

Tall Trees Care Communities Encourage Friendship for Health's Sake

Providers of alternative to traditional aged care on the Gold Coast and Brisbane areas reveal how friendship can extend life and enhance quality of life.

Australia, 15 September 2014 - Tall Trees Care Communities are known for their revolutionary approach in providing an alternative to standard aged care. Their model is based on consumer-directed care, which means that their residents elect the level of care they receive. Unlike standard aged care facilities or homes, residents of Tall Trees purchase their own homes and retain the same rights that any other homeowner would have.

Residents of Tall Trees don't feel like they are in an aged care facility because they aren't. Tall Trees can be better described as a retirement community with the options for chef-prepared meals, 24 hour nursing care, world class medical care and amenities that encourage social interaction between residents. Those amenities include the community grounds, the community centre, a dining room, a lounge and other common areas.

Recently, on the company's blog, Co-founder Phil Usher explained why their approach is so centred on encouraging the residents to socialise and become friends. Mr Usher cited some well-documented conclusions that have resulted from studies concerning the relationship between friendships and health.

The Relationship Between Friendship and Health

Most studies concerning the effects of social interaction and friendship on health, especially when compared to isolation and sadness, have concluded that positive emotions and events have a positive effect on health while negative emotions and events have a negative effect on health.

The more scientific studies usually credit the positive effects of friendship and socialisation to the neurotransmitters serotonin, dopamine and beta-endorphins. Negative effects are seen as being caused by stress-related hormones such as cortisol. The macro-analysis is that happy people live longer, better lives and sad people tend to live shorter lives with diminished quality of life.

According to Mr Usher, savvy use of this information can help seniors live longer, happier lives:

"Ten years ago, when we decided to create the kind of haven that our mums and dads would like to live in, we found out all we could about ageing, health and quality of life. Most of all, we asked our mums and dads what would make them happy. We found that independence, dignity and social interaction were very important to them. So, we decided we would create a model in which independence and dignity were valued and encouraged. We also decided that we would provide plenty of opportunities for social interaction and friendship."

Mr Usher continued, "We wanted to make sure that our residents could maintain their independence but avoid the isolation that so often happens to the elderly. At the same time, we wanted to maintain a standard of competent but non-obtrusive care."

Mr Usher concluded, "The result has been five communities that have exceeded my original expectations. We are proud to have the ability to make a difference in so many lives."

Tall Trees Care Communities are providers of an alternative to the traditional aged care and nursing home models in the Brisbane and Gold Coast areas. They currently have five locations where residents purchase their homes and determine their own level of care. To learn more, call (07) 3442 9378 or visit their website: <http://www.talltrees.net.au/>.

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