

Art program provides hope, healing

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BY [MATT CROSSMAN](#)



The story of a Japanese girl with cancer who desperately wanted to make 1000 paper cranes has helped Sunbury's Donna Page find ways to deal with anxiety.

Earlier this year, Ms Page took part in Sunbury Community Health's Art of Change, a free six-week skills program promoting self-responsibility and expression.

She discovered that tapping into her creative side was a way to short-circuit her illness.

"Before the program, I would struggle to sit down for even 10 minutes at a time, whereas now I can sit down for half an hour or an hour," she said.

"Now, when I have anxiety or I'm feeling a little down, I pull out my paper and make cranes. It's a healthy way to deal with it."

Ms Page said the program included a lot of positive affirmation "showing you how you can change your life for the better".

Hearing about the Hiroshima schoolgirl, whose classmates finished her project after she died, was an inspiration for Ms Page.

"As soon I made one, I was like, that's it, I'm going to do that. And I did it.

"It's been a mission to make life better for myself and my children."

Ms Page encourages anyone dealing with addiction or mental illness to sign up for the next program, which will be held at the Salvation Army Community Hall from October 4 to November 15.

"Just do it," she said. "It changes lives."

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