

# ELDER WISDOM ACADEMY

ancient practice - new understanding

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#### Conversation Circle

December 14 @ 4:00 PM  
JCC Conference Room

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Director of OAS and  
Support, JFS of Akron  
Jewish Family Services  
of Akron

## Diana Kunze

“Passing the traditions of  
my Austrian heritage to  
the next generation.”

### Conversation Circle

December 14 @ 4:00 PM  
JCC Conference Room  
Lower Level  
750 White Pond Dr.  
Akron, OH 44320



### Welcome to EWA

We would like to welcome you to the Elder Wisdom Academy. We are looking forward to connecting with you, growing relationships, and learning from ancient ways while building new understandings of elderhood.

Cultural and family traditions are the essence of our being, it instills in us a sense of belonging rooted in certain rituals and rights of passage that defines us as member of a sheltering and caring family and community. Through stories, food, music, art, poetry, and other means, I celebrate my connection to the souls of my ancestors and make an effort to pass it on to future generations as a valuable gift to cherish as an integral part of themselves.

Drive around to the JCC back entrance: (right side of the building)

- Enter the building through the back entrance (glass doors) JCC Shaw and Jewish Family Services over the door.
- Go down the flight of stairs (or you can take the elevator)
- Immediately to your left, at the bottom of the stairs, is the door that will lead to the conference room (look for the EWA sign)
- – that door is locked, but someone will be there to let you in.





## Meet Buffy Ramos L.S.W.

Director of OAS and Support, JFS of Akron  
Jewish Family Services of Akron

Tikkun Olam:  
Repairing the World

Buffy Ramos has been a community activist, as well as a professional practitioner in the field of social welfare, for over 25 years. As a young teenager, she had many meaningful experiences of service that shaped her worldview. These encounters deeply impacted her interest in repairing societal systems as well as inter-personal human relationships. At 14 years old, she accompanied her local church's elder group to the poverty-stricken communities in the Appalachian countryside of Kentucky. She learned to build relationships with others to better understand their strengths and challenges; she also worked with the skilled elders to re-build the structure of the homes that were in poor repair. When she was 16, she traveled to the Dominican Republic to help lay a foundation for a new elementary school located in a small village outside of Santo Domingo. She worked side by side the local Dominican families and elders, paving a way for youngsters to learn in a clean, safe environment. At 19, she had the opportunity to learn about the systematic challenges that lead to homelessness, as she traveled to New York City and lived among the local homeless community for a time. She considers herself very fortunate to have had these extraordinary opportunities, which, at a very young age, planted seeds within her that would eventually grow into a flourishing career of service as a licensed social worker.

Buffy is both humbled and honored to be a member of the Elder Wisdom Academy. She has always held dear the older adults in her life, including grandparents, great-grandparents, elders in her faith community, and neighbors. Because she has lived so connected to elders since she was a young child, she knows very personally the richness and fullness of life that is available to us when we build and maintain strong connections to those who have gone before us. She also believes that understanding one's own story in an expansive context of the broader world is essential to living a life of clarity and truth today. She looks forward to gaining a deeper understanding of elderhood through participating in EWA.

Currently, Buffy is a licensed social worker and is the Director of Older Adult Services at Jewish Family Service of Akron, a division of Jewish Family Service Association of Cleveland. She is in her 8th year at JFS Akron; from 2002 – 2015, she worked professionally in the area of child welfare. In her role today at JFS, she is passionate about building a community which empowers older adults to thrive! She works to secure resources for older adults to remain independent, age with dignity, and contribute to their communities in meaningful ways, far into their later years. She also develops programs that create inter-generational, inter-cultural spaces for people of all ages to connect, grow, and share life together.

A lifelong learner, Buffy is excited to be a student at the Elder Wisdom Academy. She also desires to be a conduit through which friends of JFS Akron can access the academy. She looks forward to increasing her connections to the Northern Cheyanne people, which she hopes will foster personal, spiritual, cultural, and professional growth. As an aspiring elder, she is eager to listen, learn, and dream through participating in EWA.

**A simple question you  
can ask yourself that  
often changes behavior:  
Is what I'm about to do a  
step toward or away  
from what's important?  
unknown**



Watch Dr. Torem's presentation  
<https://thenucleus3.org/events-resources-22-23/>