



BELONGING

Why It's Important and How to Make It Happen

by Karen Charron

Belonging to something bigger than ourselves is a basic human need. It helps us to see the value in life. Whether we belong to a group of only a few people or a large organization, having a connection helps to relieve loneliness and pain, and improves motivation and happiness.

By belonging to a group, we're able to see that all people have troubles, and that can be comforting knowing that we're not alone in our struggles. Communities are a safe place where people can share a passion for something bigger than themselves.

Belonging doesn't just happen, it requires an active approach. It's easy to feel disconnected by focusing on how we're different from others. By focusing instead on finding similarities, we can improve our odds of feeling connected. Finding the common bond with people, while accepting and appreciating the differences, is a great way to build a community.

Say Yes to Opportunities

It's one thing to want to join a group and another thing altogether to join in the activities. A dozen excuses about why not to attend an event may crop up. Put them aside and jump in. Being together creates a bond. Let go and enjoy the experience; be present for all that happens.

Think and Speak Inclusive

We've all been somewhere and heard people that are actively judging others; it's apparent in the words they use. Words can create barriers to community or promote unity. Look for the

strengths each person brings to the group and honor the differences. Honoring and accepting diversity doesn't necessarily mean agreement, just respectful acceptance.

Let Go of Emotional Sensitivity

Feeling overly sensitive in public situations can hinder a feeling of belonging. Focusing on how we might not fit in takes the focus off from enjoying the experience. Let it go and just be present. Secret is, most people are more concerned about what others think about *them*. If we remember that, we can avoid being overly sensitive about ourselves in public situations. With less emotional sensitivity, people are more likely to share their story. Shared stories build commonality of experience and a stronger community bond.

We're fortunate in Hawaii to have many ways to belong. The following are just some examples of groups and organizations that offer opportunities to participate. Anyone looking to join a community of likeminded-individuals can reach out to these groups:

Blue Zones Project Wahiawa

P.O. Box 12229
Honolulu
BlueZonesProjectWahiawa@sharecare.com
hawaii.bluezonesproject.com

Blue Zones Project is a community-wide, well-being improvement initiative to help make healthy choices easier in Hawaii. The Hawaii Medical Service Association has brought the Blue Zones Project to Hawaii to transform our state into an even better place to live, work, and play. One of the precepts of Blue Zones is “belong to live long,” that the people we surround ourselves with, even friends of friends, strongly influence our health. Residents and business owners can join the Blue Zones Project by taking the Blue Zones Pledge.

The Wahiawa Blue Zones Project is ramping up their program to work with schools, worksites, restaurants, grocery stores and faith-based organizations in the Wahiawa area. Check out their calendar of events and get involved in this dynamic community organization.

Girlfriends

808-393-5527
OneExperience.Guru/Girlfriends

Brandi Kiana-Jo had a vision to empower women and strengthen sisterhood, so she launched Girlfriends in 2017. Girlfriends offers monthly events for women entrepreneurs and aspiring leaders that focus on developing meaningful relationships. These events go beyond networking by inspiring creativity and self-reflection, and enhancing personal and professional growth. Women can join one event or attend them all by registering on the website.

Kahumana Farm

86-660 Lualualei Homestead Rd.
Waianae
808-696-2655
information@asi-hawaii.org
Kahumana.org

Sitting on more than 50 acres in the beautiful Lualualei Valley on the sunny west side of O’ahu, Kahumana Farm helps support homeless families, people with disabilities and youth.

They offer volunteer opportunities, learning centers, farmers markets, tours, festivals and a café. They’re committed to assisting vulnerable members of our society through programs that are person-centered, holistic, strength-based, work-focused and community driven.

Kokua Market Co-op

2643 South King Street
Honolulu
808- 941-1922
Marketing@Kokua.Coop
KokuaMarket.com

Kokua Market Co-op focuses on providing fresh, local and organic products. A co-op is a business jointly owned by people with a shared vision and values. Becoming an owner of Kokua Market is an investment in the community’s access to healthy and sustainable food.

Their more than 4,000 owners have a say in what they sell and how they operate. While it is a co-op, anyone can shop at Kokua Market. Owners receive a discount, and can volunteer, vote and participate in the organization. Lifetime membership is a one-time \$160 investment (or a \$10/ month payment plan).



Apply for
Classes Now!

MORE THAN MASSAGE

Hawaii’s School of Massage and Holistic Healing

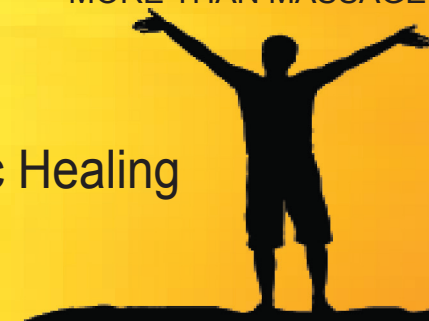
Call: 808-626-5087 Text: 808-988-4440



Healing Massage
Starting at \$35/hr

State DOE License #0917-15133

MAE3065



QUANTUMINSTITUTEINTL.ORG

SLEEP BETTER FEEL BETTER



Michael B Russo, MD

Board Certified Sleep Medicine

HawaiiSleepNeurologist.com

808-294-3332



Terence QL Young, DDS

trained to look for signs of
airway-related issues.

AirwayFocusedDentalCare.com

808-945-9977



**Terence Q.L.
Young, D.D.S.**

Airway-Focused Dental Care

Quantum Institute International for Holistic Health

931 University Ave

Honolulu

808- 988-4440

QuantumInstituteIntl@gmail.com

QuantumInstituteIntl.com

Founder, Karen “Lucky” Thornton has created a community for wellness practitioners to gather for foundational and continuing education opportunities. Quantum offers certification programs for Holistic Massage Therapist, Licensed Massage Therapist, Holistic Health Practitioner and Nutritional Healing Consultant along with regular workshops that are open to the public.

Waimanalo Market Co-op

41-1029 Kalanianaʻole Hwy

Waimanalo

808-690-7607

info@waimanalomarket.com

WaimanaloMarket.com

Waimanalo Market Co-op is a community-operated, non-profit market that supports local farmers, artists, cooks, and crafters. Individuals or groups that are interested in creating a more sustainable and healthier Hawaiʻi can also volunteer their time, services, and/or talents.

Waimea Valley

59-864 Kamehameha Hwy

Haleiwa

808-638-7766

Volunteer@WaimeaValley.net

WaimeaValley.net

Located in the heart of the North Shore, the mission of Waimea Valley is to preserve and perpetuate the human, cultural and natural resources of the Valley through education and stewardship. They actively participate in the local community through farmers markets, and cultural and public events on a regular basis. Anyone wishing to volunteer can sign up on their website to offer their time and talents for hospitality, cultural, beautification, and preservation efforts in the sacred Waimea Valley.

Without a sense of
caring,
there can be no sense
of
community.

~Anthony J. D'Angelo

YMCA

808-531-3558

info@ymcahonolulu.org

YMCAHonolulu.org

The YMCA is dedicated to youth development, healthy living and social responsibility. The YMCA of Honolulu is one of the largest non-profit organizations in the state. Their programs and services are open to children, teens, women and men of all ages, faiths and backgrounds. In all of their programs, they promote their core values of caring, honesty, respect and responsibility. As an island-wide member, families can enjoy unlimited access to a wide range of programs, classes and amenities at all YMCA branches, including Central, Kaimuki-Waiialae, Kalihi, Leeward, Mililani, Nuuanu and Windward.

Whether joining one of these communities or another, get involved with a group of people and share ideas. It really makes a difference.

Karen Charron is a freelance writer living on Oahu and a frequent contributor to Natural Awakenings Hawai'i.



If you want to go fast, go alone.
If you want to go far,
go together.
~unknown

How The Health Are You?!

Tune In Saturday Mornings

9:00 am -11:00 am



Host David Snow

For news of
Medicine
Nutrition
Fitness &
Wellness

DoctorHealth Hawaii's #1 Health Talk Show • est. 1990
NEWS TALK AM 690 KHNR
HAWAII'S INTELLIGENT TALK

Radio re-broadcast 9:00-11:00 pm
www.doctorhealthradio.com

PHILIP STEIN

THE SLEEP BRACELET

Natural Frequency
Technology[®] Inside

Wearers have experienced:

- Falling asleep faster
- Increased quality sleep
- Waking up more refreshed

Recommended by



If you choose to return your Philip Stein goods, please do so within 30 days of receipt in perfect condition and in the original packaging.