

## The My Way Program

For Gateways Support Services participant, Julie, the My Way program provides an opportunity to be social, whilst pursuing creative endeavours that she so enjoys.

Julie attends Gateways Community PLACE in North Geelong twice a week where she is involved in looking after the plants as well as creating colourful, hand-painted pots which she then sells.

Debra Stephens, My Way Coordinator, says the program is about advocating and empowering participants so that they can live life their way. 'It is about them choosing what they want to do on the day. Really it is about connection and feeling appreciated. And of course, fun, they come in here and have lots of fun,' says Debra. The My Way Program provides person-centred, high quality in-home and community based support for Gateways' adult accommodation participants who are unable to join other day programs.

'This could be due to COVID they have been out of routine, or there are some older participants who have chosen to 'retire' from programs. It is one-on-one support that enables them to get out there and do activities,' says Debra.

For Julie it's difficult to walk, so she's getting exercise, being social and doing something creative,' says Debra.

For the 20 participants that are part of the program, each has support tailored to meet their individual needs and goals.

'There is one participant, for example, who likes structure, so he comes in every week and goes out with a support worker and collects shredding boxes from the houses and counts them. He'll then come down to our accommodation area at Thompson Road where he builds on his social skills,' says Debra.

'It is really about connection and feeling appreciated, and getting out and about' .

Gateways Support Services' My Way program is available in the Geelong region.

***'I love it' said Julie, 'I love doing my pots... and I love the staff and flexibility of choosing what to do for the day...'***

Contact [intake@gateways.com.au](mailto:intake@gateways.com.au) for more information.