



WINTER 2023

# FEP NEWSLETTER

Latest News From Our FEP Family



## Meet Manuel

FEP Men's Group participant, Manuel, shares his journey getting to where he is today, and his future hopes for his family.



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# Manuel Alonso Shares His Journey

FEP GENERATION 2019 MENS GROUP MEMBER

In 2020, Manuel decided to join the foundation after striking up a conversation with an FEP member while waiting at the bus stop. Manuel was **intrigued by FEP** Member, Isabel, sharing her experiences participating at the Foundation. Manuel's interest in learning and growing led him to **find out more** about the Foundation for himself. It was then he committed to his personal growth through the **Men's Group Therapeutic Program**.

Over the years we have had the gift of getting to know Manuel, and witness his **growth** and **deepened self belief**. He shared with us his journey to get to this place in his life.

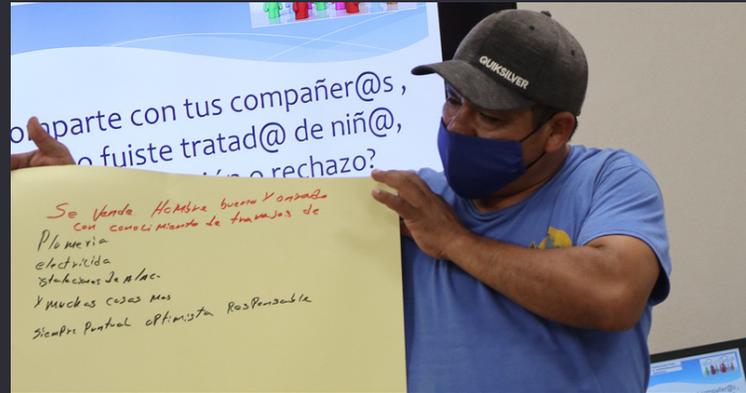
Manuel was raised by his grandparents. "I had a **humble upbringing**, but always had food and life's necessities". Manuel had never met his father, and wasn't sure what happened between him and his mother. Until 8 years of age, his mother lived with him with his grandparents. It was at that point his mother met a new partner, and began her life with him and the children they had together. Though Manuel stayed living with his grandparents his entire childhood, he still maintains a relationship with his step siblings.

At 17 years old, Manuel lost his grandfather, then his mother and finally his grandmother. With **only elementary schooling**, at 18 Manuel joined the **Army**. With a desire to join the Navy, he was required to complete middle school. He did so while with the Army, and from there spent 4 years at the Navy. It was with the Navy Manuel fostered his **passion for the trades**, and began taking external training to grow his skillsets.

After 4 years in the Navy, they wanted to move Manuel to Manzanillo. This was at the same time he met his now wife of 19 years, Elsa. Manuel made the decision to leave the Navy in order to stay in Puerto Vallarta to pursue a relationship with his now wife.

For the past 18 years Manuel has put his trades skills to use working in maintenance at a Plaza. "No two days are the same, I enjoy doing different things all the time like electrical, plumbing, mechanical and carpentry, as well as **continuing to learn** as new situations come up."

During Manuel's nearly 3 years at FEP, he has really liked the relationship he has built with the other men, and learning from their experiences. "It gives us an **opportunity to release our burdens** & challenges. We get to share in a safe environment, and learn that **we all have similar challenges** and **learn from each other**." "Every block (topic in FEP group therapeutic curriculum) will leave you with some **skills** in your brain you can use in all aspects of life. Those skills are **transferable in every aspect of our lives**; work, family, friendships."



Manuel describes his **biggest changes** he sees in himself "Definitely my **communication skills**. I was very reserved. I am now more social, and approachable which has led to more positive interactions. Those interactions and relationships have brought great value to my life." He also share those communication skills he has developed has given him the ability to communicate more, and better with his wife.

"Its amazing, when you are **more open to share**, others become more open to share with you. This really creates **better relationships**."

As for the advice he would give to the new generation of men starting at FEP "**Be consistent, be punctual**. If you miss a session, you could miss something that could make a profound change in your life. The consistency will help you **create good habits**."

What does the future hold for Manuel and his family? His wife Elsa has joined the new generation of women, Generation 2022. His children continue to access programming at the foundation, with his oldest currently in Culinary school. He **hopes** to be successful, to **have a good life** and build a place to retire with his wife on their land in the southern part of Mexico. He appreciates the Foundation, the **support**, and the **learning he has been able to take away** in order to make these **goals a reality**.





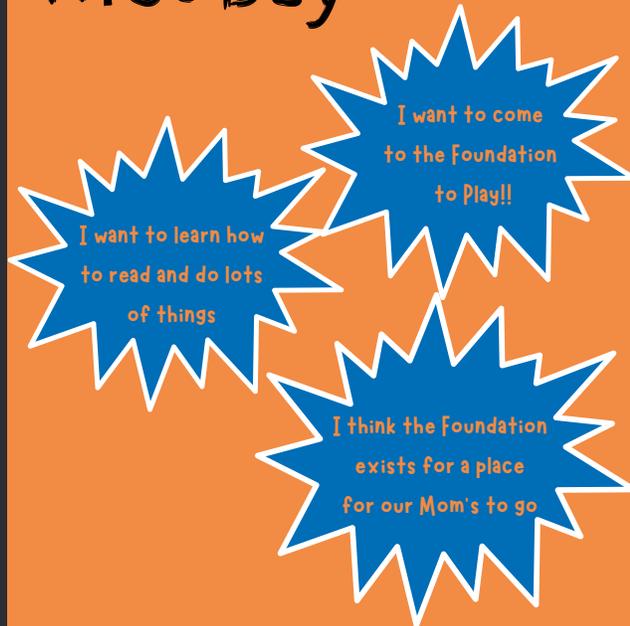
## FEP Little Ones Group - 6 & 7 Year Olds

When you want honest feedback, you ask a group of 6 & 7 year olds! We were so excited to have include our youngest group of children into a structured group program this September. After an interview process to understand the children's needs, ensure age appropriate programming was created based on these needs, we invited a 6 & 7 year olds of mixed generation to join programming. They meet weekly to learn through play about values and habits. This will provide them a basis to deepen their readiness for the Children's Group Program at 8 years old.

We asked them some questions on their first day, and followed up a few weeks later to see how they were doing. This is what they had to share with us!



### First Day



### Follow Up

#### ☀️ Favourite reasons to come every week

- Learn new Things
- Draw, Colour & Play
- Tranquility, it feels like a hotel
- Air Conditioning

#### ☀️ New things you have learned

- Be responsible
- Take care of your pets
- Many things

#### ☀️ Now why do you think the Foundation exists

- By God, because everything exists because of Him
- To help
- To study and learn new things
- To play





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# CURRENT & UPCOMING ACTIVITIES

1) After a long hiatus due to the pandemic, we are thrilled to welcome a new generation of members to the foundation. We have both a Men's and Women's group as part of the FEP family participating in the weekly group Personal Empowerment program.

2) In December we had the honor of celebrating the graduation of Generation 2019 Women. 10 women made the commitment to themselves and successfully completed the 3 year Personal Empowerment Program, along with other workshops and initiatives at FEP. We are so proud of their dedication, growth and achievements.

3) FEP is proud to graduate our second group of adolescents. Generation 2016 youth completed the children and adolescent curriculums. These amazing young people have such bright futures with tools that will help them thrive through the next phases of life.

4) Although children are back in class full time as of 2022, we continue to provide computer and homework support as they bridge the gap in their learning development due to the 2 year suspension of in class learning. Karina continues to provide an environment the children look forward to coming to learn in, and are succeeding in their educational goals.



**TO LEARN MORE ABOUT FEP AND HOW YOU CAN GET ENGAGED**



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