



Wellness and Recovery Newsletter

Volume 4 Issue 1 June 2009



Community
Resource
Connections

of Toronto

Welcome to the Wellness and Recovery Newsletter

Hope everyone is enjoying the summer weather.

Recently we saw an interesting development on the wellness/quality of life scene here in Canada- namely, the release of the first report of the Institute of Wellbeing.

The Institute of Wellbeing has the potential to make people more aware of what does, and does not, contribute to their wellness and well-being. Its primary product will be a Canadian Index of Wellbeing (CIW)- a number which will enable the tracking of the wellbeing of Canadians somewhat like the GDP tracks the health of the Canadian economy. It is hoped that it will go on to be a positive influence on shaping public policy that influences well-being. At the Institute's web site www.ciw.ca you can download their first report and join their mailing list, among other things. Their first report summarizes research findings in the three areas of Living Standards, Healthy Populations and Community Vitality. Roy Romanow is the founding chair of the Institute of Wellbeing.

In the Wellness and Recovery Newsletter this issue we have a helpful article, prepared by CMHA National in partnership with Desjardin Financial Security, which addresses stress and mental health issues caused by finances. This seemed particularly relevant in the midst of the recession, so I deferred putting in the Newsletter this issue several articles which I had written, in favour of the ones you currently see.

The other major piece in this edition of the Newsletter is the schedule of events to be held during Mad Pride Week in Toronto, July 13 – 19, 2009. For more information about Mad Pride Week, including events in other cities and countries both in this year and in past years, go to www.mindfreedom.org. The Consumer/Survivor Information Resource Centre of Toronto is one of the partners in this year's Mad Pride Week celebrations in Toronto.

- G. Dewar

Invest in Yourself

In surveys conducted by Desjardin Financial Security in recent years, Canadians have consistently said that their finances are the top cause of stress. You may be feeling the stress more than ever these days with the current economic climate. That's why the theme for this year's Mental Health Week (May 4 – 10) was "Now more than ever...Invest in yourself". Here are some practical suggestions on how to do that:

Invest in your family.

Pay attention to the mental health of those closest to you. Share a warm meal and some kind words. Listen to each other. Be honest and open with each other about the stress in your life. If you have children, discuss finances with them. Don't scare them, but help them understand the household budget and how you plan to deal with the challenges.

Invest in your friends.

Reach out to your friends. In times of economic stress, sharing challenges with friends is healthy. They might have insights into your challenges. You might have insights into theirs. And, remember to laugh. Friendships are built on laughter.

Invest in your community.

When you join or volunteer with community groups, clubs and organizations you feel a part of something bigger. You feel connected to a place and to a network of people. It's a good way to build personal and collective resilience in difficult times.

Invest in your workplace.

While the workplace can be a source of stress it can also provide you with positive networks, good friends and professional contacts. Take the lead to open lines of communication. Build supportive relationships with all people in your workplace, including employees, employers and even clients.

Invest in yourself

Address the big things that are causing you stress. Sometimes a professional perspective can help you turn things around.

- **Are your finances the source of your stress?**

Seek the help of a financial planner or debt counselor.

- **Feeling vulnerable in your job?**

Speak to a career counselor and make a career plan.

- **Are your relationships with loved ones strained?**

Speak to a counselor to work it through.

- **Do you fear that your stress is turning into depression?**

Meet immediately with a mental health specialist.

Learn to manage stress.

One of the most effective ways to reduce stress is to take control of the situation. However, if you are really feeling overwhelmed, get help. Don't wait for your stress to become a crisis. There are many resources and professionals to help you manage your stress.

Take time for yourself

- Turn off your computers, cell phones and other distractions.
- Read a book, listen to music, play a game, go for a walk, meditate, write in your

- diary, or take up a relaxing hobby
- Make use of free resources in your community, like parks, libraries, swimming pools and community centres.
 - Host a potluck dinner so you can enjoy company without a huge cost.
 - Visit with a friend or family, just to talk and laugh.
 - Eat healthy meals and snacks.
 - Get fresh air and exercise everyday -- even just a little bit will do a lot of good.

CMHA National Office, in partnership with Desjardins Financial Security

Come one! Come all!
MAD PRIDE WEEK

When: July 13 to July 19 2009

Where: City of Toronto

A week long festival of arts, education and heritage activities which recognize psychiatric survivors, consumers, mad folks and others for the purpose of community development, rights awareness and celebration. All events are free.

Mad Pride Week community partners are; Accent on Ability through A-Way Couriers, C/S Info, The Consumer/Survivor Information Resource Centre of Toronto, The Gerstein Centre, Houselink Community Homes, PARC, Parkdale Activity Recreation Centre, PCIC, Parkdale Community Information Centre, PCLS, Parkdale Community Legal Services, Soundtimes Support Services, The Raging Spoon, Out Of This World Café, and The Friendly Spike Theatre Band

With support from The Toronto Arts Council Community Arts Program and Ministry of Heritage through BCAH Building Culture through Arts and Heritage

Monday July 13th 2009

CAMH

(Centre for Addiction and Mental Health)

1001 Queen Street West (meet on front patio, Ossington entrance)

**6PM – 8:30PM: The Patient Built Wall Tour,
guided by Geoffrey Reaume.**

The purpose of this tour is to remember the contributions of the men and women who lived, worked, and died in the Toronto Hospital for the Insane. This is represented by the nineteenth century patient built boundary walls, which stand as enduring testament to their abilities and a monument to their

memory. We hold up this past symbol of exclusion to challenge discrimination that is experienced today by people who have a psychiatric history

Geoffrey Reaume, Psychiatric Survivor Archives Toronto.

8:30PM-9PM: Memorial

Attendees are invited to a post wall tour memorial which will pay tribute to those who went before us. Organizers ask guests to bring words that lend meaning to the moment. Candles will be lit.

Tuesday July 14th – Friday July 17th

**METRO HALL, ROTUNDA
55 John Street (King and John Streets)**

A gallery of original art, crafts, displays and information and much more, from 11am to 5pm each day.

Demonstrators include artists from Houselink Community Homes, Soundtimes Support Services, and the PARC Art Group and others, along with the postings of individual artists Naomi Laufer, Sarah Griffin. Paul Draper and others and information from A-Way Couriers, IDPWD, Metro Tenants Association, Simply People, Social Phobias Support Group of Toronto, Street Health, Street to Trail and more!.

Tuesday July 14th

World Mad Pride Day

11AM – 12NOON: Opening Ceremony

Join the Mad Pride organizers for:

***The Reading of the Mad Pride Week Proclamation**

***With MC Peggy Gail Dehal Ramson PCLS and special guests;**

**The Honourable David C. Onley, Lieutenant Governor of Ontario Ontario
Human Rights Chief Commission Barbara Hall**

MPP, Cheri Di Novo

Presentations from:

Voices from the Street, is comprised of individuals who have had direct experience with homelessness, poverty, and/or mental health issues. The organization works to put a human face to homelessness and involves people with direct experience as leaders in a public education process.

Caroline Kwok, reading from her book *Free to Fly; A Story of Manic Depression* (Inclusion Press, 2006) is a moving, hopeful story that works on two distinct levels.

First, it is the story of the author's experience as a Chinese-born Canadian, dealing with multiple issues faced by new immigrants. More gripping though, is her harrowing account of her life with bipolar-despairing, coping and finally providing inspiration to others" BP Canada

Naomi Laufer, a published poet, artist and teacher who will read two of her poems

A song lead by Frank Hall. Heinz Klein and The Friendly Spike Theatre Band

12NOON – 1PM - LUNCH – light refreshments generously provided by Out of This World Café and The Raging Spoon

***RSVP <madpridetoronto.yahoo.ca>**

IMPROVISE!

1PM – 2PM – Presentation; *Hugging Our History: Why Psychiatric Survivors need to 'own' our Mad past.*

By Geoffrey Reaume

2PM – 2PM – Presentation: *Living Archive Project*

By PARC Living Archive Collective

Presentation includes a documentary film and live presentation

Time spent on Q. and A.

Wednesday July 15th

Know Your Rights Day

11AM – 12 NOON Presentation: Dream Team –

The Dream Team is a group of consumer survivors who advocate for more safe, secure and affordable supportive housing for people living with mental health and addiction issues. They do this by telling their personal stories about the life-altering benefits of supportive housing, by tackling discrimination and stigma, and by working to eliminate barriers to the creation of more supportive housing through public education, research and advocacy.

Over the last year the Dream Team has worked with various groups and communities across Ontario to explore the issue of discriminatory zoning. In this presentation members of the Dream Team will illustrate the concept of discriminatory zoning and the impact on people with mental health and addiction issues.

12NOON – 12:15: Presentation: PARC Ambassadors Program

PARC Ambassadors program is a community consultation by the Parkdale Activity Recreation Centre with the Parkdale Community. The purpose and the goal of the program is to engage, inform and consult with residents and stakeholders in the community in relation to our building development Edmond Place. The program consists of 9 Ambassadors whom are PARC Members receiving remuneration for the work they do. It is peer and member driven, incorporating and building on the principles and values of the recovery model and PARC's Mission –PARC – A Place Where People Rebuild Their Lives. When the Parkdale Activity Recreation Centre acquired the building from the City of Toronto to develop affordable, social housing for marginalized persons in our community there was extreme opposition to PARC by residents and stakeholders in Parkdale. Since the PARC Ambassadors Program inception in September 2007 we have progressed from a state of NIMBY (Not In My Back Yard) to one of YIMBY (Yes In My Back Yard). The PARC Ambassadors Program has been successful with their community consultation and public relations in Parkdale. It has proven that marginalized people do have a commitment to their community, have all the necessary attributes and capabilities to be productive, contribute to their neighbourhood and society, and live a healthy, meaningful and fulfilling life.

PARC Ambassadors will discuss their work at this presentation

12:15 NOON – 1PM – Lunch –light refreshments generously provided by Out of this World Café and The Raging Spoon

***RSVP: madpridetoronto@yahoo.ca**

IMPROVISE

1PM – 2PM – Presentation – Legal Jeopardy by Parkdale Community Legal Services (PCLS)

2PM -3 PM- – David Carmichael

QUESTIONS, QUESTIONS, QUESTIONS

When it comes to treating your own mental illnesses, we often assume that doctors and other mental heal professionals always know what’s best. During this presentation, David will raise a few issues about scientific drug research and help you understand, based on his own experience recovering from major depression, how important it is for people suffering from mental illnesses to take responsibility for their own recovery and rehabilitation by asking their doctors and mental health workers questions, questions and more questions, and by becoming regularly physically active.

David holds a masters degree in physical education and is the former director of national projects at ParticipACTION. After experiencing his first major depression in 2003 at the age of 45 and a relapse in 2004, he tragically learned the importance of good mental health and does not assume that doctors always know what’s best.

(opportunity will be given for the audience to ask questions)

3PM – 4PM Street Nurse Beth Pelton

Beth Pelton is a registered nurse currently working with Street Health Community Nursing. Most of her nursing work has been in the community, and with people living with cancer. Her experiences have included working in medical and geriatric and psychiatric nursing. In practicing from a Harm Reduction philosophy she is learning deeper meanings about Client-Directed Care and Client-Centered Care.

Thursday July 16th

Madly Theatrical

11AM -12 NOON Presentation; Mind Storm, by Mortimer Christie

Mind Storm is a play about Michael, a person with mental health issues around schizophrenia. Michael spends a 24-hour period of time, each month, in a local park experiencing audio and visual hallucinations.

Featuring Henrik Kartna

12 NOON – 12:45 NOON – Presentation; films by Helen Posno

IMPEDIMENTA – which deals with the homelessness of mankind in the universe

MY SILENT LIVES – which deals with both the lightness and the darkness of the human spirit.

12:45 NOON – 1:30PM Lunch – Light refreshments generously provided by Out of the World Café and The Raging Spoon.

RSVP; madpridetoronto@yahoo.ca

IMPROVISE!

1:30PM – 2:30PM – Play by The Friendly Spike Theatre Band

Moving To My Own Beat

A diverse group of students attend a lecture they won't ever forget.

2:30PM – 2:45PM Presentation: Clay and Paper Theatre

2:45PM – 4PM: Open Stage

Friday July 17th

1PM -2PM: Panel discussion, topic tba; with Erick Fabris, Onar Usar, Joel Zablosky and others.

2PM – 2:45PM: Essya Nabbali

“Mad Pride toward a democratic utopia”

Saturday July 18th

**CAMH
(centre for addiction and mental health)
1001 Queen Street West, Toronto**

The Third Annual Bed Push Parade Day

12NOON to 1PM - Mad Tea Party

Presented by the Empowerment Council and CAMH Peer Staff

**1PM – 2:30PM Bed Push Pride Parade, Led by PARC Drummers
And featuring Crazy Talk: Share your rant, dance, emotion, expression,
comment, in support of Mad Pride. This “speakers corner” style video will be
shared on Youtube.com. Enacted by the Mad People’s Video Project**

**This unique pride procession of individuals, agencies and organizations.
pushes a gurney dressed like a bed with sheets that shout words that reclaim
what was once lost; ‘Hope’, ‘Education’, ‘Friends’, and
more. The event is in celebration of ourselves and serves to strengthen our
community.**

***1PM – Gather at CAMH front Patio for Special guests, Mad Pride Honours,
and Bobbi Nahwegahbow Memorial Awards will be presented to outstanding
Artist/Activists DD Spideria and Heinz Klein**

***1:30PM – Push off**

***2:00PM – Rest station**

***2:30PM – arrive at PARC**

2:30PM -5:00PM– Party!, Hosted by PARC

How to Subscribe to the Wellness and Recovery Newsletter

The Wellness and Recovery Newsletter is available by Canada Post and by email. To subscribe, contact the C/S Info Centre by phone at 416 595-2882 or by email at csinfo@camh.net. The Newsletter is published quarterly ie. Four times a year. Subscriptions are free.

This Newsletter is a joint effort by the Consumer/Survivor Information Resource Centre of Toronto and the Health Promotion Program of Community Resource Connections of Toronto (CRCT). The C/S Info Centre has for many years published its Bulletin which twice a month

brings information of interest to consumers and stakeholders in the mental health system. CRCT works to encourage wellness and recovery of consumers through its Health Promotion Program, Community Support Program, Hostel Outreach Program, COPE Program, and Mental Health Court Support Program. Visit CRCT's web site at www.crct.org for information about its programs as well as current information about mental health-related resources, news and events.

Current and past issues of the Wellness and Recovery Newsletter, as well as a Cumulative Table of Contents, are available on CRCT's web site: www.crct.org. Just enter 'Wellness and Recovery Newsletter' (without the quotes) in the site-wide search box at the top of any page on CRCT's web site. Feel free to photocopy, post and otherwise distribute copies of the Wellness and Recovery Newsletter. Usually it is alright to further reproduce individual articles from the newsletter for nonprofit purposes, but please be sure to include the acknowledgement for the original source of the article.

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