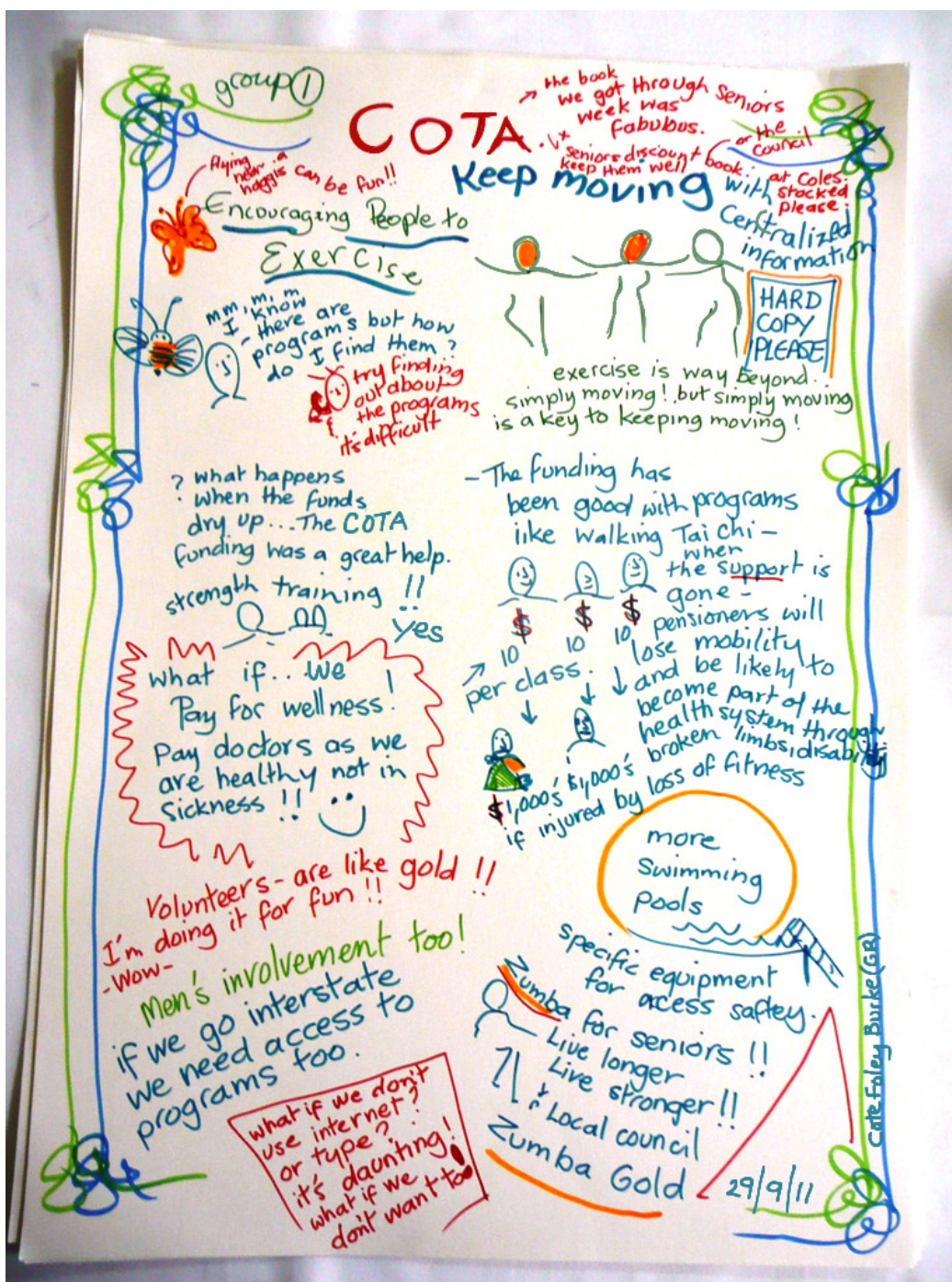


Seniors' Conference 2011: Agents of Change

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|-----------------------|--|
| <b>Session Title:</b> | Encouraging people to exercise and socialise   |
| <b>Convenor:</b>      | Denise Stone   |
| <b>Participants:</b>  | Jo, Stephen, Sakuntala, graham, Marjory, Maree, Kaye, Susan, Ruth, Inessa, Cecilia, Tom, Yvonne, Tracy |



## Summary of Discussions:

### The problems

- Funding for continuous programs
  - Drying up of funds for seniors' health programs e.g. Prime Movers, Strength Training, don't need all the "fancy" equipment
- Gyms not interested in older people
- There are programs available through local councils etc but nobody knows about it
- Advocacy to Council – centralised information, hard copies of info available
- Affordability – health funds make refunds available for gym membership
- U3A good for information and providing classes
- Getting out the fact that exercise is so beneficial for both body and mind
- Difficulty with waiting periods for referrals from hospitals especially for things like physio & falls prevention
- Local newspapers not interested in seniors as they're not newsworthy enough
- Starting with state government; advocate for a web site (which is constantly updated) for seniors to find out what is available to them anywhere in Victoria, also available in hard copy
- Approach community radio

### Issues/Ideas

- Perceptions of age – incapacity of doing things
- Perceptions of differences between Pensioners and Seniors (i.e. Seniors Card holders) – you may be 56 and on a pension but unable to access things that Seniors Card holders can access
- Approach local chemists/Drs rooms/health professionals to get information out to the public
- Approach men's organisations – tend to perceive the organised activities as "women's" groups – get them involved earlier
- Matching up people who live in apartments etc who are interested and/or passionate about gardening with seniors who garden they can no longer tend to – Local Council
- Start funding for activities and the after a certain period of time the funding is withdrawn and the activities are left to floundering to survive

### What will we do now? What needs to happen next?

1. Advocate for continued federal & state funding of Seniors' "Healthy Living" groups e.g. chair exercise, tai chi, strength training, balance training, water therapy, walking groups etc – through Local Councils, community Health groups etc
2. Centralised information from government down to community level available to all seniors both on the net and in hard copy
3. Advocate for Gym & Leisure centres to be :
  - More welcoming to seniors
  - Have appropriate programs
  - Be economical enough for people on fixed incomes
  - Accessible pools etc for people with disabilities
4. Approach local chemists/health professionals to help with spreading the word to the local communities about the programs/classes available in their area.