



I'm a huge supporter of Seniors Month, an annual Queensland wide celebration held in October that aims to promote social connections for the more mature members within the community. Throughout the month of October community groups and organisations are hosting inclusive events and activities throughout the state. Many of these events are either no or low cost. Who wouldn't be up for that?

I've just been reading about some of the planned festivities within my own area and am busy scheduling dates into my diary: guided walks through the local environmental park, a theatrical performance, an opportunity to experience chair yoga and even a Queensland Ballet Seniors Workshop. (Tutus not required, thank heavens!)

Why is it so important for older people to be socially active? There are both physical health and mental health benefits which include:

- Reduced feelings of loneliness
- Maintaining and improving cognitive function
- Enhanced emotional support system
- Boosted self esteem
- Greater sense of purpose

More importantly, I feel removing myself from the influence of Karl Stefanovic and his ilk on the tele each morning has to be a positive for my brain health so the Seniors Walking Group that starts each day with a brisk meander by the seaside looks worth a try.

I understand that we aren't all extroverts. We don't all need constant contact with other human beings. After 35 years working with people I am the first to admit that I ignore the telephone when it rings and much prefer books and pot plants over people. If you need to make contact, send a text or email. Sorry, not sorry.

Getting on in years doesn't mean we have lost that curiosity for new experiences. It just takes us a little longer to prepare and perhaps a pain killer to provide motivation. And that's okay. We can still participate, we can still enjoy, we can still have fun and we can laugh.

My challenge for each of you who reside in Queensland is to sample at least one Seniors event during October. Not only is it important to promote positive ageing, but if we "don't use it, we'll lose it". So get out there and participate, my fellow old farts. You too could be like my partner who has just signed up for a drumming workshop.

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