

The Centre's Alumni ... JUST PART OF THE CENTRE'S GREAT CAPACITY



First Annual CCC Alumni gathering, Caffé Fantastico, Sept. 30, 2015

On September 30th almost 100 Citizens' Counselling Centre training program graduates gathered for the very first time, as Alumni.

Over the past 46 years the Centre has trained more than 700 caring people to become skilled volunteer counsellors. Many have said that the training program was life-altering. Many have followed their new paths to great places.

In coming issues of Friends of the Centre, we'll feature our Alumni, as well as our amazing practicum students and professionals that volunteer to create our team of volunteer counsellors. In this issue we'd like to introduce to you Centre Alumni, Selinde Krayenhoff.

Island Parent (it was just my husband Jim and I in those early days!) was one of the initial tenants at 941 Kings Rd. in the early 90's. For years I encountered clients and counsellors coming into the building. I became increasingly curious and impressed with my interactions with both. In 2002, when I felt our sons were old enough for me to take the time to train as a CCC counsellor, I applied. I thought it would be a very interesting and powerful way to give back to the community while developing my own skills. The whole experience, the training, the years of individual and then group counselling, the supervision

and then employment in the front office all contributed to a growing sense of confidence. So I headed back to university and graduated with my BA in Liberal Studies as valedictorian for my class from Vancouver Island University (Nanaimo) at age 54.

"It is one of the best examples of community service I've come across as a volunteer, a lay counsellor and as an employee."

Since 2001, I was busy building my business "Authentic Communication" teaching Nonviolent Communication to parents, initially, and then to any/everyone who was interested. Everything I was doing dovetailed beautifully and allowed me to passionately and constructively express my belief and commitment to opening to the abundance of life for all.

At present, I have limited the amount of NVC work I do outside of school so my only involvement currently is a project I'm doing within my church on the Island.

I will be 60, maybe 61 when I graduate with my Masters, and I feel excitement about what lies ahead of me. I look back at my life in amaze-

ment – at all the interesting things I've done and that caught my attention. And now my experiences and skills have come together in this completely new way. Wow.

I also continue to financially support GVCCC because it is one of the best examples of community service I've come across as a seasoned volunteer, a lay counsellor and as an employee. This is in part due to the amazing model of service, the incredible people who come forth to volunteer, and the clients who are courageous enough to embrace change... but mostly, I am sure, it's due to the phenomenal direction, vision and commitment of our fearless leader, Brenda Wilson.

Selinde Krayenhoff is a community worker, writer, co-founder/publisher of Island Parent Magazine, and an ordained deacon in the Anglican Church. She is finishing the 3rd year of her Masters of Divinity at Vancouver School of Theology at UBC. Selinde graduated from the Centre's Training Program in 2002.

We will build capacity through state of the heart counselling.

Friends of the Centre is published twice per year and is distributed throughout the Citizens' Counselling Centre Community.

Citizens
COUNSELLING
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Digging Deep for Courage and Clarity

Story by Laura Hutcheson

While people are often moved by stories of despair turned to hope that our clients can offer, we at Citizens' are reluctant to ask our clients to reveal their very personal journeys for the sake of the Centre telling our story. We do however understand that the best way for the community to understand the value of the work that we do here is through the client's experiences.

For this issue we have asked one of our Centre-trained volunteer counsellors to tell her experience of one of her client's journeys, relaying the challenges that her client brought to the sessions and how they worked through them. The name of the client has been changed to protect her identity.

My name is Laura. I have been a volunteer counsellor at the Centre for two years. I took my training in 2013 and am now paying back what feels like a small token for the rich transformation that I experienced in the Centre's ten-month training program.

Bonny was assigned to me earlier this year. She is in her 60s. Bonny has suffered through bouts of depression on and off as long as she can remember, but it was a recent workplace incident that touched on some very raw spots from the past and moved Bonny to seek help.

Like so many of our clients, Bonny presents herself as a competent, accomplished person, showing no signs of the turmoil or insecurity that lie within. It was only when Bonny and I settled in and she got comfortable with me that she was able to share her stories of growing up with an



Laura Hutcheson, Volunteer Counsellor

"She was able to get her big feelings out in the open, and in doing so, they lost their power."

abusive mother, and an absent father and the wounds that were created, and the scars that remain.

Bonny spoke of horrific verbal abuse, and the effect that that has had on her entire life. She spoke of very low self-esteem, of her inability to form functional intimate relationships and her challenges staying present without ruminating about the past, and worrying about the future.

Intellectually Bonny knew she was accomplishing what she wanted in life, but she would too often focus on the failures, living with dark thoughts of self-loathing. Only her closest friends were aware of her suffering. And while Bonny found great comfort in her ability to give her children the love and attention she herself had not received, she was now having difficulty navigating these changing relationships, as her children are now adults and new boundaries needed to be set.

Bonny and I worked together to sort through these big feelings. She was able to get them out in the open, and in doing so they lost much of their power. I suggested ways to reframe the sadness and pain she had been living with since childhood and offered new strategies to counteract her negative feelings when they resurfaced. Bonny learned to recognize her strengths and honour her great resilience. We examined old coping strategies and she was able to let go of the ones that were no longer serving her. She found she could now clarify her boundaries with her children and work colleagues. Bonny was able to make some brave choices about her future and where she would focus her energy and was hopeful for the first time in awhile.

I am forever in awe of the wisdom of my clients, and their ability to dig deep for their courage to find the clarity that they need to move forward. I know that I grow a little stronger with each and every client I work with.

Thank you Bonny.

Kevin Breel at the Centre

Kevin Breel, local TEDx sensation, stand-up comic, social activist and freshly-minted author took a few moments out of his very busy life to stop by the Centre in November to see what we're up to, and see what he could do to support it.

If you're not familiar with Kevin, you're in a very small minority. A quick Google search will come up with over 100K hits, and his first TEDx video has over 2.25 million views.

The young stand-up comedian from Victoria flew onto the viral internet scene at 19 with his Vancouver TEDx Kid talk entitled, "Confessions of a Depressed Comic". His heart-filled talk shares his experiences of the duality of being both socially-able and secretly depressed.

Since that fateful day in 2013 Kevin has performed all over the world as a mental health activist speaking

openly and honestly of his journey with depression. Kevin is the National Spokesperson for the Bell LET'S TALK Campaign, and has just published his first book, "Boy Meets Depression: Or Life Sucks and Then You Live." Good Reads says, "Kevin smashes the silence surrounding what it's like to be young, male, and depressed in a culture that has no place for that."

During Kevin's visit to the Centre we had the opportunity to talk about the work that he's doing in bringing mental health out of the shadows, and about the work that the Centre is doing with people trying to work through the pain.

"We had a wonderful visit. Kevin is warm and caring, and interested in his community," says Centre ED Brenda Wilson. "Kevin has offered to do something with the Centre when he returns in the Spring. We're not sure



Kevin Breel

what that will look like yet - maybe a night at the Centre with our counsellor community, or a theatre performance fundraiser and book-signing - it will all depend on what the Centre can muster with the resources that we have."

So check out Kevin's Youtube Channel and his book - and stay tuned for more on this amazing young man in the new year.

"I had the answers, he just guided me in a positive direction. He was very helpful in pressing the harder issues."

"I felt she was very present, friendly and held space for me to communicate myself."

"I was able to apply change."

"It was helpful to talk to someone who is a good listener and well educated about things such as relationships."

"I felt relief in being able to vent my feelings in a safe setting with an unbiased listener."

The amazing Dr. Grady

To date Dr. Brian Grady has clocked over 1,000 km on his run across the largest country in the world, all while attending to a thriving local psychology practice, being an active father, grandfather, and partner, and he even managed to slip in a Paris vacation this past summer. How does he do it? Virtually, that's how.

Brian is running across Canada -

virtually as a fundraiser for the Canadian Mental Health Association and Citizens' Counselling Centre.

In the coming weeks and months you'll hear more about Brian's run and fundraising - including an invite to join in the fun. You can find out more about how to sponsor him on his blog at: www.canadarun.wordpress.com and follow him on Twitter/

[com/cross-canada-run](http://www.canadarun.com/cross-canada-run) and on Facebook at [/VirtualCrossCanadaRun](https://www.facebook.com/VirtualCrossCanadaRun). If you're a runner and would like to add a 'doing good' motivation to your ritual - please be in touch. We're in the planning stages of this, and we're sure it's going to be fun!



Our funders
this year
include:



United Way
OF GREATER VICTORIA
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We acknowledge the
financial support of
the Province of British
Columbia Gaming
Commission.

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FOODS**



Provincial Employees Community Services Fund



And hopefully
YOU!

It's about the beauty and the healing - inside and out

Citizens' Counselling had a wonderful surprise in November as newly-opened Carne Tattoo chose the Centre as the beneficiary of their first Charity Tattoo-a-Thon Day raising almost \$2800 for the Centre by offering tattoos by donation.

Carne's two artists, Kyle Carter and co-owner Bart Van Der Eyden were joined by Empire Tattoo's artists Ory, Dave and Isaac to form an unstoppable 12-hour tattoo team with Carne co-owner and event organizer Kailey Menzies at the desk keeping the bookings – and the media – sorted and the line-up happy. People began lining up hours before the shop opened. The

shop's supplier – Good Guy Supply – even donated all the disposable tattooing supplies for the event.

Kailey says that she heard about the Centre from friends who have used the Centre's services and were happy with their experience. Kailey told CHEK TV that they wanted to help bring mental health out of the shadows reducing the stigma so people aren't afraid to get the help they need.

So if you're considering some body beautification, or a gift certificate for someone, please think of Carne Tattoo. And know to arrive early at next year's tattoo-a-thon!




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Citizens' Counselling Centre's Board Members

- Chair: Chris Hoyer
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- Treasurer: Lisa Underdown
- Secretary: Sara Comish
- Special Advisor: Eliza Bates-Smith
- Arla Sinclair
- Derek Collins
- David Hume

Counsellor Reps

- Carla Macdonald
- Emily Jacques
- Shannon Arnold

The Centre has a new Chair

As the new Chair of Citizens' Counselling's Board of Directors, I wanted to introduce myself to those of you who may not know me. I'm Christine (Chris) Hoyer, and I've served on the Board since 2009, as vice-chair since 2010.

I take over from John Gawthrop's four years as Chair. He did an excellent job of steering us safely through the exciting Hero-Works renovation and our best Tip a Fool event ever.



as a volunteer counselor, and I've just started seeing clients, which has been both nerve-wracking and exciting. I like to think it gives me a useful 'two-headed' perspective on the Centre, as a board member and as a volunteer counsellor.

I'm originally from London, England, though I've been in Canada for nearly thirty years, and the past 15 of those have been in Victoria, which I love for its natural beauty and sense of community.

Working closely with our wonderful ED Brenda Wilson, I hope we can build on that momentum and renewed community connection. Together with our talented board, we'll be exploring the current and future needs of the Centre, and helping it grow in a positive direction and on a sound financial footing.

Until now, I've mainly served on the Revenue Development Committee, and in particular on the 'Tip a Fool' Committee for several years. Last year I was able to train

My past lives include being a registered nurse, a counsellor and more recently a family lawyer. I'm a mother to two grown children. I love to travel and also enjoy genealogy, photography, creative writing and yoga.

I'd really welcome input from volunteers and community members. Please email me at chrishoyerca@yahoo.ca if you have thoughts and ideas about our wonderful Centre.



Greater Victoria Citizens' Counselling Centre

941 Kings Road, Victoria, BC, V8T 1W7 • 250.384.9934
info@citizenscounselling.com • www.citizenscounselling.com

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