

MEDIA RELEASE

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New podcast helping over 50s get their mojo back

The first-ever podcast series by COTA SA, produced to help older South Australians find their zest for life and improve their wellbeing, is now streaming on Spotify and Google and Apple Podcasts.

'Voices on Ageing' is a free six-part series, interviewing over 50s about how they've empowered themselves to reconnect with life and their community, how they've achieved connection, and what contributed to their success.

Among the interviewees is 72-year-old Margaret from Belair, who embraced 'pumping iron' to help her overcome shock, fear and a period of depression after an unexpected medical diagnosis.

"I had a diagnosis of mild cognitive impairment which it can go forwards or backwards and I was very motivated to stave it off. When I learned that physical exercise is one of the main game changers for cognition, I started taking COTA's Strength for Life classes a little more seriously," Margaret says.

But beyond the physical exercise, the social element of classes is beneficial for brain health.

"I once said to one of the instructors, perhaps we should be chatting less and exercising more, but he said it's also for the social benefit. I know, for me, if I didn't have the appointment of the class I wouldn't be doing the exercise by myself at home. This really works for me."

And Margaret says she has noticed a change in her mind.

"I have fewer times when I put the salt in the fridge, fewer times when I forget someone's name. I can feel the difference and my friends and family can tell the difference... I say I lost some of my marbles but I found them again at the gym!"

COTA SA chief executive Jane Mussared said the 'Voices on Ageing' podcast will inspire and empower older people to make changes in their own lives.

"We have met wonderful people whose lives have altered or faltered after experiencing some of life's challenges, but the podcast shares how they found their mojo, reconnected with others, and got back into life after a period of loneliness or social isolation," she said.

“With our support, all the podcast interviewees took steps to reconnect with others and revitalise their activities and will share with listeners how they can do the same.

“If you, or someone you know is facing barriers as they age, this is the podcast for you.”

Episodes available

- **Episode 1: My Journey with Memory Loss** – Margaret bravely shares her experience of memory loss. For her, connecting with COTA volunteer Lai Woon was a major turning point, helping her pull herself ‘up out of her chair’ after the anxiety she was feeling as her memory became less reliable. Marg’s journey may be difficult but she’s taking positive steps to empower herself and shine a light on what is possible, when living with cognitive impairment.
- **Episode 2: The Power of a Chat** – Colin shares his experience of moving into an independent unit within a retirement village. Colin explains his move helped increase his social activities and connections. COVID-19 has limited some of these activities but through the support of Meals on Wheels, COTA SA, and his local council, he continues to proactively seek ways to maintain his independence in retirement living.
- **Episode 3: Finding Purpose in Retirement** – Sandra shares her story of seeking purpose in retirement. After relocating from interstate and retiring within this timeframe, Sandra found herself feeling isolated and without a strong sense of local community connections. Becoming a COTA SA Volunteer and accessing support services through Social Connections is helping Sandra to bridge her feelings of loneliness.
- **Episode 4: Reconnecting After Loss** – Barbara talks about how she overcame her feelings of isolation after the passing of her much-loved husband. With the support of her Peer Volunteer Marjorie, Barbara rebuilt her confidence to attend social activities as a single person. This renewed confidence has enabled her to reconnect with her passion to travel, something she didn’t think she’d do again. With plans for a week-long intrastate travel trip and beyond, once COVID travel restrictions ease, Barbara is excited about the adventures to come.
- **Episode 5: The Spark I Needed** – Bryan shares honest insights into his mental health challenges. After a series of health challenges and the loss of friends, Bryan found himself feeling very low. A brochure for COTA Social Connections at his local library provided the turning point he needed. Support from his peer volunteer Lizzie has helped him re-engage with activities and new social groups. Bryan has also

found a new determination to enjoy life and has resolved to be more proactive for his family.

- **Episode 6: Staying Connected at Home** – Bonnie shares personal insight into how she navigates life as an older South Australian with physical mobility limitations. Bonnie has overcome many personal challenges in her life and draws from this resilience and her wonderful sense of humour to keep positive. Accessing COTA Visitors has helped Bonnie stay connected from her home.

Each interviewee from the 'Voices on Ageing' podcast series was a Social Connections participant, a COTA SA program developed in response to the disruption of COVID-19, to help older people connect with social activities and services that matched their interests and needs.

The 'Voices on Ageing' podcast was recorded in partnership with Adelaide Primary Health Network with each episode running for approximately 20-minutes.

'Voices on Ageing' can be streamed via Spotify, and Google and Apple Podcasts, or online here: <https://voices-on-ageing.captivate.fm/>

COTA SA is an older people's movement and the peak body representing the rights, interests, and futures of more than 633,000 older South Australians aged over 50.

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