

JANUARY 2022

NEWSLETTER



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OUR PLACE COMMUNITY OF HOPE

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January Birthdays

Our Place Birthdays

Teresa C. – January 9th

Rachel S. – January 16th

Gordon S. – January 17th

Emma B. – January 18th

Norman B. – January 23rd

Mair D. – January 30th

Raymond D. – January 30th

Dave B. – January 30th



Famous January Birthdays

David Bowie – January 8th, 1947

Elvis Presley – January 8th, 1965

Martin Luther King Jr. – January 15th, 1929

Muhammad Ali – January 17th, 1942

Jim Carrey – January 17th, 1962

Dolly Parton – January 19th, 1946



If you want to celebrate your birthday with us, let us know!

Changes due to COVID-19

Hi everyone! Due to the recent increase in positive COVID-19 cases in Ontario and specifically the GTA, we *must* take a step back with our programming.

For the time being our indoor dining program is cancelled and our takeaway meal program is on hold. We will be giving away snacks and coffee *only* on Mondays and Tuesdays from 3:00pm to 5:00pm.

Our indoor drop-in programs are sadly being cancelled due to the fact that the number of positive cases is increasing at an extremely high rate. This also means that our individual appointments are not running and our bathrooms are closed.

We are transitioning our in-person programming back to a zoom virtual platform. Your favourite groups will still take place, but just online! We all hope to see you on those days. 😊

If you would like a weekly check in from us, please let us know and we can add your phone number to our call list!



Our Place Weekly Virtual Programs

NEW Anger Management – Mondays at 1:30 pm

Our new program will run on a weekly basis. **Limited capacity.** Link will be on the website soon! 😊 If you have any questions, let us know! *Starting date will be on weekly calendar.*

NEW Yoga & Meditation – Tuesdays at 12:30 pm

Everyone is welcome! We will follow videos done by the yoga pros and new poses together! The link will be available soon. 😊 *Starting date will be on weekly calendar.*

Bingo – Tuesdays at 2:00 pm

Your favourite game will now be online! There are prizes to be won! Link will be on the website soon. 😊 *Starting date will be on weekly calendar.*

MOVIE DAY! – Wednesdays starting at 12:00pm!

Enjoy a staff picked movie! Movies will be played during indoor drop-in. Link will be available soon. 😊 *Starting date will be on weekly calendar.*

Online Peer Support Group – Wednesdays at 3:30 pm

Peer support meetings are a time to connect with others for support, encouragement, and hope. We'll learn from each other's experiences in conversations. We'll talk about relaxation, managing emotions, self-compassion, and self-acceptance. We'll look at positive steps that you could try towards having a better life.

Link to join Meditation and Peer Support: <https://zoom.us/j/94221242340>

Join by phone: **(647)374-4685**. When prompted, enter in the Meeting ID: 942 2124 2340

Art & CRAFTS Group – Thursday at 2:30pm

Art & Crafts is a time to explore your creative side and connect with others. It will include drawing and coloring, painting, and many more fun activities. Links to the group will be on the website soon! 😊 *Starting date will be on weekly calendar.*

Online Writing Group – Fridays at 1:30pm

Writing Group with Peter (a professional journalist!) is a time to connect with others, build friendships and get creative together. Everyone is welcome to join in and no experience is necessary!

Link to join Writing Group via Zoom:

<https://zoom.us/j/93536287038?pwd=RVpzR1pMSGcxQ01UQXZ6YVBHTlI0UT09>

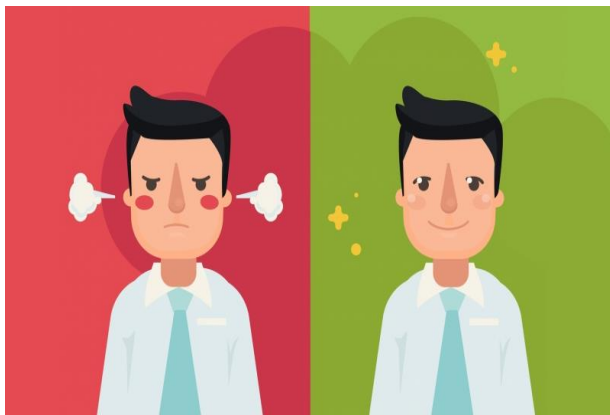
Join by phone, dial: **647-374-4685**

When prompted, enter in the Meeting ID: **935 3628 7038**

Join Our New Program!

Anger Management – Online

Our Place is starting a weekly virtual anger management group on Mondays! Anger management is a course for anyone who is interested in getting a handle on their anger and strong emotions. The training will utilize Cognitive-Behavioral tools and techniques to help individuals navigate tough situations. Participants are welcome to dive deeper into the root of their anger and learn more about themselves and what triggers them in the process. This group is open to all, and will be an interactive online group where all are welcome to share their experiences.



Together we will discuss topics such as managing our expectations vs. our reality, understanding and navigating our inner parent, adult and child, and creating an anger control plan.

Anyone who is interested in attending is encouraged to talk to staff about participating.

Other Community Programs & Supports

Please ask one of the Our Place Staff if you need support

Nicotine Replacement Therapy: Are you thinking of quitting smoking? Talk to any of our staff members about how you can access support and free nicotine replacement therapy like lozenges and patches with no wait.

Addiction Support Groups: If you are on a journey with addictions and are seeking support from the community, feel free to contact any of these communal resources.

<i>Narcotics Anonymous</i>	<i>KeepSIX Consumption and Treatment Services (CTS)– 955 Queen Street East) – 416-461-1925 ext 2264</i>	<i>Evangel Hall Mission – 552 Adelaide Street West – 416-504-8056</i>
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Community Fridges Toronto is a mutual aid organization made up of community members and volunteers working to provide food for those in need. They have several fridges and

pantries across the city (locations listed below) and they operate on a “take what you need, leave what you don’t” basis. Feel free to visit any fridge to pick up or drop off food.

214 Wright Street	782 Adelaide Street West	250 Westlake Avenue	499 Parliament Street
1132 College Street	870 Dundas Street West	348 Pape Avenue (Pantry)	

Davenport-Perth Neighbourhood Community Health Centre 1900 Davenport Rd: Provides free harm reduction kits (needles, stem kits, syringe kits and condoms), as well as other information and support. Contact (416) 656-8025 for more information. They also offer short term, one-on-one crisis support and information on community resources, OW, ODSP, shelter and housing, emergency needs and health-related supports. Contact their CSCI worker to book an appointment → Ingrid Moreno (416) 656-8025 ext. 401.

Warming Centres: The City of Toronto will open Warming Centres (locations listed below) when an extreme cold weather alert is issued because the temperature drops below -15° C or if there’s a wind chill -20° C or colder. Warming centres open at 7 PM on the day an alert is issued and will remain open until noon on the day the alert is terminated. They are pet-friendly and TTC buses will provide transportation between the sites from evening until early morning at approximately 2 AM. To see if an alert has been called, contact 311 or Central Intake at (416) 338-4766, 1-877-338-3398.

129 Peter Street	195 Princes’ Boulevard Exhibition Place
5800 Yonge Street	150 Borough Drive Scarborough Civic Centre

Shelter Beds and Respite Centres: If you need a place to stay you can access 24-hour respite sites and shelters by calling central intake at (416) 338-4766 or toll-free at 1-877-338-3398.

Gerstein Crisis Centre: Provides 24/7 telephone support, community support referrals, substance use crisis management, follow-up and access to short-term crisis beds. They also have an in-person mobile crisis team. Call (416) 929-5200 to access support.

New Circle: If you are in need of warmer clothing for the winter season, please connect with one of the Our Place staff and we will start the online referral process with you.

Lohri

This year the traditional North Indian winter festival of “Lohri” falls on January 13th. Many people of the Sikh faith gather to celebrate the end of the Winter Solstice and the beginning of longer days.



People celebrate by putting together a large bonfire and by giving out sugarcane treats like jaggery, gurrh and gachak. After eating sweet treats, people often dance Bhangra and Giddha to folk music and a special drum known as a dhol.

There are many blessings that come with the festival of Lohri. This includes the blessing of good crops for farmers, blessing of good life for newly weds when they walk around the bonfire and the blessing of good health by eating special treats.

National Soup Month

Did you know January is known as national soup month? Everyone loves having some warm soup in this cold weather even people from way back in 20,000 B.C. The first can of soup was made and sold by Dr. John T. Dorrance for the Campbell Soup Company, which is still extremely popular. Those same soup cans were famously painted by Andy Warhol who was an avid fan. So, for the new year, we thought we would share our own favourite soup recipes!



From the Kitchen of Our Place

This month's recipes include our favourite soups

Alanna's Lentil Soup

Ingredients

- 2 tablespoons olive oil
- 1 large yellow onion, finely diced
- 2 tablespoons tomato paste
- 1 teaspoon dried thyme
- 1 clove garlic, finely diced
- 3 stalks celery, finely diced
- 3 carrots, peeled and finely diced
- 2 cups (12 ounces) small green French lentils
- 8 cups water or vegetable stock
- 1 tablespoon low sodium soy sauce
- 1 1/2 teaspoons salt, plus more to taste
- 1/8 teaspoon pepper, plus more to taste
- 3 tablespoons lemon juice, plus more to taste
- 1/2 bunch kale, stemmed and thinly sliced crosswise



Method

Caramelize the onions:

In a soup pot over medium heat, heat the olive oil. Once the oil shimmers, add the onions and cook, stirring occasionally for 10 minutes, or until deep, golden brown.

Cook the tomato paste and vegetables:

Push the onions to the side of the pot. And in the space you made, add the tomato paste. Stir for 2 to 3 minutes, or until the tomato paste darkens to a ruddy brown. Add the thyme, garlic, celery, and carrots. Cook and stir for 2 minutes.

Add the lentils and liquid, and simmer the soup:

Add the lentils, 8 cups water, soy sauce, salt and pepper to the pot. Adjust the heat to medium, so the soup is just at a gentle simmer. Simmer for 55 to 60 minutes, or until the lentils are soft.

Finish the soup and serve:

Scoop out 2 cups of the soup and purée it in a blender until smooth, or use an immersion blender and purée just until the soup takes on a little body and thickens, but you still have texture. Return the blended soup to the pot and stir in the lemon juice. Add the sliced kale and simmer until the kale softens, about 1 to 2 minutes.

Taste, and add more salt, pepper, and lemon juice, if you like. Serve with a nice slice of crusty bread or a side salad.

Zoe's Favourite North African Cauliflower Soup

Ingredients

- 2 ½ cups chopped onions
- 2 tablespoons vegetable oil
- 2 medium sized potatoes
- 1 medium head of cauliflower
- 2 teaspoons of ground cumin
- 1 ½ teaspoons ground fennel
- 4 cups hot water
- 1 tablespoon vegetable bouillon powder or 1 bouillon cube (optional)
- 2 tablespoons fresh lemon juice
- Salt and ground black pepper to taste
- Chopped fresh tomatoes
- Chopped chives or scallions



Instructions

1. In a soup pot on medium heat, sauté the onions in the oil for 5 to 10 minutes, until translucent.
2. While onions sauté, dice the potatoes and chop the cauliflower.
3. Stir the cumin, fennel and potatoes in the pot and cook for a minute.

4. Add the cauliflower and optional bouillon, and return to a boil, then lower the heat and simmer while covering the pot for about 10 minutes until the vegetables are tender.
5. In a blender or food processor, puree the vegetables and broth until smooth.
6. Add the lemon juice, salt and pepper.
7. Reheat the soup if necessary, taking care not to burn it!
8. Serve with chopped tomatoes and chives or scallions.

Mental Health Tip of the Month

Reducing harm and Taking Care in the New Year

Content Warning: Overdose crisis, drug use, harm reduction tips

By Audrey S.

January can be a difficult time for many of us. The holidays have passed, finances are tight, the sun sets at 5:00 pm and we can find ourselves cold and alone without much to look forward to. For those of us who live with mental health issues, December may have been a time that stirred up family conflict, anxiety, depression, or possible suicidal thoughts. It's no wonder that many people turn to substances to cope.

On top of all of this, 2021 has been the worst year so far in terms of overdoses and deaths within the shelter system in Toronto. This statistic is heartbreaking. Toronto leadership has been making this worse by violently displacing people, criminalizing drug use, and prioritizing the interests of the ultra-rich. The city isn't treating the root causes of this crisis, instead choosing to apply band-aids to save face. We know through experience that community-building, housing first, and harm reduction approaches are the most effective way to make sure our communities are safe and healthy while also costing us less money.

While we know that there are things that need to change structurally, like making housing more affordable, it's important to know how to take care of ourselves right now. Here are a few ways we can do this:

Get a naloxone kit and learn how to use it: Our Place provides Naloxone kits and information about how to use them free of charge, talk to any staff member to get yours today.

Get your hands on harm reduction supplies: The Davenport-Perth Neighbourhood Community Health Centre at 1900 Davenport Road provides free harm reduction kits (needles, stem kits, syringe kits and condoms).

Try not to use alone: Or see if a friend or neighbour can check in on you, you don't have to let them know exactly what you're doing, just tell them that you may need support and ask if they can check in on you. Try to offer the same to your friends or family who use.

Know the signs of an overdose: Deviations from normal body temperature (e.g., hyperthermia/hypothermia), passing out/unresponsive, changes in skin colour, abnormal breathing, gurgling, extremely fast, slowed, or irregular pulse are all things to look out for.

Take a small amount of a new drug first to see how you react: When trying a new batch of something, it's safest to take a little to see how your body will react before taking more.

Try not to mix substances: To avoid dangerous interactions, avoid mixing. You can learn more about possible interactions by visiting drugcocktails.ca.

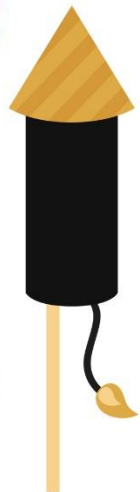
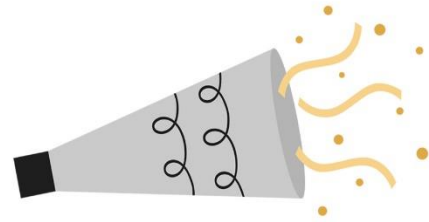
Understand tolerance: If you have already experienced an overdose or take a break from using, your body can be more sensitive. Don't rely on how others react as your tolerance can be different.

Eat a meal before you start using: If you're drinking, try and avoid saltier foods to prevent dehydration. Come to Our Place between 3:00 pm and 5:00 pm for a free takeaway or dine-in meal.

Plan a couple of days off using each week or alternate days that you use: It can be helpful to plan some things you enjoy, whether that be running errands, going to see a movie, attending a program at a drop-in like Our Place, going to the library or watching Netflix.

Overall, remember that using substances does not negate the fact that **you are worthy of care, connection, and a safe place to live**. Relying on our friends and neighbours will help us get through this crisis and build stronger communities. Reach out to us anytime for non-judgmental, unconditional support and additional resources.

HAPPY NEW YEAR!



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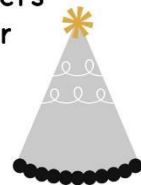
Countdown
 Confetti
 Midnight
 Balloons

Celebration
 Fireworks
 January
 Happy

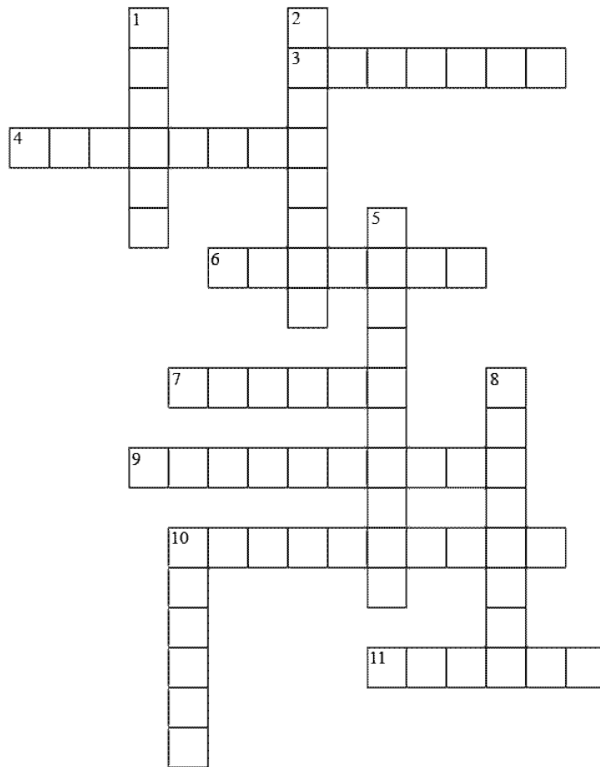


New Year
 Clock
 Cheers
 Goals

Party Poppers
 Noisemaker
 Resolution
 Sparklers



New Year Crossword



Across	Down
3. A "good luck" vegetable that is consumed on New Year's Day	1. Polar Bear _____, a New Year's activity that requires you to enter into water, mainly for charity
4. Twelve 'o clock at night, the highest point of New Year's celebrations	2. The famous song, "Auld Lang Syne, commonly sung to bring in the new year originated in
6. The month that follows December 31st is	5. He is the personification of time
7. A ceremonial procession including people marching with bands	8. Small pieces of coloured paper or streamers
9. A promise to do something in the new year	10. The Iranian new year holiday is called this
10. A horn or rattle used to make noise at a party	
11. People born on New Year's Day are commonly called New Year _____	

