



S E P T 2 0 1 4

Newsletter

BC Schizophrenia Society, Victoria Branch

“Self Care”

For info or self referral: visit www.bcssvictoria.ca or call 250-384-4225 email: admin.bcsc@shaw.ca

Self-Care through Learning: Annual Conference November 28th, 2014

Learning is a big part of empowerment for people with lived experience and caregivers. Come and be a part of this important annual conference at the Victoria Conference Centre.

We are proud to partner with Island Health to present the 17th Victoria and 12th Annual Vancouver Island Schizophrenia Conference on November 28th, 2014. Caregivers, people with lived experience of mental health challenges learn together with GPs, Psychiatrists, clinicians, and administrators on relevant topics. This year is themed “Connecting the Docs”. It features three plenary speakers, *Dr. Manchanda on Early Intervention in First Episode Psychosis*, *Dr. Bonnie Kirsh on The Way Forward: Realizing Work Potential and Possibilities for People with Lived Experience*, and *Dr. Williams on the Pharmacologically Difficult to Treat Schizophrenia Patient*. The afternoon workshops are varied and we are pleased to be offering our Family Counsellor, *Susanne Dannenberg for an interactive workshop on Supporting a Loved One with Limited Insight*. I will be co-presenting with *Dr. Yaxley and Jennifer Sutton on Coming Home: Moving from Mental Health Care Back to Family Practice*. Other special features of the day include a community booth fair, an “Artists in Recovery” art exhibit and a lunch time presentation and networking event on WRAP and Peer Support on the island by BCSS Victoria and its partners. Registration and information can be found on this link: <http://islandschizophreniaconference.webs.com/> See you there!

-Hazel Meredith



The BCSS Victoria is Hosting the Annual Christmas Dinner & Dance on Sat Dec 6th

Doors open at 5:30pm for guests at the First Metropolitan United Church at 932 Balmoral (Quadra & Balmoral).

This is an invitation only event for our membership of those with mental illness and their families. It is warm, inclusive and inviting, providing an opportunity to socialize and enjoy the holiday season. This year

Chef Steven Walker Duncan is cooking with us a full turkey and ham dinner. We are in need of volunteers to take on a number of different roles such as decorating the Hall early Sat day, serving, bussing, kitchen clean up and end of the night clean up. Or if you would like to join our planning committee please let me know, as we have 4 spots available. We are also looking for an overall event SPONSOR to support this offering to our community

members. **RSVP Call 384-4225 or email: admin.bcsc@shaw.ca**



"Self Care Formulated"

Self care is important for all individuals in society, however self care for individuals with a diagnosed serious mental illness (SMI) is especially important because it could mean relapse or recovery. There are three elements of self care that an individual with a diagnosed serious mental illness can apply to make their self care more effective. First, develop one positive coping mechanism. Second, start to implement that one positive coping mechanism and third, reinforce the positive use of the coping mechanism by celebrating the personal success it brings. . .

. . . An example of a coping mechanism would be a technique used in cognitive behavioral therapy and that is to view a negative life situation in a positive light by flipping it around. Applying this positive coping mechanism would benefit one's well-being and contribute to a higher quality of life as well as reducing stress.

Family members can support the self care applied by the individual with SMI by noticing, acknowledging and validating the change-over from a negative interpretation to a positive one. When a family member becomes acutely aware of this transformation, the family member could verbally acknowledge this in the form of praise of the cognizant ability of the individual suffering from SMI. This praise by the family member combined with the positive use of the coping mechanism by the individual with SMI would contribute to the individual's sense of self which in turn would benefit the individual with SMI, the relationship the individual has with their family member and the reciprocal nature of positive socialization on all societal levels making it easier for an individual with SMI to feel more accepted versus stigmatized.

The painting symbolizes how the positive coping mechanism can chase away the darkness in one's life. The light in the sky and on the trees represents the increased quality of life one can achieve by applying self care.

Photo: Rembrandt, "The Stone Bridge," 1638. – by Annuska Vanderpol



BCSS Victoria AGM 2014

The 30th Anniversary. Annual General Meeting of the BC Schizophrenia Society, Victoria Branch was held on **Monday, Sept 8th from 6 to 8 pm** at CDI College with 58 attendees present. Thank you to Kent Laforme, Paula Roumeliotis and Marion Gibson for sharing their stories on the panel. Also a great amount appreciation to all the long time members, founders and volunteers for all their efforts at making BCSS Victoria run efficiently all these years. It is because of you that we have been around for 30 years serving the mental health community. May we continue to support people with mental illness and their families with their goals for well being.

Self Care



Self care is ever important to keep my harmful symptoms at bay. I need both a healthy self image and a strong barrier between what is real and imagined. I monitor my thoughts correcting harmful ones continuously. Although I have few symptoms currently, I still have to be proactive and persist. I trust in my ability to continue to use helpful affirmations. I know what it is to have a healthy outlook on life. Like many who suffer from mental illness, I often over personalize and am over sensitive to my environment and interactions with others. I often think these interactions have something to do with me, but realistically they do not. When I feel this way I remind myself that I am just over personalizing, and in actuality the happening has nothing to do with me. I have to remind myself of this otherwise my symptoms can spiral out of control. I put effort into creating healthy relationships, finding common interest. The goals I set for myself drive me and reflect my inner feelings of value and belonging . . .

. . . Self care for me is to create an environment where I am able to pursue my interests, and not being fully happy then to at least have contentment. The quality of my state of mind is dependent on looking for solutions and changing the ways I perceive the world. Taking my medications as prescribed is one of the most important parts of my self care, but there are things that are “beyond medication”. My harmful thoughts don’t just disappear because of medication. Medication reduces thought over activity but that isn’t enough. I am responsible to monitor my thought. I must take all the time necessary to stop harmful thoughts and replace them with thoughts that compliment quality of life. I am fascinated with the idea of reinventing myself making a better updated me. Old beliefs that once fueled anger, depression and upset inside me have been left in the dust, reframed, discarded, and replaced. I tap into the core of my mind to change beliefs that are more detrimental than beneficial. Mystical type beliefs are replaced in an effort to ground myself in realism, so my creativity doesn’t meld with reality, promoting harmful psychosis - **by Fabian Rousseau**

A Self Care 1st- My first published article!!!!

Putting it bluntly, the people in Bruce Weber’s stories are dying for his business. That’s because Weber spends his days writing obituaries for the New York Times. He’s also a passionate cyclist who has rode across America not once but twice. His latest trip in 2011 at the age of 57 is chronicled in a book entitled *Life is a Wheel*. It’s a fascinating diary of his journey, with vivid descriptions of the land, the weather and—most importantly the people. Weber starts off in July from Astoria, Oregon and travels 4,100 miles to New York City. Along the way, he scaled the Rockies, battled fierce prairie winds and pedaled through downpours. With a reporter’s keen eye for detail, he brings the vast landscape to life for the reader. Weber also reflects on the kindness of people, whether they found him shelter or gave him a lift through areas impossible for cyclists. One of the most interesting parts of the book is a side trip Weber took to Vietnam in 1995. He joined a cycling tour group who pedaled from Hanoi to Ho Chi Minh City in three weeks. During their trek, they travelled through “deep green jungles” and lush riverbank villages, but Also came across terrain that “still looked like a war zone”. The Vietnamese they met were fascinated with them. That’s because they were the first white people they’d encountered since the U.S. evacuation in 1975. Weber also noted that the villagers had never seen a person with hair on their arms and legs. With the thousands of miles to travel, Weber also considers his past, his family and the “echo that a well lived life leaves behind.” Some of the most poignant passages deal with the passing of his parents and a close friend. Finally, when people ask Weber whether he’ll do it again he responds – partly joking and partly annoyed – “What, twice isn’t enough?” - **by Colin Pryer**

17th Victoria and 12th Vancouver Island Schizophrenia Conference**This year's theme is: "Connecting the Docs:****Family Practice – Hospital – Family Practice"** www.islandschizophreniaconference.webs.com

A one day symposium for People with a Mental Illness, Family Members, Psychiatrists, General Practitioners and Mental Health Care Workers

Next Conference: November 28th, 2014

8:30 am to 4:00 pm Victoria Conference Centre, 720 Douglas Street

3 Plenary Speakers and 8 afternoon concurrent workshops

\$30 People in Recovery and Students, \$45 Family Members,

\$110 Physicians, Clinicians and Health Professionals

**TWITTER:**

@BCSSVictoria

FACEBOOK:<http://on.fb.me/1vDKUQJ>

CAN YOU HELP? We are seeking extra financial support for our Peer Program this year, which is facing an unexpected shortfall. If you can *pay it forward* or have a gift to give, please help us by giving online through our website "Canada Helps" button, mail a cheque, or stop by the office. Thanks for your help!!

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.bcsvgvictoria.ca E-mail: admin.bcsvg@shaw.ca

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

Name _____ Phone _____

Address _____ City _____ Province _____

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!), you can unsubscribe anytime by sending us an email to admin.bcsvg@shaw.ca
- ☐ 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.bcsvg.org/2007/05/aboutbcsvg/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!*

"We acknowledge the financial support of the Province of British Columbia."

United Way
OF GREATER VICTORIA
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A REASON TO HOPE. THE MEANS TO HOPE.
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- Victoria Branch -