

JANUARY 2026

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THE OFFICIAL WILLOW PARK MAPLE RIDGE COMMUNITY NEWSLETTER  
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*Cover Photo by Cristabel Soza*



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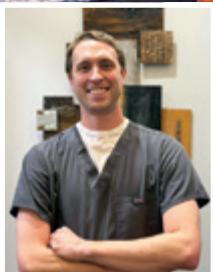
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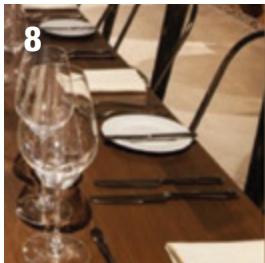
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SCAN HERE TO VIEW ADDITIONAL CONTENT: NEWS, EVENTS, CRIME STATS, REAL ESTATE STATS, & MORE

## WILLOW PARK



## MAPLE RIDGE



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# WILLOW RIDGE COMMUNITY ASSOCIATION

680 Acadia Drive SE Calgary, AB T2J 0C1

Ph: 403-271-8044

Website: [mywillowridge.ca](http://mywillowridge.ca)

Email: [info@mywillowridge.ca](mailto:info@mywillowridge.ca)

We are available by phone Monday to Friday 8:30 am to 3:30 pm  
(Voicemail is checked daily and will be responded to by the end of day the next business day). In-person by appointment only.

\*\*Closed Weekends and Holidays

## Board Members

President	Jason Carling	<a href="mailto:president@mywillowridge.ca">president@mywillowridge.ca</a>
Vice President	Dustan Byrnes	<a href="mailto:vp@mywillowridge.ca">vp@mywillowridge.ca</a>
Treasurer	Kody Shiels	<a href="mailto:treasurer@mywillowridge.ca">treasurer@mywillowridge.ca</a>
Secretary	Jeciel Alonso	<a href="mailto:secretary@mywillowridge.ca">secretary@mywillowridge.ca</a>
Membership Coordinator	Vacant	
Facilities	David Hughes	<a href="mailto:facilities@mywillowridge.ca">facilities@mywillowridge.ca</a>
Sports and Recreation	Vacant	
Funding	Don Boykiw	<a href="mailto:dboykiw@mywillowridge.ca">dboykiw@mywillowridge.ca</a>
Social	Vacant	
Casino	Marshall Horne	<a href="mailto:mhorne@mywillowridge.ca">mhorne@mywillowridge.ca</a>
Communications	Vacant	
Volunteer Coordinator	Vacant	
Civic Affairs	Gord Rouse	<a href="mailto:grouse@mywillowridge.ca">grouse@mywillowridge.ca</a>
HR Director	Michael Krisa	<a href="mailto:mkrisa@mywillowridge.ca">mkrisa@mywillowridge.ca</a>
Urban Forestry	Gordon Paynter	<a href="mailto:gpaynter@mywillowridge.ca">gpaynter@mywillowridge.ca</a>
Strategy Director	Andres Galindo	<a href="mailto:agalindo@mywillowridge.ca">agalindo@mywillowridge.ca</a>

## Directors At Large

Director-at-Large	Tom Firth	<a href="mailto:tfirth@mywillowridge.ca">tfirth@mywillowridge.ca</a>
Director-at-Large	Peter Gibson	<a href="mailto:pgibson@mywillowridge.ca">pgibson@mywillowridge.ca</a>
Director-at-Large	Roger Lohrey	<a href="mailto:rlohrey@mywillowridge.ca">rlohrey@mywillowridge.ca</a>
Director-at-Large	Katie Bradbury	<a href="mailto:kbradbury@mywillowridge.ca">kbradbury@mywillowridge.ca</a>
Director-at-Large	Gordon Palmer	<a href="mailto:gpalmer@mywillowridge.ca">gpalmer@mywillowridge.ca</a>

## Other Contacts

Soccer Administration	Rich Cree	<a href="mailto:soccer@mywillowridge.ca">soccer@mywillowridge.ca</a>
Garden Liaison	Joshua Plumb Megan Festa	<a href="mailto:wrveggiesandherbs@gmail.com">wrveggiesandherbs@gmail.com</a>

## WRCA Staff

General Inquiries		<a href="mailto:info@mywillowridge.ca">info@mywillowridge.ca</a>
Community Services Manager	Anna Glickman	<a href="mailto:gm@mywillowridge.ca">gm@mywillowridge.ca</a>
Office Administrator		<a href="mailto:info@mywillowridge.ca">info@mywillowridge.ca</a>
Bookkeeper	Jenna Burns	<a href="mailto:jburns@mywillowridge.ca">jburns@mywillowridge.ca</a>

## Community Resources

City of Calgary Liaison	Christa Zaharychuk	<a href="mailto:christa.zaharychuk@calgary.ca">christa.zaharychuk@calgary.ca</a>
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## Community Resources

### Councillor - Ward 11

Rob Ward

### MLA - Calgary Acadia

Diana Batten 403-640-1363 [calgary.acadia@assembly.ca](mailto:calgary.acadia@assembly.ca)

### MP - Calgary Midnapore

Stephanie Kusie 403-225-3480 [stephanie.kusie.c1@parl.gc.ca](mailto:stephanie.kusie.c1@parl.gc.ca)

### CPS Community Resource Office

Cst. Matt Forest [mforest@calgarypolice.ca](mailto:mforest@calgarypolice.ca)

### Girl Guides of Canada Calgary Area

403-283-8348 [ggcinfo@calgarygirlguides.com](mailto:ggcinfo@calgarygirlguides.com)

### Scouts Canada Chinook Council

403-283-4993 [www.scouts.ca](http://www.scouts.ca)

## The Willow Ridge Community Association (WRCA) Vision

To be an integrated community connecting partners, family, neighbours, and nature.

## The WRCA Mission

To foster an integrated community by providing meaningful and inclusive programs and experiences, safe gathering spaces, and advocacy for the needs and interests of our residents.

**GET WRCA NEWS IN YOUR INBOX** – With your membership, receive e-newsletters to share up-to-the minute news and events. We think you'll find the information valuable, but you can unsubscribe at any time.

## SOCIAL MEDIA

 [@willowridgecommunity](https://www.facebook.com/willowridgecommunity)

 [@mywillowridge](https://www.instagram.com/mywillowridge)

## WRCA website

[myWILLOWRIDGE.ca](http://myWILLOWRIDGE.ca)

The [myWILLOWRIDGE.ca](http://myWILLOWRIDGE.ca) is the official newsletter of the Willow Park and Maple Ridge communities. It is generously published by Great News Media and distributed monthly for free to all residents of Willow Ridge (approximately 3,850 households).

**Monthly Board of Directors Meetings** are normally held on the third Wednesday of each month, but please check with the office as these meeting dates may change. They commence at 7:00 pm in our WRCA Boardroom. If you would like to make a brief presentation to the WRCA Board, please notify the WRCA office at least three (3) days prior to the meeting date and state the topic you wish to address.

## Good Food Box Schedule

Order Deadline	Pick-up On
January 19	January 28
February 16	February 25

**GOOD FOOD BOX**  
*We're Back!*

The Good Food Box Program is part of the Community Kitchen Program of Calgary, where anyone can purchase boxes of fresh fruit & vegetables at an affordable price.

**SMALL   MEDIUM   LARGE**  
\$30      \$35      \$40

Step 1. Order online at [wrca.getcommunal.com](http://wrca.getcommunal.com)  
Step 2. Pick up on delivery day between 12-4pm at the WRCA

## Activities at the Willow Ridge Community Centre

### Sunday

- Unity of Calgary ([www.unityofcalgary.org](http://www.unityofcalgary.org))

### Monday

- Expand Yoga ([www.expand-yoga.com](http://www.expand-yoga.com))
- Sparks ([www.girlguides.ca](http://www.girlguides.ca))
- Pyramid Psychology ([www.pyramidpsychology.com](http://www.pyramidpsychology.com))

### Tuesday

- Devotion Danceworks ([www.devotiondanceworks.com](http://www.devotiondanceworks.com))
- National Sports Academy ([www.nationalsportacademy.ca](http://www.nationalsportacademy.ca))

### Wednesday

- Devotion Danceworks ([www.devotiondanceworks.com](http://www.devotiondanceworks.com))
- Expand Yoga ([www.expand-yoga.com](http://www.expand-yoga.com))
- Girl Guides ([www.girlguides.ca](http://www.girlguides.ca))

### Thursday

- Because You Can Fitness ([www.becauseyoucanfitness.ca](http://www.becauseyoucanfitness.ca))
- Embers ([www.girlguides.ca](http://www.girlguides.ca))
- Expand Yoga ([www.expand-yoga.com](http://www.expand-yoga.com))
- National Sports Academy ([www.nationalsportacademy.ca](http://www.nationalsportacademy.ca))
- Pyramid Psychology ([www.pyramidpsychology.com](http://www.pyramidpsychology.com))
- Ujamma Grandmas

### Monday to Friday

- FLC Brushstrokes ([www.flcseniors.ca](http://www.flcseniors.ca))
- FLC Line Dancers ([www.flcseniors.ca](http://www.flcseniors.ca))
- Creations Child Care ([www.creationschildcareinc.com](http://www.creationschildcareinc.com))
- Willow Park Preschool ([www.willowparkpreschool.com](http://www.willowparkpreschool.com))
- Willow Ridge Community Kids Club ([www.willowkidsclub.ca](http://www.willowkidsclub.ca))

### Saturday

- Devotion Danceworks ([www.devotiondanceworks.com](http://www.devotiondanceworks.com))



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# WINE TASTING EVENT

ANDREW  
PELLER

*presents*



## A NIGHT IN THE OKANAGAN

BOOK ONLINE  
[WWW.MYWILLOWRIDGE.CA](http://WWW.MYWILLOWRIDGE.CA)



Willow Ridge Community Assoc.  
680 Acadia Dr. SE  
Sat. Feb 7th ~ 7-10 pm  
Tickets: \$50

*This is a private event  
for WRCA members only*



# ICE SKATE LESSONS

*Beginner & Intermediate Lessons  
Power Skate & Ringette/Hockey Skills*

*8 week sessions \*outdoors\**

*Ages 4-12/Youth 13+/Adult*

## ONGOING REGISTRATION



WILLOW RIDGE CA  
680 ACADIA DR. SE  
OUTDOOR RINK



WED & SUN CLASSES  
RUN DEC 10-FEB 4  
**CLASS FEES PRORATED  
FOR LATECOMERS**

**Register at [wrca.getcommunal.com](http://wrca.getcommunal.com)**

# Rent Our Space!

The Willow Ridge Community Association can accommodate a wide range of guests for activities or functions like wedding receptions, birthday parties, baby showers, workshops/seminars, art shows, fitness classes, and more!

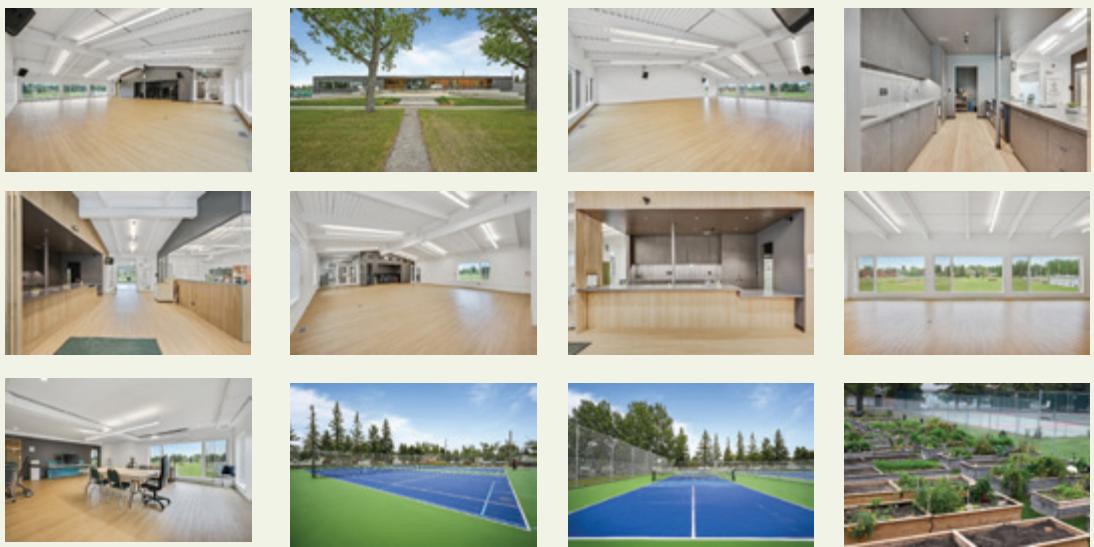
Located outside are two private parking lots, crock curl (in the winter), gaga ball pit, pickleball/tennis courts, lacrosse box/hockey rink, baseball diamond, 50-plot community garden, and a large green space which we use for our WRCA Soccer league in the summer and a pleasure skating rink in the winter.

Our newly renovated, air-conditioned building has the following spaces available for rent!

- The Willow – 1,924 sq. ft. North Hall (135 dining/200 standing) with large windows, built-in audio/speakers, vaulted ceilings, wood sprung floor. Perfect for high-impact activities!
- The Maple – 1,200 sq. ft. South Hall (60 dining/135 standing) with large windows, separate sink/washing area, additional storage, vaulted ceilings, and a sound system.
- The Herard Room – 540 sq. ft. Board Room (25 dining/50 standing) with large windows, available projector, and mounted whiteboard, conveniently situated off the Ridge Lounge. Perfect for small group yoga, art classes, meetings, catering set-up, etc.

The community centre has the following additional features:

- The Ridge Lounge, an upstairs gathering area for members with a view of the rinks/fields.
- Large floor-to-ceiling windows to allow for more natural light.
- Internal stairs and elevator access to lower level.
- Four individual gender-neutral washrooms, two of which are wheelchair accessible.
- Wi-Fi throughout building.
- Large change area/washrooms with rubber flooring, accessible to rink users in the winter.



# Memberships Available Online



Family  
Membership  
\$35



Seniors 60+  
Membership  
\$20



Individual  
Membership  
\$25



Business  
Membership  
\$40

*Support your  
Community*



WILLOW RIDGE  
COMMUNITY  
ASSOCIATION

Visit [mywillowridge.ca](http://mywillowridge.ca) for more info

RENTAL RATES: Minimum 3-hour rental on weekends.

Facility	Size	Capacity	Hourly Rates	Day Rates	Deposit	Usage Examples
Willow (North Hall)	11m x 16m 37' x 52' 1924 sq ft	200 people	\$65/hr – Weekdays \$98/hr – Weekends	\$550 – 6hrs \$1,175 – 13hrs	\$550	Scouts or Guides, Art shows and exhibits, Larger AGMs, Town hall meetings, Martial arts, Dance classes
Maple (South Hall)	11m x 9m 37' x 31' 1200 sq ft	125 people	\$54/hr – Weekdays \$81/hr – Weekends	\$450 – 6hrs \$975 – 13hrs	\$450	Faith groups, Low-impact activities, small AGMs
Denis and Rose Herard (Board Room)	8m x 6m 27' x 20' 540 sq ft	25-30 people	\$33/hr – Weekdays \$49/hr – Weekends	\$275 – 6hrs \$575 – 13hrs	\$275	Corporate meetings, Break-out meetings, Wedding party preparations, Interviews and staff reviews, Green Room
<b>PARTY PACKAGE</b>	Over 4,000 sq ft	300-400 people	N/A	\$2,500 – 13hrs	\$1,000	Exclusive use of Kitchen Area, Ridge Lounge, Washrooms, All Rooms on upper level.

WRCA Members receive a 5% discount for one-time rentals.

Contact: [info@mywillowridge.ca](mailto:info@mywillowridge.ca) or 403-271-8044



# Rethinking New Year's Resolutions: A Kinder Approach to Food and Health

by Andrea Kroeker

January is often framed as a month of fresh starts and for many that means making resolutions about food, weight, or exercise. Often resolutions built on restriction don't last past February. When we set rules that feel rigid or punishing our natural response is to rebel against them. Then comes guilt, frustration, and the sense of "failing" before the year has even begun.

But there is another way to think about the new year, one that moves away from dieting and toward a more compassionate, sustainable relationship with food.

### Why Diet-Focused Resolutions Backfire

Traditional resolutions tend to sound like this:

- "No sugar for 30 days."
- "Cut carbs."
- "Lose X pounds."

But these rules ignore how human behaviour works. When we restrict food, our brain interprets it as a threat. Hunger hormones increase, cravings intensify, and the foods we try to avoid become even more appealing. This isn't a lack of willpower, it's biology.

Diet-focused resolutions also reduce health to a number on the scale, overlooking emotional well-being, social connection, culture, and daily rhythms that shape eating habits.

### A Non-Diet Alternative: Intention Over Restriction

Intuitive eating is a framework developed by dietitians and supported by evidence where it invites people to step away from dieting and reconnect with their body's cues: hunger, fullness, satisfaction, and emotional needs.

Instead of making weight-centered promises, consider intentions that foster curiosity and self-trust. For example:

- "I will pause before meals to check in with my hunger level."
- "I will add foods that help me feel energized, rather than cutting foods out."



- "I will explore movement that feels good instead of forcing punishing workouts."
- "I will practice being kinder to myself when I eat emotionally or feel stressed."

These intentions are flexible. They honour daily life and recognize that eating is not only physical but also social, emotional, and joyful.

### Honouring Satisfaction, Not Perfection

A key idea in intuitive eating is satisfaction. When meals feel satisfying, flavourful, comforting, and nourishing it becomes easier to stop eating when full. In contrast, when meals are very low in calories or overly "clean," we often roam the kitchen afterwards searching for something to "hit the spot" and satisfy our hunger.

Allowing preferred foods (yes, including treats or fun foods) within a balanced pattern reduces the urgency and guilt that often lead to overeating.

### A More Compassionate January

The new year does not need to be a self-improvement project. It can be a moment to practice gentleness, to notice small wins, and to reconnect with what truly matters—energy, pleasure, connection, and care.

Resolutions don't have to shrink you. They can expand your life.

As you step into January, consider what it would look like to trust your body a little more and judge it a little less. You might find that the most meaningful change comes not from tightening rules but from letting them go.



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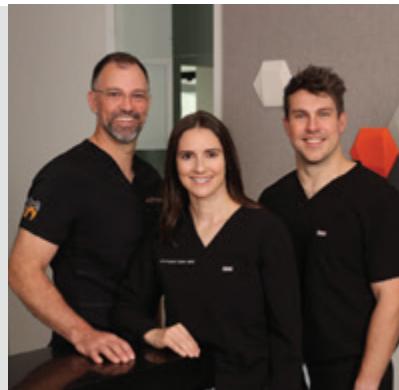
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Calgary, AB T2V 4A3

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Book Now



# Asian-Style Chicken Noodle Soup

by Jennifer Puri



A comfort food ideal for cold weather, variations of chicken soup can be found in cuisines around the world.

Chicken soup is typically made with chicken broth and can include pasta, noodles, rice, dumplings, barley, leeks, celery, onions, carrots, matzo balls, and potatoes.

In some cultures, chicken soup is believed to have healing properties and is served to the sick and the elderly. Chicken soup is filled with protein and vitamins which can help boost immunity.

**Prep Time:** 20 minutes

**Cook Time:** 25 minutes

**Servings:** 3 to 4

#### Ingredients:

- 1 lb boneless, skinless chicken breasts, cubed
- 2 green onions, finely sliced
- 3 heads of bok choy, quartered
- ½ red bell pepper, thinly sliced
- 2 carrots, thinly sliced
- 1 tsp. crushed garlic
- 2 tsp. crushed ginger
- 2 tsp. sodium reduced soya sauce
- 1 tbsp. olive oil
- 2 tbsp. rice vinegar

- 1 tsp. red chili flakes
- 6 cups sodium reduced chicken broth
- 1 cup water
- 4 oz. vermicelli noodles broken into thirds

#### Directions

1. Heat the olive oil in a large pot, add the green onion and sauté for a couple of minutes.
2. Next add ginger, garlic, and chicken cubes and stir until chicken is no longer pink, about 2 to 3 minutes.
3. Add carrots, bok choy, and red bell pepper, and sauté for a couple of minutes.
4. Lastly add soya sauce, fish sauce, red chili flakes, stock, and a cup of water, and bring to a boil. Reduce heat and simmer for about 12 minutes or until chicken is tender. Add the broken noodles to the pan and simmer until the noodles soften, approximately two minutes.
5. Serve soup with green onion cake if desired.

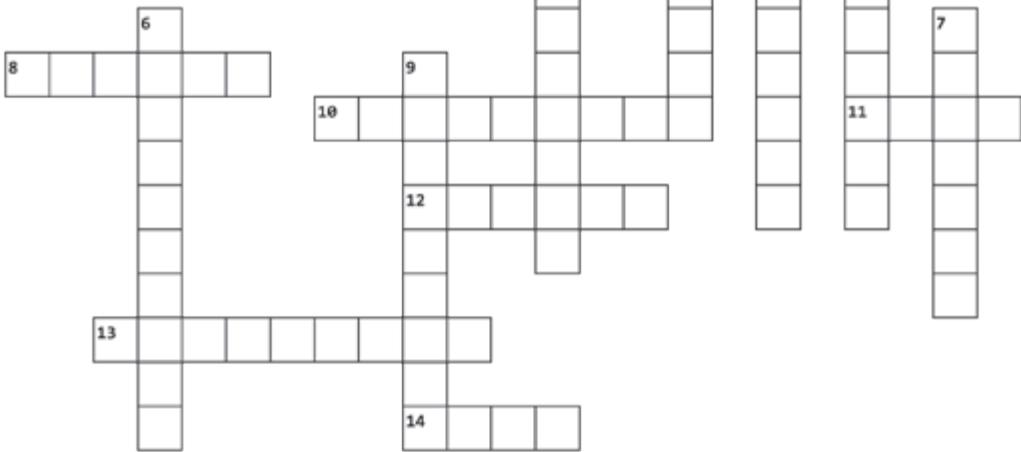
Bon Appétit!



# January Crossword



Visit [bit.ly/  
mycalgaryanswers](http://bit.ly/mycalgaryanswers) or  
scan the QR code for  
the answers



## Across

4. The world's largest office building, which houses the U.S. military, was completed on January 15, 1943.
8. Rare snowfall occurred on this North African desert on January 7, 2018.
10. January's birth flower is also the official flower of Mother's Day.
11. In 2015, New Zealander Lydia Ko became the youngest person to be ranked number one in the world in this club-and-ball sport at the age of 17.
12. In 45 BC this calendar took effect for the first time as decreed by Roman ruler Julius Caesar.
13. This free-content online encyclopedia launched on January 15, 2001.
14. On January 15, 2024, Elton John won an \_\_\_\_\_ award for his television special *Elton John: Farewell From Dodger Stadium*, completing his status as an EGOT winner.

## Down

1. On January 3, 1892, writer J.R.R. Tolkien was born in this South African capital city.
2. World \_\_\_\_\_ Day is celebrated on January 2 to honour quiet, reserved, and sometimes shy individuals.
3. On January 23, 2018, \_\_\_\_\_ James became the youngest player to reach 30,000 NBA points.
5. The first Prime Minister of Canada, John A. Macdonald, was born on January 11, 1815, in \_\_\_\_\_, Scotland.
6. The crime drama series, *The Sopranos*, starring James \_\_\_\_\_ premiered on January 10, 1999.
7. Former professional footballer, Owen Lee Hargreaves was born on January 20, 1981, in \_\_\_\_\_, Alberta.
9. Jane Austen's romance novel *Pride and \_\_\_\_\_* was originally published on January 28, 1813.

## COLOURING PAGE

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# WINTER

\* Emotions



Can you name the emotions on the polar bears?

Identifying emotions is the first step in emotional literacy.

**FEELINGS RISE LIKE WINTER WINDS — ACCEPT THEM AND KNOW THAT  
THEY TOO WILL PASS.**

# FRIENDS *of* Fish Creek

## It's a Great Time to Start Thinking About Your Native Plant Gardens!

There's nothing like a chilly January to make you look forward to spring. Something we like to do when winter seems to drag on is to start planning our gardens, and at the Friends, that means starting seeds for a ton of different native plants! If you're interested in starting your own native plants from seed, there are a lot of species that are beginner-friendly, even if you don't have any experience growing plants from seeds at all. We're highlighting two species that are easy to get started with and how you can germinate and grow them this winter!

Did you know that the Friends have a native plant growing program called 'Grow with Us' that also acts as a native species seed bank? Learn more and sign up at [friendsoffishcreek.org/grow-with-us/](http://friendsoffishcreek.org/grow-with-us/).



### Plant 1: Smooth Blue Aster

These beautiful blue flowers are a cheery addition to any garden, plus, they support native pollinators and insects. Easy to germinate and grow, you could easily see the plants flower their first year when grown from seed, and they may even produce seed to harvest the first season too!

To grow this native species, sprinkle seeds on top of a pot of soil at least 6" deep then cover with a handful of soil, about ½ cm. Lightly press down on the top layer of soil and then mist the top of the soil with a sprayer to moisten the seeds and begin the germination process. Germination can take up to a few weeks, so check back often to make sure the soil (and most importantly, the seeds) is still damp.



### Plant 2: Prairie Coneflower

The prairie coneflower is a classic native species that often comes to mind when we think of the word "wildflower". It can be found growing all across the North American Great Plains North America, so why not bring the sunny yellow hues of this native plant to your garden bed?

To grow prairie coneflower from seed, you'll start by "cold stratifying" the seed. This means putting seeds outside in cold weather, or in the fridge in a moist substrate (like sand or paper towel) for a few weeks to a month. Then, plant seeds in sandy, well-draining soil in a pot at least 6" deep and water daily until germination. From there, you can move your seedlings outside or gradually transition them by bringing them outside for increasing durations during the day in April or May.

Wondering where to get seeds for native species? Sign up for our 'Grow with Us' program for smooth blue aster seeds, prairie coneflower seeds, and more. Plus, be a part of our circular seed economy and increasing species diversity in Fish Creek Provincial Park and beyond. You can find more information on our website.



# Caring for an Aging Parent: Strategies for When the Going Gets Tough

by Nancy Bergeron, R. Psych | info@nancybergeron.ca



### Emotional Strategies (Inner Work and Regulation)

#### 1. Acknowledge Complex Feelings

Allow yourself to feel grief, anger, guilt, resentment, or sadness—without judgment. Write or talk about your emotions rather than suppressing them. “It’s okay to love my parent and still feel hurt by them.”

#### 2. Release the Hope for Transformation

Accept that your parent may never change, apologize, or become kind. Focus on who you want to be in this relationship—not who you wish they were. Acceptance is not approval—it’s choosing peace over constant disappointment.

#### 3. Separate Compassion from Tolerance

Compassion = understanding their limitations and pain. Tolerance = letting them mistreat you. You can have empathy while maintaining strong boundaries.

#### 4. Name and Limit Emotional Triggers

Identify patterns that consistently lead to hurt (e.g., criticism, manipulation, guilt trips). Develop calm exit strategies when tension rises (“I need to step out for a minute,” or “Let’s talk later.”)

#### 5. Practice Grounding Techniques

Use breathing exercises, mindfulness, or sensory grounding before and after visits. Create “emotional decompression rituals”—e.g., a walk, journaling, or music after caregiving tasks.

#### 6. Reframe Your Role

Instead of “being the good child,” think of yourself as a care coordinator—doing what’s necessary, not what’s emotionally reciprocal. This mental shift reduces guilt and over-responsibility.

#### 7. Find Validation Outside the Relationship

Seek empathy and support from friends, therapy, or caregiver groups. Don’t expect emotional reciprocity from your parent; that’s not where healing will come from.

### Situational Strategies (Practical Boundaries and Care Structures)

#### 1. Clarify What You Can and Cannot Do

Define your caregiving “job description.” Example: “I manage their medication and groceries, but I can’t

handle daily visits." Say it out loud, write it down, and share with other family members if needed.

## **2. Establish Firm Communication Boundaries**

Limit exposure to verbal abuse or manipulation. End conversations that become cruel or degrading: "I'm not willing to be spoken to that way. I'll come back when you're ready to talk respectfully."

## **3. Use Neutral, Brief Responses**

When provoked, respond with calm neutrality ("I hear you," "That's your opinion," "Okay"). Avoid arguing, explaining, or defending—it fuels conflict.

## **4. Set Structured Routines**

Predictability helps both you and your parent. Schedule visits or calls at consistent times to minimize last-minute demands.

## **5. Engage Outside Help When Possible**

Look into: Home care aides or respite programs, adult day centers, geriatric care managers, volunteer respite programs or faith-based support. Even a few hours of relief can help you sustain caregiving long-term.

## **6. Protect Your Physical Space**

If your parent lives with you, designate "off-limits" areas or private times. If you live separately, establish boundaries around unannounced visits or excessive calls.

## **7. Use Written Communication for Sensitive Topics**

For logistics (medications, finances, appointments), use texts or emails—it reduces emotional escalation and provides a record.

## **8. Plan for Respite and Breaks**

Schedule non-negotiable downtime—a full day or weekend off every few weeks. Even short breaks prevent burnout and resentment.

## **9. Involve Professionals for Tough Conversations**

Use a doctor, social worker, or counselor to mediate when your parent refuses help or denies issues. Hearing it from a professional, lands better than hearing it from a child.

## **10. Prepare for Emotional Pushback**

Difficult parents often use guilt, martyrdom, or control when they feel powerless. Recognize it as fear, not truth. "They're scared of losing control—that's not mine to fix."

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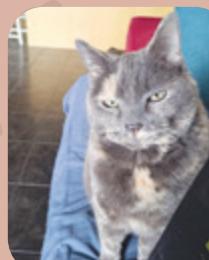
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# Understanding Mental Health

by Recovery Alberta – Community Health Promotion Services



Mental Health is complicated. There are many ways to talk about it, and it can get confusing. To better understand, Mental Health Literacy developed a tool known as “the pyramid” that consists of four layers. The base of the pyramid is the largest, which is related to the number of individuals in this state. Therefore, as the pyramid gets smaller so does the amount of people who may experience this state. Let’s take a closer look at what the four levels of the pyramid are:

### 1. No Distress, Problem, or Disorder

This is the bottom level and the largest of the pyramid. This is when everything is okay and you are not experiencing any mental distress, problems, or disorders.

### 2. Mental Distress

The next layer up is mental distress. Distress releases a signal from our brain indicating the need to adapt to our environment and that there is a problem to solve. Triggers of distress are unavoidable, but the process is necessary for life-skills promoting and building resilience. An example is having an argument with your boss. Once you figure out a solution the mental distress goes away.

### 3. Mental Health Problem

The layer second from the top is mental health problems which is an indicator that we are having difficulties and may need external help such as counselling or community support. This can arise from a stressor of great amount, such as the death of a loved one.

### 4. Mental Disorder/Illness

Located at the top of the pyramid is mental illness. This occurs when there is disruption in usual brain functioning. This disruption is the result of our genes and our environment from the time of conception and throughout the lifespan. Examples of this can be the diagnosis of ADHD, Clinical Depression, and Anxiety.

Now that we have a better understanding of these terms, here are everyday things you can do for your mental health, also known as the Big Five to Thrive!

#### The Big Five to Thrive

- 1. Exercise:** This could be a walk in the community or a session at the gym.
- 2. Sleep:** The optimal amount needed varies for everyone. Put away your phone and snuggle up for a good night’s sleep.
- 3. Supportive Relationships:** Develop and maintain positive relationships with family, friends, and community. Surround yourself by those who lift you up.
- 4. Nutrition:** Incorporate healthy foods that are easy to make and taste great!
- 5. Helping Others:** Get involved in your community coalitions or volunteer with local charities.

It has been shown that improving even one of these areas can improve the other areas. Consider steps that are practical to you to better your mental health!

## The Art of Finding Work: What if I Told You Ageism Doesn't Exist?

by Nick Kossovan



When you read the title of this column, where did your focus and mental energy immediately go?

What if, when job searching, instead of obsessing about all the things you can't control—biases, economic factors, the job market, employer's hiring process—you focused on what you can control, such as creating and maintaining a professional network, tailoring your resume and cover letter for each application, managing your digital footprint, and cultivating a positive mindset. Wouldn't this be a more effective approach to your job search?

Every job seeker I encounter seems fixated on what they can't control. LinkedIn has become an echo chamber

of pity, dominated by posts vilifying employers, giving unsolicited advice to employers who'll never read it, and venting about ageism, being overqualified, or ghosting. Participating in these discussions doesn't reflect well on you when employers check your profile to evaluate whether you're interview-worthy.

You're likely familiar with the quote attributed to theologian Reinhold Niebuhr: "Grant me the serenity to accept the things I cannot change, the courage to change the things I can, and the wisdom to know the difference." This emphasizes the importance of accepting situations you can't change and directing your energy towards what you can influence.

### **As a job seeker, you can't control:**

Someone's Biases: Do yourself a favour; stop trying to control the beliefs and behaviours of other people. Whether it's age, ethnicity, or any other characteristic, you can't change how someone perceives (read: interprets) you. Biases are a fact of life, and dwelling on them only drains energy.

Speaking of biases: Why do people fail to recognize their own biases but see them in others?

The Economy and the Job Market: Yes, economic downturns, market fluctuations, industry trends, government policies, and global events contribute to the job market landscape, but you have no influence over them. My advice is to say to yourself, "It is what it is," and turn your attention elsewhere.

The Hiring Process: Employers own their hiring process. You can't control how an employer structures their hiring process, accesses candidates, or how long they take to make a decision. Since no two employers hire the same way, job searching is unpredictable, leading to frustration if you let it dominate your mindset.

I often see the unpredictability of hiring; what one employer views as a positive might be seen as a negative by another. For example, hiring manager A might determine, based on the level of your previous job and/or your age, that you're overqualified and, therefore, will soon become bored and leave. Conversely, hiring manager B might perceive you as a potential role model for younger employees, in addition to bringing a wealth of knowledge and experience.

Subjective perception, the basis for creating bias, plays a crucial role in hiring decisions.

Company Culture: You're either a fit or you're not. Trying to contort yourself in hopes of appearing to be someone who'll "fit in" is pointless. If you get the job but can't be yourself, you won't be happy. Hiring managers know their company's culture much better than you, especially its nuances; hence, trust them if they determine you won't be a good fit.

Past Experiences: What's done is done. If there's anything to learn from a mistake, do so and move on. Dwelling in the past only creates unnecessary anxiety.

### **As a job seeker, you can control:**

Creating and Maintaining a Professional Network: Your professional network is your lifeline in terms of job search and career advancement; thus, it's the most influential factor in your job search. Given that the correlation between networking and job search success is common knowledge, you undoubtedly know the primary benefit of networking is access to unadvertised opportunities.

I highly recommend reading *Never Eat Alone* by Keith Ferrazzi.

Tailoring Your Resume and Cover Letter: Each job application should feel personalized, highlighting your skills and experiences that directly relate to the position you're pursuing. "I applied to over 700 jobs in three months" isn't a flex. As far as job searching is concerned, submitting two quality applications daily is significantly better than the 'spray and pray' method that most job seekers resort to.

Your Digital Footprint: Be mindful of your online presence. Your social media activity reflects your professionalism. A messy digital footprint is a red flag to employers, just as not having one makes you appear out of touch.

Practicing Interview Skills: The best hack I know for honing your interview skills is to have more conversations with family, friends, acquaintances, and strangers and ask more open-ended questions ("How did you spend this past weekend?" "What made you decide to become an accountant?" "What's your go-to restaurant?"). The more comfortable you become having conversations, the better you'll perform in interviews, which are essentially a conversation.

Maintaining a Positive Mindset: Your attitude impacts your job search. Control your mindset by practicing mindfulness and gratitude. Focus on what you can achieve, not on what you believe is holding you back.

Another book recommendation: *Rewire Your Mindset: Own Your Thinking, Control Your Actions, Change Your Life!* by Brian Keane.

As in life, what you focus on determines where your energy goes; therefore, choose your focus wisely.

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## Word of the Month

**Zenith:** noun (zee-nith, zen-ith)

The highest point of something.

Their career reached its zenith in the 1970s.



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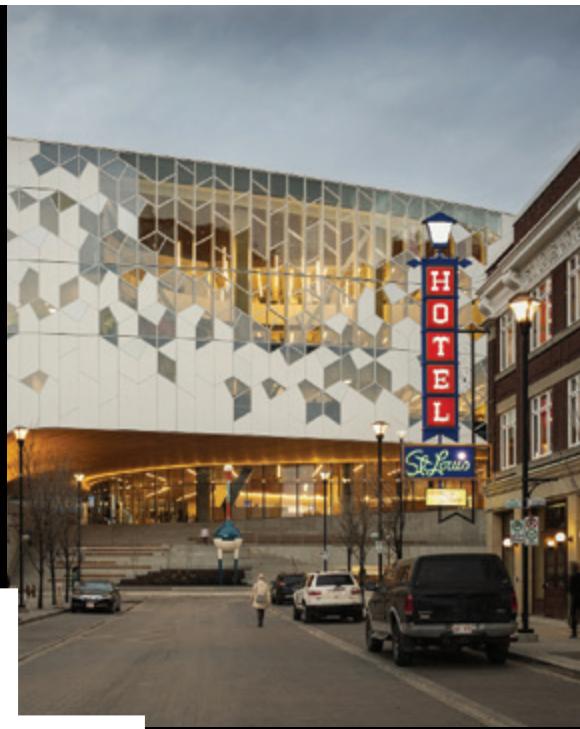


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## Egyptian Gem

January's birthstone is the garnet, but did you know that this gem was used by ancient Egyptians! As far back as 3000 BC, Egyptians used garnets for their jewellery, amulets, and burial artifacts. The Egyptians considered garnets a symbol of royalty and power. Perfect for any Pharaoh!

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## Crib Drop In

Through our community survey done in July/August 2025, we heard from many community members that they would love to see more available programs for kids, adults, and seniors! As a first step, we are thrilled to be "test driving" our new WRCA Crib Drop In for the months of November, December, January, and February. Tea, coffee, cookies, cards, and crib boards are provided.

WRCA members: \$1

Non-members: \$5

Please register and pay cash at the office upon entry.

**Every Wednesday 1:00-3:00pm**

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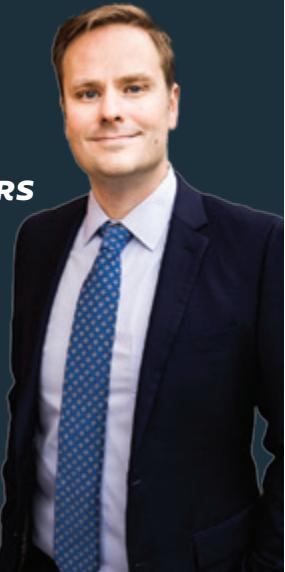
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**9**

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Average Days on Market



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