

BELONGING MATTERS CONVERSATIONS

How To Initiate & Lead Volunteer Programs & Activities at Oasis Roddan Lodge (Session #5)

Roddan Lodge, Oasis | WESN Tuesday, April 8th 2025

“Oasis” (noun): A fertile spot in a desert where water is found; something that provides refuge, relief, or a pleasant contrast.

“The part you don’t see on the news is when the folks down here in the Downtown Eastside pull together... It’s really touching to see people that have very little to give so much. It warms my heart to experience such generosity and kindness.”

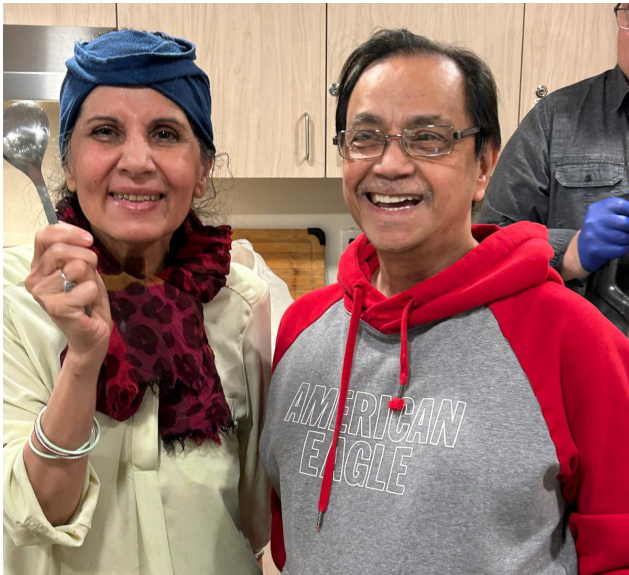
Karl Hartlen, Roddan Lodge Resident & Poet

In what ways is Roddan Lodge an Oasis to you?

- ✓ “Feeling open, welcomed to share feelings and knowing action will be taken.”
- ✓ “Giving people opportunities to do stuff—you’re not obligated, but it’s there if you want it.”
- ✓ “Socializing, eating together, sharing ideas, doing what we can do to help.”

Creating an Oasis at RL looks like...

- ✓ Making people feel safe and calm
- ✓ Respecting and learning from different cultures
- ✓ Offering activities with no pressure but open invitation
- ✓ Taking action based on feedback
- ✓ Building connections, reducing isolation, and creating room for healing



“Grateful we got some action plans. We’re taking off now—and it’s only the beginning.”

“When I thought I would die here, I found this program and now I feel a drive to explore.”

“It’s easy to be cynical and think nothing will work, but we’re giving this a fair shot.”

— Residents & Belonging Matters Conversations Participants

What are some Benefits of Volunteering here?

- ✓ “It gets you out of your headspace.”
- ✓ “You learn more, get to know others, and understand their roots and thinking.”
- ✓ “It keeps your brain active—more present, less dwelling.”
- ✓ “Helps heal your past by feeling valued and giving back.”
- ✓ “You’re part of something bigger. It brings purpose and meaning.” – Miriam

WHAT GETS IN THE WAY OF VOLUNTEERING? WHAT HELPS?

Barriers

- ✗ Conflicting schedules or life commitments
- ✗ Lack of resources (money, space, supplies)
- ✗ Sharing space can bring tension
- ✗ Different mindsets or expectations

Supports

- ✓ Flexibility and clear expectations
- ✓ Respect policy or shared guidelines
- ✓ Feeling needed and valued
- ✓ Training and orientation
- ✓ Ongoing support from coordinators (like Miriam, Caleb, Melissa)

