



Choose Well

Member Newsletter

HEALTHY AGING MONTH

SEPTEMBER 2022



sarsis

Health | Technology Solutions



September is

Healthy Aging Month

For this newsletter, we focused on showcasing content that features how the Choose Well community stays healthy and engaged.



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MEMBER COUNT

By HHSA region, this is how Choose Well membership is distributed countywide.

HHSA Region	Total in Region
Central	13
East	27
North Central	44
North Coastal	40
North Inland	69
South	18
County Total	211





Facility Feature: National Assisted Living Week with Rose's Canyon View Estate

By Val Paraiso, Administrator

September 11-17, 2022 was National Assisted Living Week! The theme for this year is "Joyful Moments." In line with this theme, we asked new Choose Well Member Administrator, Val Paraiso, how he sustains joy in his community at Rose's Canyon View Estate. The following is his response.

I was recently asked how we sustained "joy" in our community. Initially, I thought it was an odd question to ask of a community that specializes in caring for senior citizens living with dementia. Joy in a community of seniors afflicted with various stages of dementia? I thought it better to ask how we kept calm, much less joyful, in such circumstances. But in pondering this question deeper, I realized our residents smile without filter, laugh without reservation, hold our hands without prejudice, and despite their disease, they try to communicate with us without fear of being judged.

To answer that question, I had to first ask myself, "What is joy?" As defined in the dictionary, "joy is the emotion of great delight or happiness caused by something exceptionally good or satisfying; elation." If I thought my residents to be joyful, the next question is, "Why?"

What is it that we are providing these residents that would allow them to feel joyful, regardless of their circumstances? Many of our residents came from family homes where their loved ones provided care for them. Others lived on their own or in independent care communities, but their dementia necessitated a higher level of care. In both scenarios, I observed a few things:

1. Seniors do not wish to be a burden to their loved ones.
2. Seniors long to be useful and included in a community.
3. Seniors want to be acknowledged.

It was in realizing these three things, we created an environment in which people would feel valued, included, acknowledged, and treasured. The simple answer to the question, “How do we sustain joy in our community?” is to treat everyone as a cherished part of this makeshift family.

The answer to the question, “How do we sustain this joy?” came naturally to us. My personality and that of the caregivers helped to build this atmosphere. The caregivers and I realized that we come into “their” home and should always be excited to see them. A smile on our face, a quick hug, or an inside joke go a long way in helping someone feel valued and cherished. We treat them as thinking, functioning, feeling adults and so we engage their personalities, their preferences, and most importantly, their input and opinions. We treat them in the manner of how we wish friends would treat us, so we surprise them with treats, compliments, silliness, and humor. Lastly, we employ the same tools that help us connect and build a relationship with our own circle of loved ones by following a few simple rules:

1. Speak truthfully with sincere attention.
2. Invest in their friendship, sharing ourselves and experiences as we ask them to do the same.
3. Be a supplement and not a replacement.
4. Make every effort fun, or at least find the humor in it.



Joy is something that can be found and sustained in even the most difficult of circumstances. It is not elusive nor obscure. It is something that we should be able to find and define in ourselves first, before attempting to share it with others.

It goes without saying that we are not always at this constant state of blissful existence. There are moments when our residents are angry, sad, confused, and depressed. There are times when our caregivers are in the middle of some personal crisis that consume their being and that negative energy is manifested in all of their interactions. It is in those difficult times that we find the best opportunities to grow and strengthen our residents' trust and respect. The quickest and most effective way to reset a day that started in the wrong way is a sincere and earnest apology. If you foster an environment where joy is the focus, everyone in that environment will always give each other the benefit of the doubt. Everyone must feel safe and unconditionally accepted in order to lower their guard and sincerely share all the spectrum of human emotions that exists in a real friendship. To have that safety net is the true meaning of joy.

Choose Well is Back with In-Person Visits!

Choose Well San Diego staff is back in action doing in-person facility visits. In the past month, Choose Well had the opportunity to visit many new member RCFEs. Quan and Sergio were able to meet with assisted living facility administrators and staff, who graciously gave tours, shared about the fun activities provided to their residents, and even treated them to a home-cooked lunch!



Graceful Hearts

Quan and Sergio visited a new Choose Well Member, Graceful Hearts, and received a tour around their facility. They all chatted about the many benefits of the Choose Well program, and were even treated to a home-cooked lunch and chocolate cake!

Ivy Park

Choose Well visited Ivy Park in Otay Ranch, which is a 137-bed community with memory care. They happily shared how one of their residents still drives their own car!



Rose's Canyon View Estate

Rose's Canyon View Estate Administrator, Val Parasio, gave Choose Well a tour of his facility. Throughout the tour, Val shared about the activities they provide to their memory care community, including coloring, painting, reading, and singing on Sunday mornings.

RESIDENT FEATURE: How do Residents Stay Healthy?

September is Healthy Aging Month, which is celebrated to raise awareness about the physical and mental health experience of growing older. Every year, people participate in Healthy Aging Month in order to promote a healthy body, mind, and lifestyle.

As a memory care facility, Rose's Canyon View Estate intentionally curates activities for residents to engage in cognitive activities. Each week, residents have a mid-morning "tea service," where they enjoy beverages and sweet snacks with staff. This weekly activity provides the opportunity for residents to chat and respond to open-ended questions, which encourages conversations, engages the thought process, and strengthens vocabulary and speech.

For Healthy Aging Month, Rose's Canyon View Estate staff asked their residents, "How do you keep yourself healthy?" The following were their responses.

"I walk up and down the hallways. Sometimes I go outside to the garden and go around the sidewalk. My family takes me out to dinner. I do not eat tomatoes or anything with milk." - Dina

"My brother picks me up and we go fishing on his boat. I go to physical therapy twice a week." - Theresa

"I like to use my legs to push my wheelchair around the living room and hallway. The caregivers help me do leg raises and stretching." - Dennis

"I'm blind, so they help me walk around. I eat grits everyday!" - Millard

"Don't worry about me, you worry about yourself, you're gaining weight." - Mae



To learn more about Healthy Aging Month, Scan the QR Code or visit:
<https://healthyaging.net/healthy-aging-month/september-is-healthy-aging-month/>

Choose Well Member Events

Oakmont of Escondido Hills Poolside Mixer

Thank you to Oakmont for always providing fun and engaging opportunities for the older adult industry to network at your community!



South Bay Senior Providers (SBSP) at St. Paul's Senior Services

Choose Well was invited to join SBSP at St. Paul's Plaza, where they hosted a breakfast meeting for staff and colleagues. We learned so much from the guest speaker, Tina Buchanca! She presented on how Care Managers work with families and assisted living communities, and how they can be a private pay resource when families have issues that staff at the community can no longer resolve.





Helping Families Find Distinguished Assisted Living Facilities


Choose Well is a free, innovative, web-based program that helps older adults and their families make informed decisions when selecting assisted living facilities.

Quality Measures

Discover specially evaluated Choose Well facilities that have voluntarily agreed to be scored on 11 measures of quality.

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Learn more details about the Choose Well program:

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 info@choosewellsandiego.org

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Do you know a facility that would benefit from
being a Choose Well Member?

Scan the QR Code to send
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Choose Well is a free, innovative, web-based program that helps older adults and their families make informed decisions when selecting assisted living homes.

For information on other programs and resources for older adults and people with disabilities, visit www.aging.sandiegocounty.gov or call 800-339-4661.

