisler Dr.  
Second Tuesdays at 10:30 am  
Sept. 10

## ORO VALLEY

### Oro Valley Public Library

1305 W. Naranja Dr.  
Second Wednesdays at 10:00 am  
Sept. 11



## HAPPY DOG DAYS OF SUMMER

Evan as it starts to cool off in the East, we know the desert sun isn't finished with us yet.

Don't forget to drink water, pant a lot, and lay around on the tile floor.



