



F E B R U A R Y 2 0 1 4

# Newsletter

BC Schizophrenia Society, Victoria Branch



## *"Inspirational Stories"* *In Memory of Elizabeth Bogod*

For info or self referral: visit [www.bcssvictoria.ca](http://www.bcssvictoria.ca) or call 250-384-4225 email: [admin.bcss@shaw.ca](mailto:admin.bcss@shaw.ca)

### *Honouring Elizabeth Bogod*

My name is Kimberly Ferko and I am here to tell my story of a woman who came into my life for a short while and left an imprint on my heart. I believe people come into our lives for a reason and we may not know why until it is too late. Elizabeth Bogod was someone who did just that. I got to know this happy, energetic, and passionate woman while working as a peer supporter at BCSS. She welcomed me to the team the first day I sat in, and when she looked at me with those eyes full of caring and love she put a huge smile on my face. Even on days when I was feeling down or stressed over personal issues, having Elizabeth around somehow always chased the blues away. Little did I know at the time how she would show me a world where my passion now lies.

As we all know, Elizabeth was very determined to educate the world on Dialectical Behavior techniques for people suffering from overwhelming emotions. In 2010 she decided to write up a funding proposal for an education group called New Light Recovery. She poured her soul and heart into making this group happen. As we talked more each time she gave me insight on Borderline Personality Disorder and types of therapy that work. I had heard that she ran the New Light Recovery group but hadn't sat in to understand what it offered, but as I spent more time hanging out with her and hearing her personal recovery story I became amazed at how much she knew about DBT.

The day that Elizabeth asked me if I would be interested in co-facilitating the New Light Recovery group with her I was scared and yet thrilled. I thought to myself, I don't have BPD but suffer from depression, how in the world could I show someone these skills without having prior knowledge? With only some training in addictions I didn't know anything about facilitating let alone Dialectical Behavior techniques. The first group we did together was in the summer of 2012. I watched her facilitate and saw how she connected to people and understood what they were going through. She showed the group that she was equal to them and not someone who was there to dictate to them, that she too was in recovery. She was spirited and eager to pass on these techniques to the people in her group. As word spread and the sign up list grew bigger we had hard decisions to make as to who we could fit in the upcoming groups. It was incredible to see the demand. This group was here baby and I was proud to be co-facilitator.

The last time she and I ran the group I noticed on the poster she put both our names as facilitators. I laughed and said, "Elizabeth, you made a mistake on the poster, you forgot to put co-facilitator in front of my name." She replied, "No Kim, you and I are equal and we work great together side by side as a team."

Elizabeth and I grew to be great friends. I shared her passion for getting education out there for Borderline Personality Disorder, getting early diagnosis for youths, and her baby, New Light Recovery Group. I spent quite a few private moments with her and she had a heart of gold. We all have good and bad in us, no one is perfect; but that is what recovery is all about, sharing our stories and one another's personal growth. She shared with me one day that we are lucky when we love what we do with our lives and BCSS was her life. She opened a door of opportunity for me with facilitating and I am paying it forward sharing knowledge others gave to me. I have taken on keeping New Light Recovery Group going as we, as a community, need to keep Elizabeth's legacy alive.

Thank you with all my heart , Elizabeth, you are now in the arms of the angels watching down on us. - **Kim Ferko**  
on behalf of all of us at BCSS Victoria.

Please visit Elizabeth's in Memorium wordpress page at: <http://ebogod.wordpress.com/>



## Tara Timmers Masters in Leadership Health Graduate

I believe strongly in human rights, dignity and achievement for people with mental health issues with or without addictions. My focus has been to empower individuals to rise up against the oppression that stigma creates. For the past two years I have been immersed in my own empowerment journey. As a Masters in Leadership Health student at Royal Roads University I have moved from being an underdog of sorts to harnessing the power of education. I am now an MA graduate. I have attained against all odds a higher level of ability, skill, knowledge, endurance and understanding of the world.

My inspiration comes from my clients that are barriered, restricted and not able to manage their lives. They too have the right to be well, happy and achieve. My thesis focus was on how the BCSS Victoria could develop a clinical peer counselling program. This idea is an innovation for peer services. Developing a professional role with a disclosed peer lens has not been done in mental health, or been officially standardized. The value of insights that peers have, combined with professionalism, to me, is the height of social justice. Peers belong in society, can contribute great things and in their own way rise above the stigma of illness to help others along the path. They can work, volunteer, have a strong family life, play and educate the public. My voice in all this was to leave a legacy of possibility and hope for people in recovery, while advancing the research on peer service delivery. My thesis will be published in ProQuest's password protected online database, and in [Library and Archives Canada's](#) non-password protected electronic database. It will also be published electronically in [DSpace](#), RRU's electronic archive. I also have copies available for those who would like to read it at your request. - **Tara Timmers MA.**

## Inspirational Campaign: Bell Let's Talk...

"... is a Nationwide event that aims at bringing awareness and reducing stigma around mental health issues within Canada. Bell has raised over \$60 million over the past few years for mental health organizations large and small". One of Bell's visions for reducing stigma is getting people to start talking about mental health. To do this Bell has donated 5 cents for every tweet, Facebook status share, text message and long distance call that was made on January 28, 2014.

Bell has also adopted psychologically safe work place policies within their own organization to address mental health issues within their organization and promotes this initiative to other corporations and organizations across Canada. Bell also encourages other organizations to lead by example and implement their own initiatives to address stigma across the nation.

Another inspirational aspect to Bells campaign is, spokesperson Clara Hughes. Clara has struggled with her own mental health issues and now is hopping on her bike and touring around Canada to help reduce stigma around mental health. In 110 days Clara will make her way east from Toronto, Ontario to St. Johns Newfoundland, head north to Iqaluit, Nunavut, west to Victoria, British Columbia, then east again to Ottawa, Ontario, where she will finish her tour. Clara will be making 95 stops along her adventure to speak to communities about the most widespread health issue within Canada, mental health. You can support Clara and find out more about her ride at [clarasbigride.bell.ca](http://clarasbigride.bell.ca)

For more information on Bell's initiatives, facts, statistics and ways to support their various causes you can find more information on their website at <http://letstalk.bell.ca/en/> And...stay tuned for local activities related to Clara Hughes arrival in Victoria in Mid May! - - **Jamie Brace**



## Naked Bungee Jump for BCSS 2014 WildPlay Element Parks Nanaimo Saturday and Sunday March 8<sup>th</sup> and 9<sup>th</sup> 2014

The Naked Bungee Jump is an extremely important annual fundraising event for the British Columbia Schizophrenia Society, Victoria branch. For the past 7 years, BCSS has teamed up with WildPlay Element Parks to raise funds for individuals living with schizophrenia and psychosis. **We are extremely fortunate to have an anonymous donor who will match pledges up to \$15,000.** This means that each pledge will be doubled automatically! **Here's the math:** We will have 200 Jumpers over 2 days. If each jumper generated \$75.00 in pledges we will raise \$15,000 and our anonymous donor will double this to \$30,000! When your wonderful family and friends donate \$10.00, they are actually ensuring a donation of \$20.00. Even better, a \$20.00 donation is actually a \$40.00 donation which is fabulous and brilliant! Your donation makes it possible for BCSS to provide: individual and family counselling, peer led programs and education to the estimated 1 in 100 individuals and their families on Southern Vancouver Island affected by schizophrenia and psychosis. Please help us make this our best year ever.

**Pledge and Donation Instructions: If you are reading this, you have likely already booked your jump with WildPlay and are interested in gathering pledges for your amazing feat of bravery! Our you would like to support our star jumper, Stefanie Lekei Thank You! Thank You! Thank You! .....REGISTER: <http://www.wildplay.com/nakedbungee2014>**

There are two methods which you can use to collect pledges: **Online:** Your supporters can donate online through our BCSS Victoria page on [CanadaHelps.org](http://CanadaHelps.org) **In Person:** For family and friends who prefer to donate cash or a cheque, you can use the form on the following page. Hard copies are also available from the BCSS Victoria branch office located at 941 Kings Road (in Quadra Street Village) or by phoning 250-388-4391. On the day of your jump bring your completed pledge form with the cash or cheque donations to our volunteers on site. - Heather Murphy

### How, Why and For Whom I Jump...-By Stefanie Lekei

My brother Tyler was a kind soul. He was the truest friend, the warmest heart, and he gave the best hugs. He was funny too; a regular goofball. All of these endearing attributes remained within Ty in the years following his diagnosis of schizophrenia. Despite the demons that haunted him, despite the confusion, and fear that pestered him daily, he was still Ty. He was just 18 when he was diagnosed and only 23 years old when he died by suicide. After what seemed like a lifetime of fighting, the battle was over; the battle, but not the war. My own battle with depression was on the back burner. I sought the medical attention I needed and struggled silently while there were more pressing matters at hand. As a family, we'd scoured the system high and low for resources to help my brother cope, to help him live. A crucial factor we failed to acknowledge was the need for our own support. They say it takes a village to raise a child; it takes a village to fight mental illness too. I hadn't been checking in on myself. I thought it was selfish to focus on the swells of emotion and bouts of panic that were becoming progressively debilitating. These were just symptoms of grief. It was conceited to think my grief was more severe than anyone else's. I neglected to see the affect my distress was causing my loved ones around me. While I was experiencing the discomfort of my thoughts and impulses, my family was suffering alongside. There lied the conceit; that I could deal with it all alone. I was 23 years old when I was diagnosed with bi-polar disorder. Last year was my first time participating in the naked bungee jump for the BC Schizophrenia Society. Now, I'm not shy in the least bit, but this was to be by far the boldest move I'd made in the nude. The warm reception I received upon arrival quickly put me at ease. It was painfully cold as I disrobed, and I was terrified at the thought of propelling myself off a 150 foot ledge attached to a string, but I knew that the fear and pain I was experiencing was nothing near as painful or scary as schizophrenia. If Ty could do it, I could do it. When I got to the top, I was met by a small group of jumpers, all naked as the day they were born. At first, we all just stood around, waiting our turn, averting our eyes. In no time at all, glances turned into smiles, and smiles turned into conversation. A sudden realization came to me; when we were all naked up there together, it wasn't weird anymore. That's exactly how it should be with mental illness. If we all talked about it, it wouldn't be weird. No taboos or insecurities, it would just be ok. It *is* ok; too many people just don't know it yet. Being naked is a vulnerable position, and flinging yourself off a bridge is moderately risky and that's where that fear and uneasiness should stay. No one should ever have to hide their struggles for fear of being shunned. The more we share, the more minds we open, and with each open mind comes two open arms to embrace and support each other and ourselves. Let's make it not weird anymore. **Please support my jump! Let's get talking!!!**

**My jump page: <https://www.facebook.com/events/207279349476548/>**

# Joint Occupational Health & Safety Committee

What's new at BCSS? Well, we have a new committee called the Joint Occupational Health and Safety Committee (JOHS for short). As one of the elected members of this committee I, Kimberly Ferko am excited to have a part in such an important role. As an employee here at BCSS, it is of great value to me to know my place of work is safe and addresses any health concerns that arise. Our committee involves people from all levels of our non-profit organization. I, Don Palmer, Sarah Murphy and Hazel Meredith will be responsible for identifying overall safety issues and workplace health concerns. This committee is an advisory body to the BCSS Victoria that helps bring awareness to issues of safety, workplace risks and develops recommendation to deal with these issues. The role of the committee is also to respond to employee concerns regarding safety and health, recognize workplace hazards and maintain up to date policies along with attending workshops from Worksafe BC. Our terms of reference will strengthen the efficiency of this committee's goals to have a safe, positive and healthy workplace. –Kim Ferko WorkSafe BC site for JOHS:

[http://www2.worksafebc.com/Safety/Home.asp?\\_ga=1.248192975.951734061.1391621926](http://www2.worksafebc.com/Safety/Home.asp?_ga=1.248192975.951734061.1391621926)

## Upcoming BCSS Victoria Financial and Employment Forum

We are in planning stages of our next Public Information Forum for late April or early May! We have been hearing from our membership and family advocacy group that people with mental illness and their families want to know more about what is available and what is missing in our local system to help people increase their financial independence. Our session will include finding supports to gain competitive employment and considerations for employment planning.

Please stay tuned to our website for upcoming events and we will also notify our membership and the general public through email/posters. – Hazel Meredith



## 12<sup>th</sup> Annual Hans Fear Memorial "PROHIBITION JAZZ" FUNDRAISER:

**Was held on Saturday Feb.15th 2014** at the Alix Goolden Hall Music

Featuring the local talent of: ~LOUISE ROSE~ ~MAUREEN WASHINGTON~ ~CAPITAL CITY SYNCOPATERS~

Did you know that schizophrenia and related disorders strike youth often as early as 14 years of age? BCSS Victoria is here to help with the latest hope, help and support for families and people with illnesses know recovery is possible! The Jazz event is held yearly, in memory of Hans, Hanz, Haner, Ghost, names used by family, friends and associates. To say that Hans touched lives is an understatement. As a family we were unaware of his influence until his memorial service. Afflicted with schizophrenia for at least ten years or probably longer, Hans tried to cope with this illness as best he could. His feelings came through in his art form, sometimes dark, sometimes funny, dramatic or quaint. Hans had been a great inspiration to many people! Help us invest in recovery! Our annual fundraiser for The Memorial Fund raises money to invest in the recovery goals of people who need a vote of confidence and tangible support to attain education, art/music pursuits and fitness goals. This year we raised over \$1200 and we accept donations toward to fund throughout the year. - John Fear

## Inspirational Project: The government is undertaking a large public consultation for "PWD"

on how to increase inclusion for people with disabilities living in BC. My hope is that they get lots and lots of feedback. The main website is here: <http://engage.gov.bc.ca/disabilitywhitepaper/> Anyone who wants to contribute an idea or an issue that needs resolving can do so by phone, email, twitter or posting to the website. All the details of how are here: <http://engage.gov.bc.ca/disabilitywhitepaper/participate/> Comments are being taken until March 11.

**BCSS Victoria involvement:** There was a Victoria consultation attended by our MSW student, Karen Gillis. She presented the information to our organization and is encouraging feedback by our staff volunteers and membership. Please do your part to create an enhanced system that is easier for those facing mental illness. Have a few minutes? Please complete the survey!





## BCSS Victoria WRAP UPDATE!

September to November 2012: So as you know, we were very excited to be supported by United Way of Greater Victoria and donors to train our peer team to develop personal WRAPs ® become WRAP ® FACILITATORS!

- November 2012 BCSS Victoria worked to bring Dr. Judith Cook from the USA to present her research on the WRAP as it became recognized as an “evidence based tool”. She presented at our Annual Island Wide Schizophrenia Conference
- We provided our 1:1 peer support participants with a chance to develop individual WRAPs
- We are facilitating our 7<sup>th</sup> WRAP group which is offered 2.5 hours weekly for 8 weeks. A Waitlist is established for future sessions.
- On a pilot project basis, we have co-developed and co-facilitated a “rolling entry WRAP” at the day hospital for the early psychosis program and day hospital. This open group allows for shorter sessions to accommodate the needs of those who want to learn about WRAP but need shorter sessions.
- February 19<sup>th</sup> and 20<sup>th</sup> saw BCSS Victoria train 20 clinicians and peers around the island in developing their own WRAP as a preparation to become Facilitators as part of Phase 2 of training and development. BCSS Victoria is gearing to become a Train the Trainer site...Help us grow!

### Are we excited about WRAP®? YOU BET!

WRAP is shown to prevent relapse, increase hope and empowerment...we all need Hope as we take steps in our recovery journeys. WRAP is a “living document” and grows as you gain awareness of your own wellness needs and build a supportive network. Did you know that you can use a WRAP to increase personal planning around mental health and physical health needs and more? We will host an information session later this year! **We would like to thank you major funders and donors for their assistance.**

**We could not offer this much hope and help without your financial assistance. Many cannot afford to pay for WRAP and your support helps us provide it to those who need it. We would like to thank CDI College for their ongoing support as a host location for many of our groups.**

**–Hazel Meredith**

## PSR / RPS Canada - Partners in Recovery...Uncovering Potential:

"Psychosocial Rehabilitation (PSR) Réadaptation Psychosociale (RPS) Canada is a leader in transforming the mental health sector to be an inclusive society where people achieve full social inclusion. PSR/RPS Canada promotes psychosocial rehabilitation principles and the growth of psychosocial rehabilitation practices in Canada". Please see their website or become a member here: <http://psrrpscanda.ca/index.php> Hazel Meredith, Executive Director, serves as a board member on PSR/RPS Canada and Peer Coordinator, Don Palmer, serves on the BC Chapter of PSR/RPS Canada. The National conference will be held in Toronto in September 2014. Award Nominations are being accepted now! (see their website).

**What is Psychosocial Rehabilitation or "PSR"?** Basically, when we look towards help for us or our loved ones, we are seeking help to just medically but for our psychological, social needs as well. Some would call this a "bio-psychosocial" approach. A pill can't address employment needs, social needs, housing needs and other areas on its own.

**As such, BCSS Victoria planned and co-hosted a PSR BC Webinar** event at the Patient care Centre on January 24<sup>th</sup> which helped people from around BC learn more about PSR. Family Members, people with mental illness, Peer Supporters, volunteers, students, clinicians and the general public learned about PSR and about an upcoming framework to advance practice in BC. We are thrilled that work is being done to help ensure people get supports they need to live more fulfilling lives. Stay tuned for other upcoming events.

**At BCSS Victoria we are asked what services are available to help those with a mental illness seek support and help in their recovery.** Do you wonder what rehabilitative practices are taking place in our region to help you or a loved one with mental illness? We are pleased to share that our Social Work students, Karen Gillis (MSW program), and Jamie Brace (BSW program) are performing a gap analysis of employment programs with an eye to recovery orientation in our region. The overview will be shared at our upcoming public forum on Employment and Finances. Please stay tuned to email announcements and our website for events. – Hazel Meredith

## MEMBERSHIP RENEWAL TIME! Please make cheques payable to:

British Columbia Schizophrenia Society, Victoria Branch (BCSS Victoria)

941 King's Road, Victoria, BC, V8T 1W7 Phone: 384-4225; fax: 388-4391

Easy Giving on our website through Canada Helps Button: [www.bcsvgictoria.ca](http://www.bcsvgictoria.ca) E-mail: [admin.bcsvgictoria@shaw.ca](mailto:admin.bcsvgictoria@shaw.ca)

Please accept my tax-deductible donation of: \$ \_\_\_\_\_ (receipts issued for gifts of \$20 and over)

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Postal Code \_\_\_\_\_ Email \_\_\_\_\_

- ☐ I wish to become a member of BCSS Victoria. (\$25 individual membership)
- ☐ I want BCSS Victoria online newsletter (be informed, save a tree, help us save \$! Share with you network!)
- ☐ E-mail me information about local events and news pertinent to our community! (unsubscribe anytime)

As a local regional branch we provide up to date local info and newsworthy items of provincial, national and international scope.

subscribe to provincial info: <http://www.bcsvgictoria.ca/2007/05/aboutbcsvgictoria/e-newsletters/>

subscribe to national information: <http://www.schizophrenia.ca/newsletters.php>

Designation (undesignated donations will be put towards supporting BCSS Victoria Programs and Services):

- ☐ Programs & Services (includes children/youth/adult peer programs, advocacy, consultation and more)
- ☐ Memorial Fund (supports education, arts and other goal support)
- ☐ Endowment Fund

*Thank you for your contribution!!*

Please consider giving throughout the year with payroll deductions programs (i.e. BC government employee payroll deduction program), charitable Christmas or gift giving in another's name or consider a legacy gift to help others who need us. *Thank you!*