Workshop 4- Volunteerism and Connecting within the Community with Tricia Homrighausen, Volunteer Coordinator (Independence at Home, a SCAN Community Service)

Objectives
In this session, participants will discuss and learn:
- The downfalls of seclusion
- Benefits of community involvement and volunteerism
- What to consider when looking for a volunteer opportunity

Overview:
Studies show that interacting socially within one’s community can combat mental health issues, anxiety, and depression. Volunteering, in particular, can bolster self-confidence while nurturing lasting friendships. Participants will learn the risks associated with seclusion/isolation while leveraging their local community resources to build a better tomorrow.

Agenda:
(15 mins) Homework Review and Discussion:

- Self-Portrait of Health: Your Top 3 Health Goals

(45 mins) Engaging Socially Within Your Community

(30 mins) In Class Self-Reflection Activity:

- Personal Points of Influence

(10 mins) At Home Activity and Reflection Introduction:

- At Home Activity and Reflection:

  #MissionPOSSIBLE
At Home Activity and Reflection: 
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We all have inherent gifts: things that make us feel authentic and at our natural best. Consider the following questions and write down your responses.

1. What can you do that brings great value to others?

2. Think of a time you said to yourself, “I would have done that for free.” What happened that day that made you feel that way?

3. If you could accomplish anything, without fear of failure, what would it be?

4. What would you like to change in the world around you?
GUIDED AUTOBIOGRAPHY

The Story of the Major Branching Points of Your Life

Branching points are the turning points in your life - the events, experiences, or insights that shaped your life and its directions. They may have been big events such as marriage, war, moving to a new city, or retirement. Or they may have been small events that had big outcomes, like reading a book or going on a hike.

What have been the branching points in your life? What events caused the turning points? Which ones put a stamp on your life that you carried forward? Some events are positive in their effects and others negative. Think of your life as a branching tree. New branches form, others may drop off for lack of sun or nourishment. Some flourish and bear fruit, others don't. Or think of your life as a river winding its way to the sea. Where did it begin, widen and narrow, twist and turn, and add branches as it flowed? What caused it to change its course, storms, floods or droughts?

Sensitizing questions: *(The questions are guides to prime or stimulate your memories and your thoughts about your life. The questions are not intended to be answered in a literal manner. Read through them and react to the ones that open windows on your past. Each life is unique and the priming questions don't have the same value to all persons.)*

1. What was the earliest branching point in your life? What happened and why was it important? How old were you at the time?
2. Who influenced your life in a major way? Which people were involved with you at the branching points, e.g., family, friends, teachers, doctors, lawyers and others?
3. Were there any important happenings in your environment, natural or man made crises that changed the direction of your life? Tornadoes and fires destroy homes, floods and automobile accidents leave changed lives behind them, did any affect you?
4. Were there any lucky events in your life that had positive outcomes on the directions it took such as winning a lottery, getting a new job, or falling in love?
5. Were there any bad events that influenced your life that caused it to branch such as divorces, deaths, or illnesses?
6. Did your ethnic, religious, or cultural background or your social or financial statuses have an influence on the branching points of your life? Has your background been an advantage or disadvantage to you?
7. Did your family move their home when you were young and in school that had a big impact on you? Did you ever change schools that had an important impact on your life?
8. Did changing jobs have lasting positive or negative effects on the flow of your life?
9. What branching points were you responsible for in contrast to outside influences?
10. Have there been any branching points in your life about which you changed your views over time? For example, events you were angry about then and contented about now?
11. Do you think of the flow of your life is typical of most people’s lives, or is it unusual? In what ways is it unusual?