

ON THE

COAST

COAST PROMOTES RECOVERY OF PERSONS WITH MENTAL ILLNESS

Photo: Dave Foels

Homelessness Providing Permanent Solutions

Andrea Keen

The most astonishing misconception about homelessness is that people “choose” to be homeless. It is true, however, that some people choose to sleep outside instead of shelters where they feel at risk of theft or physical harm. “I have a choice,” one client told me; “to live outside in the cold and the rain, or to live inside with the bedbugs and the rats.” However, when Coast is able to offer a client with the opportunity to have a place of their own – a home – they take it. In fact they would choose to be housed if the option was there.

An SRO (single room occupancy) is typically a multi-floored hotel, and each 10x10 unit generally consists of one room; some include a sink and a hotplate for cooking. SRO’s rarely include a private toilet or shower, but are instead shared by the tenants on each floor. While there are some well maintained SRO’s in Vancouver, this is not the norm. Many have issues with heating, electricity, and water. Drug activities are common place. People with mental illness are an easy target for crime and it is no wonder that some “choose” to live on the streets.

For many of Coast’s clients, mental illness has predisposed them to homelessness; for others, the circumstances associated with being homeless triggers mental health issues. The province’s Mental Health Plan and the Senate Committee’s 2006 report on Mental Health and Addictions both name supported housing as the highest priority for service for people with serious mental illness. Coast supports these recommendations: however, will they solve the problem for people with mental illness?



There is no question that affordable housing goes a long way to reducing the number of homeless people. Between a quarter and a third of people who are homeless also have a mental illness; between 50 and 80% of them also have addictions. Because mental illness is recurring for most people, we could expect that even if a person manages to obtain affordable housing, they may not be able to maintain it. Research consistently shows that supportive housing reduces the need for expensive hospitalization and social services over time, enhances quality of life and return to employment and community. Coast started the first supported housing program in Canada back in 1974. Clients are encouraged to reach their potential by learning new skills and returning to work or school. Supported integration back into the community goes a long way towards permanent solutions of the epidemic of homelessness.



Engaging The Public



Pursuing Excellence



Responding To The Need



Building & Reinforcing Our Foundation



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COAST
MENTAL HEALTH



Pablo Picasso's Face of Peace

War & Peace Managing My Bipolar Disorder

Simon Wu

This story is the final of four segments, presented by Coast member and volunteer, Simon Wu. His UBC psychiatrist, Dr. Lancelot Patrick, has written an introduction.

"This story is about a man with a serious mental illness. He has done well, and I, his psychiatrist, am pleased to be asked by this exceptional man to make some commentary about his methods to reach success. The fundamental thing that has distinguished Simon is his personal, unshakable determination to face mental illness with courage and never give up. He recognizes the truth that he has a serious problem. He does not minimize or ignore the illness, nor make excuses that it was somebody else's fault, or take any refuge in the concept of "bad luck". Any of these mental rationalizations could have diverted him from fighting the illness and realizing a good quality of life. I encourage you to look at the strategies he is sharing freely with you, and use those strategies to gain understanding."

Suicidal Ideation

I believe that suicide remains the number one issue in depression – it is why depression can be a lethal condition! I have to try everything to avoid committing suicide or dwelling on suicidal thoughts. Many people advise me not to think about suicide at all. This makes perfect sense - except that it is not practical. It does not work for me. When I am in a depression, the idea of killing myself seems to pop up by itself. I find it close to impossible not to think of it.

My approach is to validate such suicidal ideation, and accept it as a symptom of the disorder. I do not feel ashamed of mentioning it to my family and my doctor. What I focus on is avoiding carrying out such thoughts, rather than getting rid of them entirely. I should aim at behavior stopping (not committing suicide) rather than thought-stopping (not thinking of suicide). I also shift my focus from my own suffering to how others might suffer: What would happen to my family if I committed suicide?

Of course, things are never that simple. When the depression was at its worst, I was convinced

that I was a great burden to my family, and killing myself was the only 'useful' thing I could do. However, my cognitive ability remained intact and I could still imagine how my death would affect my family. During these darkest hours, I spent all my time pondering whether or not to commit suicide. Eventually mind did win over mood!

When my suicidal thoughts are at their very worst, I voluntarily bring myself to hospital. I never felt that doing so was shameful – depression, like any other medical condition, requires emergency treatment at times. During my brief stays in the psychiatric ward, I have a safe and supervised environment to spend the time I needed to fight off the terrible thoughts.

When I am in a depression, the idea of killing myself seems to pop up by itself. I find it close to impossible not to think of it.

Free Will & Mental Disorders

Is there still free will when suffering from a mental disorder? For someone with strong willpower, he or she will likely confront a serious medical problem with determination to fight against it. In mental disorders, however, what is disarmed is the faculty that embodies the willpower.

Except for those who have lost touch with reality or awareness of their behavior, people with mental disorders can always examine and talk about their disorders in an objective way. It is fair to say they still possess a certain amount of willpower, and in this sense, they still have free will.

We humans have developed an innate ability to guard ourselves from doing the things we don't like. We want to live the lives we aspire to. We cannot cheat ourselves. It is with this little bit of 'me' that the free will can be exerted. I am not going to be controlled by the mental disorder. I will make a choice to team up with my family and doctor to win my war!

We have to believe in free will, and my doctor says that I'm exerting my will to look after myself every way that is possible and that this is honourable.



Celebrating Our Excellence

Rhonda Rector, Director of Quality Improvement/Risk Management

Coast Metal Health successfully maintained certification with the Canadian Council of Health Accreditation (CCHSA). Coast is the only community mental health service provider in Canada to have such a designation. The standards, when met, ensure a level of quality service to be expected by all stakeholders.

Four CCHSA surveyors from across Canada examined Coast's operations in December 2006 and tested for compliance to national standards for mental health/health care facilities to assure quality. The surveyors recognized and praised Coast for including clients, family, friends, volunteers, and funders/partners in our services.

There is no doubt that each of these stakeholders play a large role in assisting Coast in being a learning organization, and improving how we execute our services.

Coast would like to thank everyone that participated in the "Partners" CCHSA interview.

Thank you for taking the time to help us pursue our vision: *A society where possibilities become reality.*



Courage Gala Most Successful Yet!

Keith Morgan

The 2007 Courage To Come Back Awards event was the organization's most successful ever as a fundraiser, and as always the recipients were the crowning glory to a magnificent evening.

The April 19th gala dinner, hosted by Global TV's Deborra Hope and Coast board member Kevin Evans, attracted 900 guests, who were inspired by the moving stories of six ordinary people who have overcome extraordinary challenges.

Funds raised through sponsorship, ticket sales, and donations from those present on the night amounts to a staggering \$706,339, a dramatic increase over the \$405,000 raised last year.

The increase in donations was due in no small part to concerted fundraising efforts by Lorne Segal, the event's Chair, and Peter Legge, President and CEO of Canada Wide Media Ltd., who charmed the dollars from a willing and generous crowd.

"We are thrilled at the success of this year's event," said Lorne Segal. "The awards celebrated the achievements of six amazing individuals, and also gave us the opportunity to raise these funds for Coast. The incredible generosity from our guests has allowed us to continue our efforts in promoting recovery of people with mental illness."

Honoured were Hersh Abramson of Vancouver (addiction), Loy Anne McCuaig of Vancouver (mental health), John Morrison of Prince George (medical), Leslie Nelson of Burnaby (social adversity), Merle Smith of Coquitlam (physical rehabilitation), and Kaytee Tuomola of Vancouver (youth).

Next year is the tenth anniversary of the Courage awards - watch out for some exciting announcements in the coming year about this forthcoming milestone event.



Engaging the Public



Thank You



Thank you to everyone who made "Courage 2007" a great success. We extend a special thanks to all the 130 nominees for sharing your amazing stories. On April 19th, we celebrated and presented the 2007 Courage Recipients their awards at a gala event at the Hyatt Regency Hotel. Coast Mental Health raised \$706,339. These funds will support Coast in the delivery of community mental health services.

Congratulations to **Merle Smith** - *Physical Rehabilitation Award*, **Leslie Nelson** - *Social Adversity Award*, **Loy Anne McCuaig** - *Mental Health Award*, **Kaytee Tuomola** - *Youth Award*, **Hersh Abramson** - *Addiction Award*, **John Morrison** - *Medical Award*.

2007 Partners in Courage

PLATINUM

Scotiabank
Weyerhaeuser
Company Ltd.
Global TV

GOLD CORPORATE

TELUS
Great-West Life

GOLD COMMUNITY

BC Housing

GOLD MEDIA

The Province
News 1130

SILVER CORPORATE

Magnolia Mercantile
Corporation
Spectra Energy Corp.

Bull Housser & Tupper LLP
KPMG

SILVER COMMUNITY

Providence Health Care
The BC Hydro Employees'
Community Services Fund
The HYDRECS Fund
Provincial Health
Services Authority

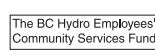
Vancouver Coastal Health
HUB International Barton
Vancity

MEDIA

Fairchild Media Group
TV Week Magazine

VENUE

The Hyatt Regency Vancouver





Courage Dinner 2007

Photos by Dave Roels

Group photo at top, left to right; RCMP Sergeant Dwayne Berkerleg; Deborra Hope, Global TV Early News Anchor; Kevin Evans, Coast Mental Health Foundation Board of Governors; Loy Anne McCuaig, Mental Health recipient; Kaytee Tuomola, Youth recipient; John Morrison, Medical recipient; Leslie Nelson, Social Adversity recipient; Hersh Abramson, Addiction recipient; Merle Smith, Physical Rehabilitation recipient; Darrell Burnham, Coast Mental Health, Executive Director; Lorne Segal, Chair, Courage To Come Back; and RCMP Constable Mel Riopel.

Photos 1 Kevin Evans, Leslie Nelson & Premier Gordon Campbell 2 Cheque Presentation with Peter Legge, President & CEO, Canada Wide Magazines & Communications Ltd. & Darrell Burnham 3 Deborra Hope, Loy Anne Mc Cuaig & Sarah Goodman, VP Government & Public Affairs, Weyerhaeuser Company Ltd 4 Deborra Hope, Heather Knittel, Community Relations Supervisor, Global Television Network & John Morrison 5 Kevin Evans, Hersh Abramson & Joanna Rudichuk, Manager, Community Investment BC, TELUS 6 Kevin Evans, Kaytee Tuomola & David Poole, Sr Vice President BC & Yukon Region, Scotiabank 7 Deborra Hope, Merle Smith & Ted Woodrow, Regional Director, Group Sales & Marketing, Great-West Life

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Message from the Chair of the Board

An Introduction to Coast Social Enterprise Foundation

For the past 33 years, Coast Mental Health has been a leader in community mental health. Through this leadership, we have developed knowledge of many of the issues affecting our clients and their recovery from mental illness. This knowledge is enhanced by strong relationships with our Board(s) of Directors, volunteers, funders, donors, clients and family members. Without their passion there is no doubt we would not be as successful as we have been in promoting recovery of persons with mental illness.

Coast Social Enterprise Foundation (CSEF) was founded in August, 2005. CSEF broadens our scope of service in a meaningful way: instead of just supporting people with mental illness in their return to work, Coast actually facilitates it by operating profitable businesses that provide employment to mental health consumers. Profits from the businesses are directed to programs that assist people in various aspects of recovery from mental illnesses such as bipolar disorder, schizophrenia and severe depression.

In Canada, one individual in five will suffer from a mental illness at some time in his or her life. The financial burden of mental illness on society is far too great to ignore and is just one reason why education, understanding and creative solutions for dealing with mental illness in the workplace and with regard to employment in general are necessary.

Through our community report, we hope to share our knowledge with other leaders and members of the community, so that they too can understand our mission and why it matters to us all.

Pat Zanon, Chair

Heather Edgar, CEO Coast Social Enterprise Foundation

Working Towards Solutions Governance of a New Social Enterprise

Social enterprises are businesses that have made a commitment to operate in a socially, environmentally and financially responsible manner, recognizing the interests of their stakeholders, including investors, customers, employees, business partners, local communities, the environment and society at large. This requires a careful balance

diligently to establish a solid model to oversee the operations of current and future enterprises, while training and providing employment to people with serious mental illness.

Landscaping with Heart is fully operational thanks to two operating grants for \$30,000 from BC Technology Social Venture Partners (BCTSVP). This revenue is critical to sustain operations of this venture during its infancy. BCTSVP also provided a capital grant in the amount of \$50,600 to purchase additional landscaping equipment for this growing business!

With leadership, the balance between a competitive business model and the mission to employ people recovering from mental illness is kept in the highest regard.

The organization is striving to launch other enterprises from the existing sewing and food service programs in 2007-08. Please contact Heather Edgar for more information on these programs at 604.872.3502.

with the need to generate profits required for a viable business against the social and environmental objectives. In the past year, the Board of Directors governing Coast Social Enterprises have worked


“The establishment of the Coast Social Enterprise Foundation demonstrates Coast’s commitment to innovation and learning in the process of building successful and financially viable social enterprises that provide quality employment opportunities for people recovering from mental illness. Coast has been able to take the experience of Landscaping with Heart and establish a unique model for incubating and spinning off other enterprise opportunities We are fortunate to be able to learn from Coast staff as they are always open to sharing their experience with others in the sector.”

Irene Gannitsos,
Program Manager of Social Enterprise
Vancity Community Foundation

Mental Illness & Employment

Creating Opportunities to Realize Potential

People with mental illness are usually low income earners, and remain unemployed for longer periods than any other group. The social isolation that is typical of many people with a serious mental illness can result in many living homeless, and/or without the support of family or friends.

When discussing mental illness and work, “work” can mean a number of things: the workplace (where we work), the act of working, (what we do) or even volunteering or toiling in the garden, kitchen or workshop. People with mental illness often require varying levels of support to participate in these functions again in a meaningful way, but is a key aspect of their recovery. Work brings tremendous benefits in guiding people diagnosed with a mental illness toward recovery, rebuilding their self-esteem, with some people returning to the jobs they left when their illness struck. 



Thank You to Our Funders and Supporters

Helping to Build Foundations of Recovery Through Coast Social Enterprises

BC Social Venture Partners	Leadership Vancouver
David & Dorothy Lam Foundation	Service Canada
Enterprising Non Profits	Vancity




Testimonials

“I want to also thank you for the excellent work by your crew. We are very pleased with the landscaping and stonework and feel the money we spent was well worth the beautiful results. We have passed along our recommendation for Landscaping with Heart to a number of friends and neighbours. It is our hope that Landscaping with Heart will assist us in the spring when we carry out the remainder of our landscaping project.”

“A few months ago I read an article in the Courier about the businesses the Society had developed. When it came time to plan our own project, I wanted to include Landscaping with Heart in the bid process. From the beginning, your representatives were open to listening to our ideas and thoughtful. We felt that we were dealing with professionals. At the same time, we felt we were doing “a good thing” by choosing this kind of a company. We couldn’t afford to give the Society a \$14,000 donation but we could certainly spend that amount on services provided by Landscaping with Heart.”

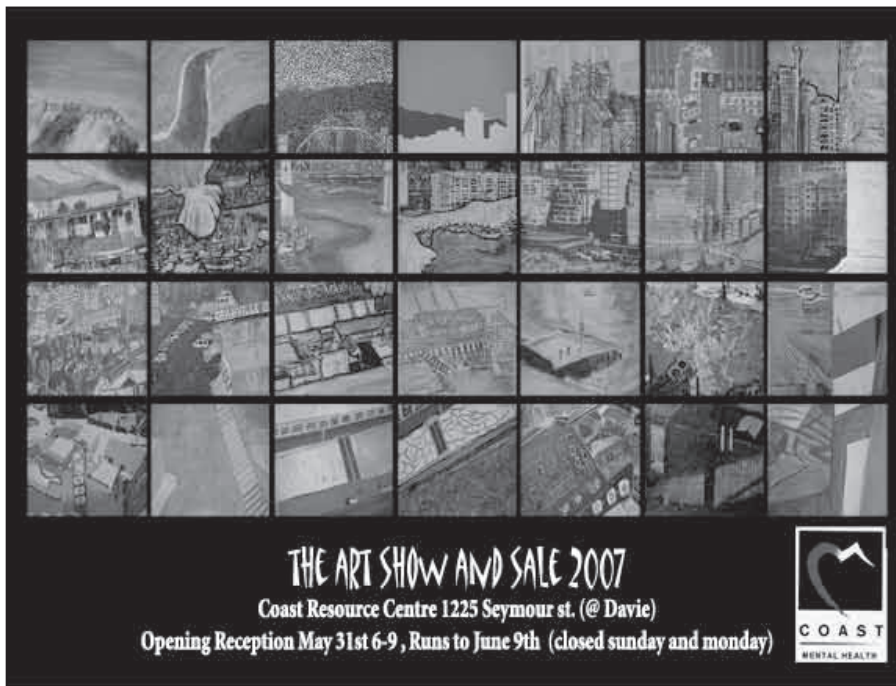
“Many societies and charities also recognize this tendency – altruism best expressed by consumerism.”

“I wish Landscaping with Heart a prosperous future and hope to be able to hire this company in 2007”.

“The opportunity to work and feel supported and respected in my work has got me to where I am today. Of that I have no doubt.” 

Responding to The Need





THE ART SHOW 2007

Please join us!
Thursday May 31st, 6-9pm
Exhibition Runs May 31st-June 9th
COAST RESOURCE CENTRE
1225 Seymour (@ Davie)
Live Performance by
SCOOTER FRUIT
Artists in attendance,
Refreshments served

Andrea Keen 604 675 2319
artshow@coastmentalhealth.com


purchased art may be picked up
June 8/9 10am-4pm

Coast Art Show & Sale *"A Picture is Worth a Thousand Words..."*

Reception: May 31st , 6 pm – 9 pm
 Coast Mental Health Resource Centre
 1225 Seymour Street, Vancouver (@ Davie)

Coast is showcasing incredible artwork created by clients who are recovering from mental illness. The show features mixed media, painting, drawing, sculpture, photography and

poetry. These works of art were created in the art program at the Resource Centre and vividly portray a range of colour and emotion. There will also be a silent auction to purchase the beautiful mural of Granville Island.

The show will remain on display until June 9th by appointment. For more information Contact: Artshow@CoastMentalHealth.com or call 604.675.2319. 

Coast Mental Health Appoints New Directors on Two Boards

The Coast Foundation Society (1974) lead by Chair Pat Zanon, is pleased to announce the appointment of Ultan Kampff (Cadillac Fairview) and Peter Hopkins (WorkSafeBC) to its Board of Directors. They will run for re-election to the Board at this year's Annual General Meeting, which is scheduled to take place in September.

The Coast Mental Health Foundation, Chaired by Winton Derby, also announced the appointment of two new members to its Board of Governors. Ross Stringer, Calvin Fong and Baldwin Wong

assumed their director positions, effective immediately, for a two year term.

Baldwin Wong and Calvin Fong are also members of the Coast Foundation Society Board of Directors, and therefore perform an important cross-functional role in helping both of these Boards work together. Both of these Boards serve Coast's mandate to promote recovery of people with mental illness.

For more information, please visit our website or call 604.675.2319 

Engaging the Public



Help us Make the
On The Coast
 Newsletter Better!



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 in print or by email? Tell us what you think
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