

Common Thread 2018

- › is a space for people to talk, share ideas and learn about sustainability
- › connects and strengthens what already exists ... passions, solutions and resources
- › promotes wellbeing, enhances resilience and reflects our community aspirations

Program structure

- › Eight events were held this calendar year from March to November (with one event cancelled due to presenter illness)
- › Variety of formats including; presenters and hand-on workshops
- › Each event includes elements to support/encourage people to take action
- › Events are usually free of charge unless a small fee needs to be charged to cover material costs or presenter fees
- › Regular time and day each month: 7pm on the 1st Monday of every month at Coinda Neighbourhood Centre
- › Promoted through a variety of channels including Green Thymes monthly e-newsletter, networks, Messenger, social media and flyers

Outcomes

- › On average 30-45 people attended each session
- › Five out of the eight events were fully booked
- › Variety of topics continue to attract both regular and new participants. 50% of participants are new to Common Thread
- › 307 people subscribe to our Common Thread email list
- › 513 people subscribe to our Green Thymes e-newsletter
- › Participants have rated the events on average a 4.5 out of 5 for enjoyment

- › Participants enjoyed the presenters, networking/discussion opportunities, interesting topics and learning about new things
- › 95% of participants were likely to attend another *Common Thread* session
- › Participants are active in making suggestions to improve the venue and presentations

Testimonials

What people like about Common Thread.....

- › ‘Great ideas for making positive changes at home’
- › ‘The hands-on activities and networking’
- › ‘My questions (were) answered, clear presentation, lots of examples...’
- › ‘Informative and informal’

People are committing to the following actions.....

- › buy more local and seasonal food
- › reduce use of plastic
- › make wicking beds and experiment with vertical gardens
- › getting home solar panels or increasing the size of their solar system
- › think carefully about what to buy at christmas
- › Grow own medicinal herbs and make home remedies including elderberry syrup





Common Thread

› the program for 2018 included a range of topics and formats

March › Sustainability Super Session

- We started the year with a Sustainability Super Session featuring five presenters covering local sustainability initiatives and case studies.
- Topics included; Marino Community Garden; the Climate Ready Communities Program; Solar Panels on Marion Buildings; How Foodbank is reducing food waste; and Building a Strawbale Home

April › Feed Your Belly Not the Bin

- A presentation covering a range of strategies for reducing food waste.
- Louise Mathwin from Healthier Habits introduced a range of strategies for reducing waste in the kitchen including meal planning, minimal waste cooking and smart shopping, freezing, preserving, eating out, food swaps and more.

May › All the Buzz About Bees

- Beekeeping expert Roy Frisby-Smith introduced us to the secret life of bees. He outlined the basics of backyard beekeeping and showed how to use some beekeeping equipment including a flow hive.

June › DIY Beeswax Wraps and Jute Scrubber

- A short presentation followed by a practical hands-on workshop focused on reducing waste and getting ready for Plastic Free July.
- The Marion Living Smart group had a display of plastic free alternatives and there were activity stations where people could make their own beeswax wraps, jute scrubber and natural deodorants.

July

- The workshop planned for July was about growing mushrooms at home. Unfortunately this session had to be cancelled at the last minute due to the presenter being unwell.

August › Water Saving in the Garden: Wicking beds and Vertical Gardens

- Karen Montgomery delivered an engaging and practical session on waterwise home gardening.
- Participants received tips and tricks on how to make wicking beds and get creative with vertical gardens.

September › Medicinal Herbs: Stay Well with Elderberry

- Local herbalist Patrizia Bronzi introduced us to the medical and nutritional properties of herbs.
- Patrizia focused on the Elderberry plant including how to grow, harvest and use this beneficial herb. She provided plant cuttings, recipes and tastings of her homemade elderberry syrup.

October › Demystifying Solar

- Solar expert Finn Peacock guided us through a 7 step process to getting tiny home energy bills using solar. He explained how solar works and how to find reliable solar information.
- Finn spoke about how to find a trustworthy installer, how many panels to get, choosing the right brand and installer, deciding whether to get batteries and how to make the most of your solar system once it's installed.

November › Sustainable Christmas: DIY Christmas Gifts

- This workshop started with a range of ideas for how to be environmentally friendly over the festive season including reducing waste, ethical gifts, and eating and travelling sustainably.
- Nicole and Rob from doterra oils introduced the group to the benefits of essential oils and then there were a range of practical activities where people made their own Christmas gifts including a natural perfume, bath bomb and clay diffuser necklace.