**BOLD - COASTAL CARING CLOWNS**

**TRANSCRIPT**

Robyn - The Clowns is a group. They're all shapes and sizes and ethnicity, and some are outgoing and some are more shy, but because we're caring clowns we need all of those components. And most of all, you need to have a big heart. My name's Robyn Redknap and I'm the president of Coastal Caring Clowns. I've been part of the clown group for five years now and it's been, yeah, one of the great challenges and also privileges of my life. The clowns have been operating for 20 years on the Sunshine Coast and we go to the nursing homes, hospitals, from the children's ward through to surgery, emergency. In the last financial year we've done over 300 individual clowning performances.

George ‘Rocco’ - Toss it, what's it? Oh, what is it?

Alan ‘Aldo’ - You go first.

George ‘Rocco’- It's a serious business to be funny. It's a serious business to be a clown. And as soon as I started working I found humour is the way to go because with people with dementia, people with stroke or cannot, how you communicate, and I found humour is the best state.

Alan ‘Aldo’ - We were both activities officers in aged care facilities. And someone said, "Oh, look, there's a clown workshop happening. You should go along because you will be able to get lots of clowns to come and entertain us." So I went along and did the workshop and ended up, you know, still here after 20 years.

Diane - My husband is a person who loves to give back in life and so he joined the Coastal Caring Clowns who do the most amazing work. They go to hospitals and cheer up the young children, people who are feeling unwell, they get a smile on their face. You know, it's wonderful because age is only a number and we're all just growing up in our life.

George ‘Rocco’ - Let's go and see our treasure room where the costumes are held. Look at this, that's the first one. It's 20 years old, would you believe? Fancy ties, we love different ties. The more fancier the better. My little bag. We have high ropes, we have noses, juggling. I juggle three balls, have a look, three balls. I have a light beer, they like that one.

Alan ‘Aldo’ - Together we're about 247, I think, at the last count, 247. But you split that down the middle, well, I'm 70 and ...

George ‘Rocco’ - I'm 73.

Alan ‘Aldo’ - We only grow old because we allow our mental attitude to deteriorate. I mean, you know, if you keep yourself busy, you don't age.

Robyn - Some people decide as they get older they just want to shut themselves away, which is sad. But we are the opposite. We think by being silly and living in the present and enjoying every day, that it increases our mindfulness, it increases the endorphins, it increases your love of living and you can pass that on to others.

George ‘Rocco’ - Well, it's an enormous enjoyment. It's absolutely, as I say, as soon this makeup goes on it liberates, you become another person. You know, I'm not George, I'm Rocco.

Robyn - You know, you can't help but laugh at yourself. There's no way when I retired five years ago that I would ever have considered being a clown, but now I'm so proud of it. And it's given me so many more opportunities to make people happy than I ever would have thought of in academic life or in managerial positions.

George ‘Rocco’ - Don't worry about boundaries and don't worry to make a mistake. Don't worry about this. It hurts in the moment, but a wise man say it once then later I learned it, that's my advice too. I think my mistakes I made, I learned the most of them.

Alan ‘Aldo’ - Be adventurous, be bold, you know, climb the mountain. Our life is lived in the now, it's not lived in the future and it's not lived in the past either. The past gives us experience, the future gives us hope.

Robyn - You know, in some of the things we've done, the wigs have fallen off or, you know, clowns, you know, forgot to put in their teeth that day. All of those, all these things have happened, but you just clown on. And probably the advice I'd give is do something where you can make people happy because you become so much more satisfied and you get the strength of the happiness back a hundred fold.