



Healing Every Rose (HER)

Total Life Fitness Reintegration Retreat

March 6-8, 2020

The Rose Haven Center of Healing

By Kaitlyn O'Donnell
&
Robert Greene Sands

Pamlico Roses' second Total Life Fitness (TLF) Retreat took place March 6th through 8th 2020, at Rose Haven Center of Healing. Although a bit chilly, with variable sun, we were able to spend a great deal of the weekend outdoors connecting with nature. The retreat closely followed the structure of the first retreat (article linked below), with a health screening, several sessions on nutrition, anxiety management, and mindfulness, a session on interpersonal competency and two sessions of creative expression with our art therapist and guided evening discussions.



Art making promotes many beneficial behaviors to help those dealing with issues stemming from reintegration, including trauma (article linked below).

https://www.pamlicorose.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/02/Pioneer-Rose-Grows-in-the-Gardens_1219-1.pdf

https://www.pamlicorose.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/02/Opportunities-for-Expression_1219-1.pdf

Art-making created community in the first two retreats, but through their art with the help of Danielle J. Braxton, M.A, ATR-BC , they have also created products that become part of their experience at Rose Haven. The participants also choose a name for their cohort. For this retreat, a totem pole became the canvas for their self and group expression and the slogan Healing Every Rose (HER) was chosen to identify their group. The Totem Pole will now always be a part of the Rose Haven healing gardens.



Our second retreat featured a more seamless daily schedule and introduced two new TLF “faculty”, Yoshi Newman, Ph.D. educational psychology and Certified Nature and Forest Therapy Guide, and Captain Kimberly Elenberg, PhD in nursing, US Public Health Agency and Director of the Department of Defense’s Total Force Fitness. Dr. Newman guided participants and retreat staff on a Guided Forest Therapy walk, emphasizing transcendence and the healing connection with nature. Capt. Elenberg, gave a session on meditation and along with retreat director, Robert Greene Sands, PhD, anthropology, and Pamlico Rose CEO, led evening discussions. Capt. Elenberg shared a great deal her military experience and gave the retreat staff some valuable insight on Total Force Fitness which she directs for the Defense Health Agency, one of the inspirations for Total Life Fitness.

During the discussion following the second day of activity one participant was almost brought to tears sharing “this weekend has been so different, women always seem to be care givers first, it is such a welcome change to be cared for.” This was a feeling

shared by the rest of the group and even the staff, it is healthy to surround yourself with people who make you feel cared for. Captain Elenberg shared “that when traveling on an airplane you are always reminded to put your own air mask on before anyone else’s, in the case of an emergency for women especially mothers it is hard to live that message in day to day life.” Remembering to care for yourself is can be such an important part of healing.

Many of the retreat activities took place at Rose Haven, although with the historic 1892 Haven House completing its rehab this summer, participants and some faculty stayed at the Pamlico House two blocks away from Rose Haven.

One of the highlights of the weekend was the Saturday evening barbeque with members of the local Disabled American Veterans (DAV) Chapter #48. The cookout started outdoors, but with the chilly evening, moved two blocks to the Pamlico House and its grand and ornate dining room.



Dr. Nate Galbreath an Air Force Veteran and Clinical psychologist currently working for the Department of Defense Sexual Assault Prevention and Response Office lead his session on anxiety management via Skype. He was a much loved faculty member during our first retreat and did not let his conference in Hawaii stop him from participating in the second.

Additional faculty and sessions provided opportunity to further explore the benefit of self-transcendence activities (beyond everyday experience). - meditation, yoga, art-making and nature walks - on promoting mindfulness and managing stress.

“Transcendence activities pull the thread of Life Fitness knitting wellness and resilience into mind, body and soul,” said TLF Director Robert Greene Sands. Pamlico Rose is exploring making the retreat a hybrid learning and sharing experience. They have teamed up with Beaufort County Community College to



develop an online 8-week post-retreat session offering the extension of the learning and application of TLF concepts and skills for the retreat participant. In addition, extending the retreat virtually provides a continuation of community building within the retreat cohort as well as with the faculty. We hope to pilot it with some retreat participants from this retreat.

For further information on Pamlico Rose and the Rose Haven Center of Healing Contact: Robert Greene Sands, Pamlico Rose CEO robert@pamlicorose.org or Kaitlyn O'Donnell, Pamlico Rose Community Resource Associate kaitlyn@pamlicorose.org