



# Newsletter

Victoria Branch, B.C. Schizophrenia Society

VOL. 26, No. 2

MAY, 2010

## NEW ANNUAL BUNGY FUNDRAISER



By Tara Timmers

If we could define fabulous it would incorporate the liberation some of our jumpers felt at this successful bungee event. Together we raised \$2280.24 in pledges which were doubled, thanks to a generous anonymous donor bringing the pledged amount to \$4560.48! Thank you so much to Wild-Play Element Parks for their leadership in promoting awareness of our cause and providing a generous donation of all ticket sales to BCSS Victoria. We will be presenting our AGM Outstanding Business Partner Award for their support of our programs and services. Not only does stigma get reduced by high profile events such as the one hosted by this amazing business, we can also gain a sense of what recovery is all about. My first jump gave me a sense of accomplishment and the second greater knowledge of empowerment. I witness so much personal growth from all the people who walk through BCSS Victoria doors and the weekend of the 4<sup>th</sup> Annual Naked Bungee Jump was not a surprise in this area of change and transformation. **The Story of Barry from Nanaimo:** Something special happened that I would like to share with you all: Barry, a man in his 50s who had just lost his wife to cancer two weeks before the event, came to the park to jump in her memory. He jumped to honor her with her teddy bear in his arms. I was touched to be a part of this event. For him, this was the most memorable anniversary of their relationship. They had come to WildPlay to jump 10 years prior. Congratulations Barry, you are a bright spirit!

We would like to thank Thrifty Foods in Nanaimo for donating a tent for the bands and food for the guests/jumpers. Your support has given us that added touch to make the event successful. We were so honored that Santa Clara & The Show gave their time to perform at the event. Their musical styles were impressive and made the day entertaining. I would also like to acknowledge the many volunteers who came to help strengthen the day. Volunteers are a valuable part of our team and it was great to have you at the park. Next year we would like to increase



Wendy Mishkin, Elizabeth Bogod, Shawn Kennedy, Tara Timmers, Corey Maruca (left to right) at event!

the pledge amounts. So, if you would like to set up a competition at your workplace or give back in some way, please let us know as anything is possible. My goal after raising \$1,500 (for a total of \$3000 with matching donations) is to double my pledges next year. I would love to have you on board to make my dreams come true. It's an exhilarating experience. To see the bungee jumps online go to:

<http://www.youtube.com/user/TaraTimmers?feature=mhw5>

**SUPPORTED EMPLOYMENT AND SUPPORTED EDUCATION CONFERENCE 930-4pm with BCSS-Victoria AGM following at 430pm. Saturday, June 12th @ 950 Kings Road, Victoria, BC (University Canada West) -See Insert for more info**



**Sadly, we lost our long time friend and newsletter dynamo, David Pryer, this month. In his honour, we have established the "Pryer Family Media Award" to recognize outstanding media work. Our thoughts are with the Pryer Family.**

**PRYER, David Maxwell** April 8, 1932 - May 10, 2010. It is with great sadness that we announce the passing of David on May 10, 2010. He will be greatly missed by his wife June; his brother Peter (Mary); his three children Colin, Jackie (Brad) and Kevin (Janet) and his six grandchildren Jessica, Trevor, Heather, Lisa, Erika and Cassandra. David had an extensive career as a news editor working for the Kitchener-Waterloo Record and the Regina Leader Post. In the late 1970's he fulfilled his dream by running his own weekly newspaper, with his family's help. David and June travelled the world which included stops in Russia, Vietnam, China and Costa Rica. He will be remembered as a gentleman with a generous spirit and a great sense of humour. In lieu of flowers, donations can be made in his memory to the British Columbia Schizophrenia Society, Victoria Branch (941 Kings Road, V8T 1W7) or Victoria Hospice (1952 Bay St. V8R 1J8).



## ON THE JOURNEY: ART OF HOPE AND RECOVERY



## Entertainment at the Caffé Fantastico

**O**n the Journey: Art of Hope and Recovery, an initiative of the BC Schizophrenia Society, Victoria Branch, included the creation of a collaborative mural, an open microphone afternoon, planning meetings, chapbook with samples of work, opening gala with performances of original work and an exhibit. It will be part of a video that's in the works. A lot of creative energy and so much to be proud of!

So many talented people wanting to get together and exhibit work, read poetry and perform. BCSS is such a creative place. It seemed organizing an art show that would include poetry and music a perfectly natural thing to do — and it was. The interest and enthusiasm was infectious. Back in August there were many details we had to figure out, the shape it would take, the venue, funding and how to keep everyone interested and active until the show in March. We set out to find a name that would inspire people to see their recovery in a positive light and combat stigma against mental illness. Life is a journey and so is recovery and finding hope.

We wanted a public space where anyone could come in and see our art and poetry and find out about our organization. A café rather than an art gallery was ideal. Caffé Fantastico (on the corner of Quadra and Kings Rd Victoria) fit

the bill. It's on the same block as BCSS and is spacious with lots of room for paintings, helpful caring staff and they serve great coffee. It's been a wonderful partnership.


We assembled artists, poets and original singer song writers from our own ranks, along with the Pandora Arts Collective, an art group in town, and others who heard about what we are doing. We were thrilled to have funding from an anonymous donor through the Victoria Foundation and the Sara Spencer Foundation. We also were helped by Opus Art Supplies and Island Blue.

On the evening of March 17<sup>th</sup>, Caffé Fantastico filled up fast with everyone enjoying the dazzling collection of paintings, collages, prints and poetry while sipping great coffee and tea. Derek Bowman kicked off the performance with a lively original tune, Elizabeth Bogod brought out fruit props to support her witty poetry, Tara Timmers entertained with a combination of poetry and song, Clive Beal sang a traditional Chinese Folk song, Fabian Rousseau entertained everyone with his unique songs and tunes, Devorah Stone, Kim Brousseau, and Glen Wheeler read their poems. Special thanks to Larson Music for the sound system. The night's entertainment was well received with enthusiastic applause and laughter at times. Adam Spiller, Karen Horn, Illyana Jones, Lauren Kinney, Kaye Collins, Luke Garrison, Shawn Kennedy, and Zoë Betzelt all displayed their work. The café staff kept busy all night. Snap Victoria took pictures. All the time Casey Peterson, a student volunteer, was busy helping out every way he could.

Many people saw the exhibit during the month. The café staff was delighted to have such wonderful art work around them. We decided to 'celebrate' the exhibit's end with a pizza party. Everyone agreed that it was a wonderful worthwhile event and we're hoping to do it again.

Chapbooks which include samples of art work and poetry can be bought at the office for \$15. *By Devorah Stone*

This newsletter, which is published four times a year,  
is a publication of



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## Self-help recovery takes new direction

*"I feel less alone."  
"I am beginning to think  
somebody cares now."  
"I really appreciate the  
opportunity to share with others  
who understand me."  
"I like that we are all in this  
learning together."  
"I just love that this workshop  
is peer-driven."  
"I never knew I had a choice  
not to suffer."*

These are some of the comments provided by participants of the **New Light Recovery Workshop** taking place at BCSS Victoria Branch where group members are learning skills to deal with overwhelming emotions. Although they have a variety of mental illnesses they all have one thing in common – they all experience intense emotions that cause emotional distress and are attending this sixteen week workshop to learn a special group of skills called **Dialectical Behavioural Techniques (DBT)**.

These techniques are based on an adapted form of Cognitive Behavioural Therapy called Dialectical Behavioural Therapy developed by Marsha M. Linehan, Ph.D. However, as a branch of the **Peer Support Program** it does not offer therapy, but rather an innovative and exciting approach to DBT and peer support that is breaking new ground!

The group is facilitated by two Peer Support Workers - Elizabeth Bogod and Erica Weikle. A practicum student, Senz Hamilton is also co-facilitating. Elizabeth and Erica are well into their recovery from Bipolar Disorder and Borderline Personality Disorder (BPD). They both have extensive experience using DBT skills in their own lives.

The prime reason for joining this workshop for

participants is to help them deal with various forms of self-destructive behaviour that make it difficult for them to experience a quality of life. Some participants are dealing with suicidal thoughts and behaviours, self-injury and substance abuse. They are also coping with various symptoms of mental illness including depression, anxiety, anger issues, delusional thinking, racing thoughts and impulsivity.

Participants are learning mindfulness skills which include observing and describing their emotions as they happen and then suspending judgement about their emotions. They are also learning how to create "a life worth living" through regulating their emotions and handling daily stress.

For example, with "ice therapy" participants hold

melting ice cubes in their hands, to match the intensity of their emotions and change their thought patterns so they do not act out self-destructively.

This workshop is a pilot project. We hope to run it again in the fall and are currently taking a waitlist. For more information please call the BCSS office at 2 5 0 - 3 8 4 - 4 2 2 5 .

**By Elizabeth Bogod**

### OVERWHELMING EMOTIONS SUPPORT GROUP

#### **Do you have Borderline Personality Disorder?**

When: Every 1st and 3rd  
Wednesday of the Month  
Location: BC Schizophrenia  
Society, Victoria Branch  
941 Kings Rd. Back Room  
Contact: 250 383 5144 Box.  
#2127

[bpdvictoria@gmail.com](mailto:bpdvictoria@gmail.com)

**Blog:** <http://>

[bpdsupport-  
group.wordpress.com/](http://bpdsupport-group.wordpress.com/)

## CHANNELING HOWARD - *By Doreen Marion Gee*

Born in 1902, Howard Hughes was a brilliant aviator and airplane engineer. He courted Hollywood superstars, made extravagant movies and in his heyday, was the richest man in the world. But despite his life of privilege, Hughes led a painful and tortured existence. This genius spent the last twenty years of his life as a recluse. He ended his days in a dark hotel room, sick and emaciated and too terrified of germs to take a bath. What caused his plummet into hell? Answer : Untreated Obsessive Compulsive Disorder ( OCD ). Howard had an obsessive fear of contamination by germs, compelling him to wash himself repeatedly if he touched anything that had met human hands. These rituals took over his life like a cancer. Eventually, he became convinced that even tap water was perilous and stopped washing altogether. In his time, there was no effective treatment for OCD at all. People like Howard suffered. And in those days, they suffered alone.

I know Howard's pain. I also have this cursed affliction called OCD and I know the daily torment of noxious thoughts and the compulsions that follow. My particular version of this anxiety disorder are obsessions about those things that are indispensable in my life. I worry about my safety, my health, my finances, my son, my relationships – the list goes on. When these fearful thoughts overtake me, I feel compelled to do mental and physical rituals to rid myself of them. This could be reassuring mental mantras or checking my stove and front door incessantly. These rituals are debilitating and exhausting. But I have an ace up my sleeve that separates me from Howard : Hope that comes from treatment and recovery.

Luckily, I live in a better time than poor Howard. In his day, OCD was considered intractable. Now, it is a highly treatable anxiety disorder. I have benefited from skilled professional help and amazingly effective cognitive behavior therapy. A low level of anti-obsessive medication has also turned my life around. Those demons still lurk around every corner but my life is no longer controlled by OCD. Life has opened up to me and I am able to do and enjoy all those things that I love. At the tender age of 36, I went back to UVIC. Two years later, I graduated "with distinction" in the top seven percent, taking home a shiny Bachelor of Science degree diploma. OCD did not prevent me from receiving four academic scholarships. It did not stand in the way of winning a recent writing award for my creative non-fiction work. Howard's fate will not be mine. I have hope in my life. I am very proud to say that I am "in recovery." Despite a few cloudy days, I am still dancing in sunshine. I think Howard would approve.



Cold Cut Combo with Alfons Fear

## **Café Berlin Jazz night aids Memorial Fund**

*By Tara Timmers*

**W**ow, what an amazing event to celebrate Jazz and the art of people in recovery, to contribute to the mental health community and raise funds for a necessary cause. If we were to hold space for our loved ones and honour their journeys it would become evident how much we all care about their well-being. Our family structures so filled with the incredible dynamics of support and protective natures. BCSS Victoria is a beacon to the families and the ones they care about who benefit from our Memorial Fund, which the proceeds of this event go directly to serve. Jazz is the conduit and Hans Fear's memory an inspiration to the great creative spirits of people with mental illness. Thank you to John Fear for continuing to remind us through his loved one's memorial that we can be inspired by our art. To all the artists who shared their artistic abilities with us may this event bring you much inspiration. We honour what you have accomplished. It is important for me to explain that this event is not possible without the energy, organization and support offered by the volunteers. Your time is so valuable and I thank you for contributing. The music was fabulous and I hope Cold Cut Combo, Brianne de Verteuil and her Savvy 6 and the Brent Jarvis Quartet understand that it was their music that carried the HOPE for so many people. You all were amazing and so talented! Our Emcee Stephen Andrew from 'A' brought humour and silent auction support to us; this partnership has been extremely welcomed and we are so grateful for it. Stephen, you are appreciated for your engaging stage presence and understanding of what we do. If anyone has interest in helping next year with silent auction donations, volunteering, or sponsorship please let us know at:



Brianne de Verteuil and Her Savvy 6

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### **OUR THANKS**

*Thank You To All Our Amazing Silent Auction Sponsors: Tom Lee Music, Spa Sirona, Avalon Books, Sauce, Moka House, Mercedes Lane, Ryan Tree - Universal Tattoo, Yellowjacket Comics, Snowden's Bookstore, Smoking Lily, RebelRebel, Street Level Espresso, Sarabande Treasures, Moda Salon, Illuminations Lighting, Level Ground Trading Company, The Papery, Side Street Studio, Pluto's, Peacock Billiards, Green Cuisine, Pic A Flic Video, Dark Horse Books, Pink Sugar Cupcakery, Cook St. Village Wine Works, Decade, The Patch, Legends Comics & Books, Rebar, Complex, Country Grocer, Brun Body Bar, 5th Street Bar & Grill, Monday Magazine, Market On Yates, Morningside Law, Butchart Gardens, The Hotel Grand Pacific, Sandman Hotel, Mac, Save On Foods, Pizza Zone, HMV, Bristol Town Hair Fashions, WildPlay Element Parks, Intrepid Theatre, Gilbert & Sullivan Society, Save-On-Foods, Denny's Restaurant, Rose McMillan, Full Circle Gallery, Artist Edna*

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[admin.bcsc@shaw.ca](mailto:admin.bcsc@shaw.ca) or 250-384-4225. "Where our growth begins is in doing the work to help others!", commented Luke Garrison, one of the artists showing his work. "I enjoyed the Café Berlin Hans Fear night. I felt it was truly a celebration of the talents of those suffering from schizophrenia and mental illness. I am most appreciative for the opportunity to have had a 'booth' to show my work. I want to thank all involved for the wonderful evening, especially Fatima for her help and BCSS also. Thanks to the Café Berlin people — the food was great."

WELLNESS RECOVERY ACTION PLAN (WRAP)

## 2nd BCSS-Victoria WRAP Workshop Completed!

**B** CSS Victoria offers WRAP Workshops (Wellness Recovery Action Plan) as well as WRAP One-on-One through our Peer Support Program. We just completed our second workshop. It ran weekly for 10 weeks from January 28 through April 1, 2010, with ten enthusiastic participants.

WRAP is an empowering self-help tool which can be used by anyone in recovery from physical or mental health problems to achieve wellness. The best thing about WRAP is that it is simple, safe, effective and free, and uses one's own preferred strategies to get and stay well. Learning about WRAP in a group setting is valuable because it enables people to learn from each other and discover new ideas which they may never have considered.

WRAP helps people create daily maintenance plans to get and stay well, and identify and create action plans for triggers and early warning signs. There is a section for recognizing and knowing what to do when things are breaking down in the hopes of averting a crisis. The final two sections of a WRAP include a comprehensive crisis plan to help people document what kind of help they want (and don't want) when they are unable to make their own decisions, and a post-crisis plan to prepare to get back to their daily plan once the crisis is over.

In addition to the sections of WRAP we also cover typical wellness tools such as nutrition, exercise and

sleep. Each workshop is unique, as participants also choose several topics they would like to explore. This group chose mindfulness meditation, grounding and focusing exercises, self-esteem, dating and friendship.

On our last day, we asked participants what they felt were some of the best aspects of the workshop. Here is a sampling of their responses:

*"The ability to empower people and give tools to keep well"*

*"Opportunity to listen to other persons who have experienced mental illness"*

*"Gaining information/education on how to plan for the worst while trying to maintain the better/best state"*

*"Brainstorming and networking"*

*"Caring, compassionate and flexible facilitators"*

For more information, or to be put on the wait list for the next workshop, please phone the BCSS office at 250-384-4225. **Wendy Mishkin, Peer Support Program**



**Ken Beattie receiving his WRAP certificate**

## WRAP Workshop called 'a great experience'

**D**uring our most recent WRAP Workshop we had 10 participants from many different backgrounds who shared the experience of living with a mental illness. It took a couple of sessions for us to get to know one another, but once we did the stories and insights we shared with each other during the workshop helped us to move further along our path to recovery.

Group participants treated each other with respect and compassion with the help of a comfort agreement which they created and added to frequently. The facilitators designed each session to build on the last by providing material reviews at the start of each session. Discussions flowed smoothly from topic to topic as we progressed through the material. This was followed by intense brainstorming sessions where we could flipchart each person's own experiences with

mental illness and create action plans to help deal with these experiences. The participants listened intently to each other and provided thoughtful feedback we could all relate to and learn from.

We had fun creating self-esteem collages and funky wellness toolboxes, which we decorated with stickers and cut-out pictures. We even braved the world of dating with a "speed-meeting" game (like "speed dating") to give us confidence in meeting new people. Snacks were served at each meeting, which gave us a chance to socialize and get to know each other even better. Wendy's stretch breaks helped to keep us awake throughout the afternoon.

All in all it was a great experience. I learned so much from the other group members. I met some really wonderful people who are as interested in recovery as I am. **Corey Maruca, Peer Support Program**



## Sidney antique show raises \$600 for BCSS

*By Nancy Pike  
Field Education Coordinator,  
School of Social Work, University of Victoria*

What do 7:30 a.m., two 50-year-old dolls and a silk table cloth have in common? A fantastic fund-raising event for BCSS Victoria - that's what!

The Mary Winspear Centre in Sidney was the site for a huge antique and retro collectible sale on April 4. My husband Larry and I arrived early to set up the tables with donated treasures from several generous BCSS supporters and were thrilled to see the crowds arrive at the hall overflowing with collectibles.

Customarily purchasers barter with the vendors, but when they saw our table's proceeds were going to BCSS Victoria, they happily paid full price. Several commented on how pleased they were to support BCSS, having friends and neighbours whose lives had been touched in some way by schizophrenia. Our society information was prominently displayed with handouts available to pick up.

Tara and Sandy replaced Larry and me in the afternoon (after they cruised the hall for fabulous jewellery!). The sale of our donations netted close to \$600 when all the receipts were tallied. Considering that we only had a few donor families, we envision this fund-raising event being the first of many with tremendous potential.

Start going through your closets, attics and jewel boxes looking for donations for the next sale. Spring clean with BCSS in mind!



BCSS Volunteers Nancy and Larry at our table

## AMONG THE LIONS!

*By Ian Taggart*

BCSS Partnership Presenters, John Gray and Ian Taggart, spoke to the Lions Club, Westshore Chapter, on April 1st. John is himself a member of the Lions.

We are deeply grateful that, following the talk, the Lions agreed to donate \$500.00 to our organization. They have a well-deserved stellar reputation for service to the community and we are pleased that they now consider us a worthwhile beneficiary of their generosity. The Lions members were most receptive to the talks by John and Ian, as evidenced by the large number of questions afterwards. Hats off to the Lions!

**2010 Picnic in the Park**  
**Saturday, July 10<sup>th</sup>**  
**Noon-4pm**



**Pizza, Badminton, Music and more!!!**

Open to persons with  
Mental Illness & their families

Call BCSS for more info: 384-4225

If you are interested in "giving back" to your mental health community please call the BCSS-Victoria office about donations of food and volunteering at the annual picnic in the park. Food items needed are salads (non-perishable type), fruit trays, watermelons, veggie trays, crackers and desserts. Tasks include sports game coordination, serving food, clean up and set up.

**DONATIONS OF BINGO PRIZES APPRECIATED AS WELL**

### PLAYTIME BINGO VICTORIA

3400 Tillicum Rd.  
and

the Province of British Columbia  
support the programs and services  
of the

**B.C.Schizophrenia Society**  
Victoria Branch

# Act sets out when authorities can step in

By John E. Gray, PhD

**T**he BC *Mental Health Act* is designed to help treat people with a severe mental illness who refuse to be treated voluntarily and are likely to cause harm to themselves or others, or cause significant mental or physical deterioration to the person. Without this treatment the person is unlikely to start the recovery process.

The BC *Guide to the Mental Health Act, 2005 edition* (Google) describes in detail how the Act works and has Appendix (2) "Assistance from Relatives and Others in Obtaining Treatment." The Mental Health and Addictions Service (VIHA), BCSS and physicians can provide helpful information on how the Act works.

*1. How "sick" and how "dangerous" does the person have to be to be committed (involuntarily admitted)?*

The person must have a "disorder of the mind that requires treatment and seriously impairs the person's ability (a) to react appropriately to the person's environment, or (b) to associate with others"; and, although the person does NOT have to be physically dangerous, the person must need admission "to prevent the person or patient's substantial mental or physical deterioration or for the protection of others." (S.22). The Court (McCorkell) wrote that "protection" from harms can relate to physical harm or "the social, family, vocational, or financial life of the patient." The person must also require psychiatric treatment.

*2. How does a person who refuses voluntary admission get involuntarily admitted?*

- If the person will see a physician or a physician will come to see the person, the physician can complete a first certificate using the above criteria. Often the physician is at a hospital emergency department.
- The first certificate authorizes anyone, although it is often the ambulance or police, to take the person to a psychiatric unit. The person can be held for up to 48 hours for an examination.
- If a person refuses to see a physician the police may help if the officer, from information they receive and observe, is satisfied "that the person (a) is acting in a manner likely to endanger that person's own safety or the safety of others, and (b) is apparently a person with a mental disorder" (S. 28).

The officer can take the person to a physician for an examination.

If a physician or a police officer cannot be involved a family member or other person can ask a judge for an order. If approved that order allows the person to be transported to the facility and detained for up to 48 hours.

*3. What happens at the hospital, especially after the 48 hour examination period?*

A second physician must examine the person within 48 hours of admission. If that physician concludes the person does not meet the criteria they are discharged. If the person does meet the criteria they are detained for up to one month. At the end of the month a renewal examination is conducted and further stays can be authorized by renewal certificates. The person can be treated as soon as they are admitted, either because they consent or the director authorizes the treatment on their behalf.

*4. Extended Leave (Compulsory Treatment in the Community)*

Where a person continues to meet the admission criteria but does not need the confines of a hospital the person may be put on extended leave. This is usually used for people who have a pattern of responding well to treatment in hospital but on discharge discontinuing treatment and relapsing. When on leave the person has conditions which usually include taking treatment. If the person does not follow the requirement they can be re-hospitalized. Extended leave has proved to be very helpful in the recovery of a number of people.

*5. When is a person discharged?*

A person must be discharged from involuntary status, either as an inpatient or on leave, when they no longer meet any of the committal criteria. The treating doctor may authorize a voluntary hospital stay.

*6. What rights do the patient and family have?*

Immediately after the second certificate has been written to detain the person in hospital a notice must be sent to a near relative (which the patient can select) providing information on the rights of the patient and the relative. If the director considers it to be in the best interests of the patient or for the safety of



**Administrative Coordinator Tara Timmers and Executive Director Hazel Meredith at the Café Berlin .**

## **Act sets out when authorities can step in** (continued from page 7)

others the director can send a notice to any other near relative.

The rights of the patient, which can be asked for by anyone include among others:

- Right to contact a lawyer
- Right to a second opinion on the appropriateness of the treatment
- Right to a Review Panel

### *7. Can a family member provide evidence at a Review Panel?*

When a patient wants to leave hospital but the doctor disagrees, the patient, or anyone on their behalf, can apply to the Review Panel. Within 14 days the Review Panel must hear the request for the patient to be discharged. If the family has evidence suggesting the patient should not be discharged they may be allowed to present it by the Review Panel Chair. The Review Board office phone is 604-524-7220/7219.



Once again we are a part of the **Thrifty's Smile Card Program** to raise monies for new office chairs. You can use the cards from our office that we gave out last time around OR come in and pick up a new one. You just load the card at the Thrifty's of your choice and then go shopping. 5% of the proceeds come back to BCSS Victoria. Contact us at 250-384-4225 or [admin.bcsc@shaw.ca](mailto:admin.bcsc@shaw.ca)



**VOLUNTEER POSITION:** BCSS Victoria has a data entry volunteer opportunity to record contact sheet statistics for phone calls and drop ins. If you have interest in coming in once a week and have computer experience please contact our Administrative Coordinator, Tara at 250-384-4225 or [admin.bcsc@shaw.ca](mailto:admin.bcsc@shaw.ca)

## **Managing symptoms**

*By Mark Tabuteau*

**M**y mental illness and related problems are extremely complex and difficult to manage. For me, it's not just taking my meds for schizophrenia regularly. Taking my Seroquel on designated times only manages my schizophrenia and thought disorder and slows down my thoughts to a normal level. Equally important to deal with are my mental images which are one after another when I am doing bad this way. There is nothing specifically my psychiatrist can do to control my mental images. My mental image problem is just a mental problem I got into. By just resting mentally along with my Seroquel I can always slow down the frequency of my mental images to a tolerable level. I have one every 15 minutes. Additionally, to stay well mentally I have to do other things. I have to take Dilantin which protects me against seizures which have been created by excess mental stimulation. I have to watch I don't get into a situation where I have extreme mental stimulation, that is, out of control thinking and or mental images. For instance if I talk to a friend for 3 or 4 hours continually or listen to rock and roll music for long periods of time-this is bad for me. I have to watch that I eat a proper diet and take a multivitamin each day. This includes restricting myself to only one cup of coffee per day and limiting alcoholic beverages to only one at a time. Also, to manage my mental health I have to make sure I get a good sleep every night. If I don't do this it messes things up for me mentally. Finally, I need to get a reasonable amount of physical exercise every day. Neglecting any one of these former things is detrimental to my mental health.

**DO YOU KNOW YOU CAN DONATE TO BCSS, VICTORIA BRANCH, ONLINE?**

Just go to [www.bcscvictoria.ca](http://www.bcscvictoria.ca), enter the site, then click on Canada Helps button



Local fundraising for local services