

Introducing...

# Life, the Universe and Stories

A novel social group program that promotes mental wellbeing and happiness in your **retirement village**.

*Would you like to offer an activity that creates meaning, joy and belonging for your residents?*

**Life, the Universe & Stories groups are a very different kind of social group.**

They are relaxed social get-togethers that centre around the reading, reflection and discussion of great short stories and poetry.

Our facilitators are trained in social bibliotherapy; an evidence-based practice that uses carefully selected literature in a safe group environment to promote connection, reflection, healing and joy.

Our sessions are welcoming and uplifting with proven positive outcomes including:

- Reduced loneliness
- Increased optimism
- Greater sense of purpose
- Improved mental health
- Increased sense of community



Groups are run by **trained and supported volunteers**

Participants contribute just **\$5 per session** to help with volunteer training, ongoing support and materials.

A **free introductory session** is offered so you and your residents can experience the benefits first hand.

**Please contact us to find out more or to book your free introductory session.**

*Christopher Smith*

Founder & CEO  
Shared Reading NSW



📞 0468 346 834

✉️ [chris@sharedreadingsw.com](mailto:chris@sharedreadingsw.com)

🌐 [LifetheUniverseandStories.org.au](http://LifetheUniverseandStories.org.au)

“ —

Shared Reading NSW has been facilitating a relaxed social group that centres around reading, reflection and discussion of great short stories in the Blue Mountains Retirement Village for a couple of years.

*Our residents absolutely love this group and look forward to it every week.*

What is great about the group is that you can sit and listen to the readings and the following discussion or participate in the conversation. No pressure is placed on anyone, and the group is very inclusive. The volunteer facilitator selects and brings along the readings each week, so residents are not pressured to find anything to read. They don't need to read aloud or have to pre-read anything ahead of time.

*The residents connect more in-depth than they do at other social gatherings. They learn so much from one another's stories, perceptions, and understandings generated from the readings.*

*It is these connections that help resident's mental health. It assists those who may suffer from social anxiety to be more relaxed at other Village events.*

As the General Manager of our Village, I encourage other retirement villages to contact Shared Reading NSW, speak with Chris, and get a group started because your residents will benefit from this program.

— ”

*Kylie Wade-Ferrell, General Manager  
Blue Mountains Retirement Village*

May 2024