

# The Meeting Place Clubhouse

Funded by: San Diego County HHS



# The Meeting Place News

April 2021

## THANK YOU WIL AND CYNTHIA!

*We are one step closer to "Bridging the Digital Divide"*

As with the rest of the world, TMP encountered many unknowns when the Covid-19 epidemic forced us to make decisions about the day-to-day operations of our Clubhouse community. With guidance from the County, we closed our doors to members and visitors, but staff continued to come in as usual with the purpose of keeping the Clubhouse in motion and our members safe and connected.

2020 was a time of readjusting, experimenting and fine tuning. What has remained is the same tight-knit and active Clubhouse community that has gone through a temporary move toward virtual activities and remote support. The Virtual Clubhouse consists of a full weekly schedule of meetings, classes and other Work Ordered Day activities that would normally take place in our physical space. Each day begins with Unit Meetings where staff and members gather as a team to assign tasks, identify issues or member needs, and provide support.

As our Board of Directors became aware that a substantial number of our members were unable to join us in Zoom meetings and activities. They had concerns about the size of the digital divide and the impact it has on our members who were relying on phone calls, cards and drop-bys to reduce their social isolation. While outreach has always been an integral part of our Clubhouse, they believed we could and should do more! That's when Cynthia Fissel, Board President, and Wil Gorrie, Board Vice President, stepped forward and successfully took on the giant task of securing a grant to fund our project, "Bridging the Digital Divide".

After many hours of writing and rewriting, editing and then doing it again, we've cashed the check and ordered 20 Samsung Galaxy A11 smart phones, 25 Samsung Galaxy Tab S5e 10, 17 Surface Pro and 2 Laptop/Tablet all equipped with unlimited data!



These data-enabled devices will allow our members to access Clubhouse Services, keep in touch with families and friends, pay bills, access entertainment, do their banking, meet with doctors, attend religious services, keep in touch with world events, submit job applications, or apply for social services including housing vouchers, Medi Cal and an endless list of opportunities. The devices will be preset with essential apps and will be connected through a security software called Mobile Device Management which staff can use to remotely help members with technical issues.

Staff and members with the skills to successfully use technology will provide educational opportunities and one-on-one training for older members and others who are uncomfortable using smartphones and accessing telehealth platforms like Zoom. This will in turn enhance our members' employability and reintegration into the community and prepare them for employment in remote working opportunities which are becoming increasingly available during the public health crisis.

Thanks to the diligence of Wil and Cynthia, the Clubhouse is excited about the prospects of improving members' tech mobility.

**The Meeting Place is open Monday thru Friday 8:00 am until 4:00 pm  
with Introductory Tours Mon., Tues., Thur., & Fri. at 9:30 am and 1:30 pm.  
Our Unit Meetings are held at 9:00 am and 1:00 pm.  
Check out our monthly calendar for mid-week and weekend recreational activities.**

## Let's Meet Tommy, our Newest Member by Marie



Another new Clubhouse member is Tommy S. who was born March 21 in Attleboro, Massachusetts. He's been in San Diego for only two weeks and became a member March 18th. He states being a member is wonderful: "There's a real sense of community. I feel welcomed."

When asked about his favorite Clubhouse activities, he stated tile painting and exotic animal workshop. Making friends has been a big goal of his and attending social activities has been a real benefit.

His likes and interests are soccer, hockey, basketball, going to a movie, and friends. He has a bachelor's degree in Philosophy from Ave Maria University.

He is not currently employed, but has worked in different fields such as retail, restaurants, educational, health and human services, and banking.

For his future goals he wants to pursue a career in theater, painting or film. His current goal is to find a job for the meantime until he can work in those fields.

Finally he states he hopes to make "plenty of connections at TMP" which will enable him to achieve his goals.



Tommy taking part in a craft project.

## Unit Updates: Reopening is Exciting!

### UNIT 1 by Jeff and Shana

Unit 1 has been in the process of reopening the café by detailed cleaning and sanitizing everything for the returning of members.

Denise has been hosting the cooking demo at 1:45 on Thursdays. Steve L. has been continuing to update the members with social activities and events during the airing of the Newscast.

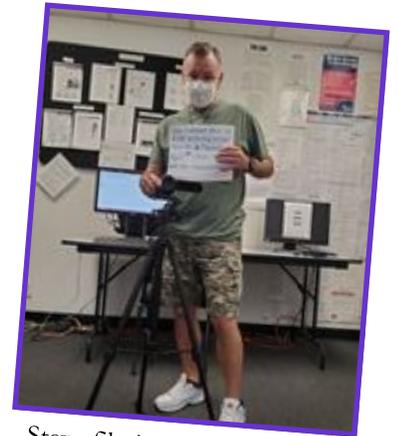
Last but not least, Angela has joined the kitchen crew and she will be helping with preparing breakfast and lunch.

### UNIT 2 by Erin

Starting in mid-march, TMP has been reintroducing in person services. We have slowly transitioned from our no in member contact. One aspect is members leading the meetings. Abby is most excited about us working in person again. Hopefully, members will be energized into working together again.

Having members back in to help with various administrative tasks like running the front desk and helping make and send outreach cards will be a boost to the flow of the unit.

"I definitely prefer working with people in person so it's great to see colleagues come into the Clubhouse," Erica said.



Steve filming the newscast.



Erica getting mail ready.

## Erin: Why I've Decided to Go Back to School by Erin

I started learning Spanish because not only is it fun to learn a new language, but it also coincided with my ultimate employment goal of working with migrant children at the border. While most of you know I speak French, most of the refugees seeking asylum do not speak French. That is when I knew it was time to learn Spanish. However learning Spanish was not only beneficial to my ultimate employment goals, but also to my present goals with the Clubhouse. When I was volunteering at the thrift store for five years, I was training other volunteers to help with tasks. These other volunteers spoke Spanish and barely understood what I was saying. I believe this is something I will have to face at a future Transitional Employment position as well. Learning Spanish also helps me learn valuable TMP skills at the receptionist when visitors come in and/or call who do not speak English very well. Sometimes it is a good time to go back to school!



*Erin taking a break from her Spanish to help run the front desk.*

## Lesson's from March's Job Course by Rob O.

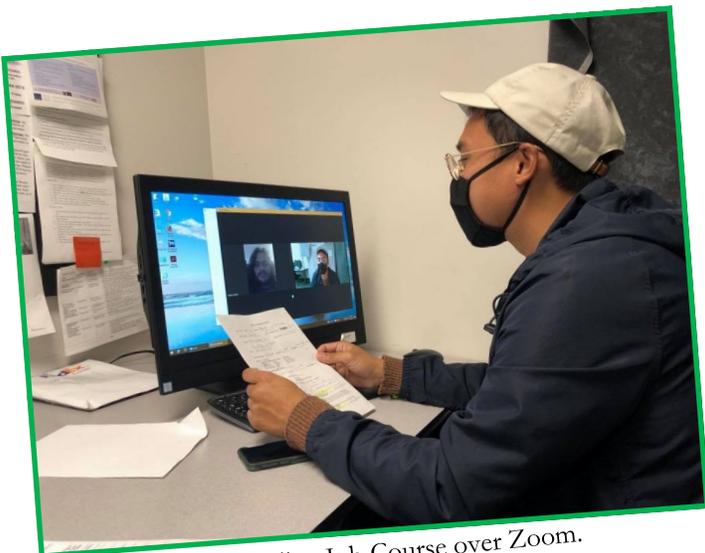
It is not hard to get discouraged when job hunting in 2021. There is plenty to distract us from the job at hand, and it is a full-time job. That's right – job hunting is a full-time job. I like to think of it as an office job requiring document production and editing, networking, making calls, sending emails and more.

Job hunting also requires consistency. Make every day count without burning out. Make sure to follow up on leads. Ask questions when in an interview about how you can contact the hiring manager. Show them you can initiate so they know you are a go getter. Tell as many people as you can that you are job hunting. This can generate leads.

Job hunting also requires thought and attention to detail. If your efforts aren't paying off (everyone has been there), try to identify the reason. When you find out you didn't get the position you wanted, don't throw in the towel. This is the perfect time to get some honest feedback from an employer about how you can tweak your job search.

Surely job hunting is never as easy as we would like, but putting yourself in the shoes of the employer might be the trick to getting a job you love.

If you're an active job seeker, Job Course is held every Monday at 1:45pm!



*Chris leading Job Course over Zoom.*

## From Volunteer to TMP Staff

by Nate

Angela Perna has just joined the staff here at TMP. She is originally from San Diego and has recently graduated from S.D.S.U with a B.A in psychology.

Angela heard about TMP from a therapist. Angela is excited about helping out in both units and working with both staff and members. She feels it is a privilege to be in this supportive community and that this is the most supportive group she has ever encountered.

She feels that her knowledge and education and personal life experiences will help her with the job and she is approachable and reliable. Angela hopes to make a meaningful impact and ensure that this place remains productive, fun and safe.



Angela on her first day.

## Need Help Filing your 2020 Tax Return? There's Still Time!

By Lindsey

It is that time of year again folks...tax time. If you are an active member of The Meeting Place and need **FREE** assistance filing your 2020 tax return, please call or come on by the Clubhouse to set an appointment with Lindsey. She will only be able to assist members filing basic tax returns such as the 1040EZ and the 540A. For difficult tax situations it is best that you use a paid service from a professional tax preparer.

It typically takes about 30 minutes to an hour to complete the federal and state tax return. Also, filing both returns is free.

**Please take note that the filing deadline has been extended to May 17th.**

Again, if you need help, please schedule an appointment with Lindsey once you have received all your tax papers and are ready to file.



Lindsey's ready to help you file.

## Staying Consistent with Fitness

by Angela

For this month's newsletter, we wanted to discuss some helpful strategies for staying consistent with our fitness routines. First, and foremost, it is wise to find a routine that you enjoy doing. If it is something that you like, you will be more inclined to stick with it over time! Another great tip is to exercise with a group or with a partner. Here at TMP, we do many exercise classes throughout the work-ordered day, and we emphasize group participation. Personally, I feel that it is a privilege to participate with the members in the afternoon walking activity. Together, we get some exercise and fresh air, while having fun conversations!

On the subject of our afternoon walks here at TMP, Mary, a member of Unit 2 says, "The afternoon walks at TMP gives me something to look forward to and has helped me to stay motivated to stay active." We really promote health and fitness here at the Clubhouse, not only for our physical health but for our mental health. George, a member in Unit 1, states that he exercises "4-6 times per day out of necessity for his heart."



Angela leading our daily virtual walk.



Top: Rick making sunny-side up eggs.

Bottom: John enjoying a full, healthy breakfast

## Healthy Breakfasts & Low-Carb Lunches Available Once Again

by Rick

The Meeting Place has some great news related to our re-opening: as of the end of March and the beginning of April, breakfast and lunches are now available! If you're looking to eat healthy and maintain clean eating, the Clubhouse will continue to offer low-carb and organic meals.

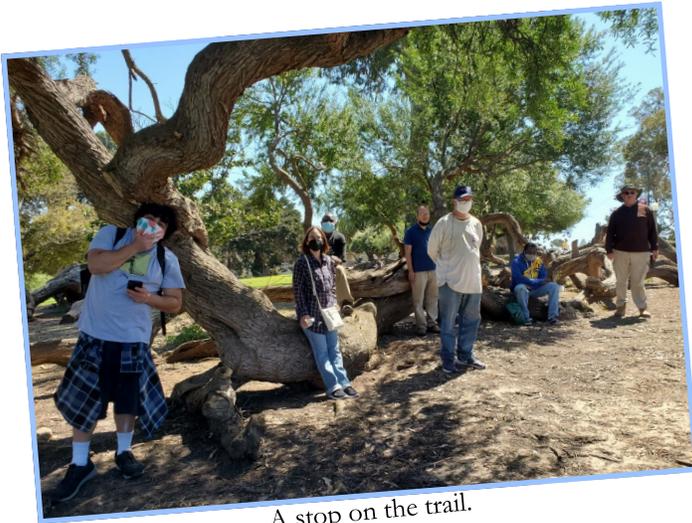
Members are invited to join us and start the day with the best breakfast you're going to find this side of the Mississippi, at very reasonable a la carte prices. Please show up between 8-8:15am to get fully checked in at the front door and to place your order.

As for lunch, there will be 8 low carb lunches served so the Clubhouse can maintain enough space in the dining room for members to enjoy their meals safely. Lunch-orders must be placed at approximately 10:30, when the café opens.

Take it from me, your friend Rick, to stay healthy and fed by having your meals at TMP!

# SOCIAL ACTIVITIES

## March Event Highlights



A stop on the trail.

### **Maple Street Canyon Hike** by Rick

It was a typically beautiful, sunny day. We set out from the Clubhouse on a moderately easy walk cutting through the canyon behind the Clubhouse, at the end of Maple St., climbing up the muddy side of the canyon onto the Quincy St. pedestrian bridge and crossing it. That brought us out onto Fourth Ave. From there we meandered through town, stopping a couple of times for refreshments. I found it to be a nice walk, more challenging than most that we've gone on, considering the terrain and the length.

### **Alcohol Fire Paint Art Day** by Abby and Erin

Members at the Clubhouse had a fiery blast at the alcohol art day! This event was a lot of fun, to the surprise of many who had some misgivings about working with flames. Members faced some anxiety at first, and Erica told them that there was a fire extinguisher nearby. Staff Chris, who led the event, reassured members this would not be necessary. Chris brought out cookie sheets for everyone to put their artwork on and everyone jumped to it. We used paints to start our abstract journey and used lighters to lightly blend them. Then we put rubbing alcohol on them and lit them with our lighters. Bam! Lit up our artwork just like fajitas on the grill! Nobody was burned to a crisp and we all enjoyed the fascinating flames. Then the finished product: beautiful! One looked like a lion's head, another like a religious stained glass window, and of course many like flowers. The interpretations of these abstract finished pieces were endless, as were the ideas for their use. After the project Chris made a delicious and nutritious salad and fruit bowl for the members to enjoy. We sat down in the dining room physically distanced and it just like the old days. What a fabulous transition back to in person TMP!



(L-R): Erin with her lit art-piece; Erica's framed piece

## A Picture is Worth a Thousand Words



Nate excited to be back in-person!

Follow us on Facebook and Instagram to get the latest updates on what's happening at The Meeting Place Clubhouse!



### The Meeting Place Wish List

- Trader Joe's and Sprouts Gift Cards for our healthy, organic meals
- Monetary donations
- Individual Hand Sanitizers
- Gas Gift Cards
- Transitional Employment Leads



### WARMLINE Peer to Peer



Funded by the County of San Diego  
HHS

1 (800) 930-9276

Or

1 (619) 295-1055

### What is The Warmline?

The Warmline is a friendly telephone support line, answered by Peer Support Specialists. We listen to concerns, offer referrals and provide understanding because we have been there, done that.

The Warmline is a non-crisis, non-emergency phone service.

*The Warm-line is in operation from 3:30 P.M. to 11:00 P.M., 7 days a week (except holidays).*

### YES! I WANT TO SUPPORT THE MEETING PLACE CLUBHOUSE

Here is my gift to help The Meeting Place Clubhouse

- \$10   
  \$25   
  \$50   
  \$75   
  \$100   
  Other \$\_\_\_\_\_

Your generous donation will go toward the growth and advancement of The Meeting Place Clubhouse, Inc., as one of the leading Mental Health Recovery Programs in San Diego County.

I would like to receive The Meeting Place Clubhouse monthly Newsletter

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

E-mail: \_\_\_\_\_

Thank you  
for  
your gift!



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**Clubhouse International**

Creating Community: Changing the World of Mental Health

*The First Clubhouse International Accredited Clubhouse in California  
Recipient of the San Diego Mental Health Director's Program of the Year Award  
and Lilly Reintegration Award*

### **WHAT WE GUARANTEE**

#### **A PLACE TO COME**

*The Meeting Place is open to any adult age 18 or older with a diagnosed mental health disorder who resides within the county of San Diego. We are open Monday through Friday from 8:00 a.m. until 4:00 p.m.. We also offer evening and weekend activities for fun and relaxation. Individuals who participate in our Clubhouse are called members.*

#### **MEANINGFUL WORK**

*At The Meeting Place, we believe everyone has something to contribute. Members and staff work side by side to facilitate the day-to-day operations of the clubhouse and perform numerous tasks to ensure smooth operation of the program.*

*Examples of tasks performed by members include: answering phones, preparing breakfast and lunch, gardening, typing, filing, entering data and maintaining records, tutoring, mentoring, writing, and coordinating the publication of the monthly newsletter, **The Meeting Place News**, and everything that goes into creating our daily in-house newscast, **KTMP Daily News**.*

#### **MEANINGFUL RELATIONSHIPS**

*Through the shared work of the clubhouse, meaningful relationships are developed between members and staff. But it's not all work at The Meeting Place! Membership has its privileges. These include outings to local restaurants, plays, tourist attractions, and other special activities.*

*Members and staff celebrate holidays, birthdays and achievements together. The Meeting Place is a place to come when you're happy or when you're sad—you're always welcome and you're always among friends.*

#### **A PLACE TO RETURN TO**

*Membership is for life. No matter how long you've been gone, you can always come back home. Returning members are welcomed and they are immediately returned to active status if they request it.*