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Family Connections

OCTOBER 2019—EDITED BY ISABELLA MORI

CREATIVITY

... is the theme for this edition of the newsletter. You will find a beautiful manifesto of hope created by the Family Connections support group, art work by consumers, and stories about drumming, writing, puppetry, stand-up comedy and more—all about how creative pursuits help in people's recovery.



Sometimes supporting your loved one requires you to acknowledge that you are not able and/or capable of providing them with what they need.

Please remember that if your loved one is at risk to themselves or others, the best resources are your local Emergency Department, and 911. In Vancouver, for non-emergencies please contact the Access and Assessment Center (AAC).

AAC Contact Information

Hours: 7:30 am - 11:00 pm 7 days/week; 365 days/year

Phone: 604-675-3700

Address: 803 West 12th Avenue (at Willow between 12th and 10th)

About us...

This Newsletter is brought to you by Vancouver Coastal Health's Family Support and Involvement Team. We assist families with resources, education, information, support, and with facilitating the inclusion of family in the care of their loved ones. We also work with patient and family partners to ensure that clients and families are involved in planning and decision making across Vancouver Coastal Health's Mental Health and Substance use Services. You can find our contact information on the front page.

The *Family Connections Newsletter* is available electronically, direct to your email inbox. If you don't already receive *Family Connections* via email and would like to stay up-to-date about programs and services for families who are supporting a loved one with mental illness and/or addiction, sign up at www.spotlightonmentalhealth.com

By going to this website and clicking on the [Family](#) tab you can find our [Community Resource Guide for Families](#), Vancouver Coastal Health's [Family Involvement Policy](#) and much more.

Thanks for reading!

A Message from the Family Advisory Committee:

Hello families!

Over the past few months, I have been attending the Family Connections and BC Schizophrenia Society Support groups with more frequency. I do this for myself, to reaffirm that I'm in a supportive community, and to listen to family members.

When we are concerned for our loved ones on an ongoing basis as we are, its not easy to think of creative ways to cope. Or to help them in their suffering. But there it is, at every meeting. Someone might disclose something they tried recently that seemed to work, and it gets my mind going. Would that work in my situation? Can I tweak it a little bit so that it would? Can I share something that worked for me and that might help spark ideas for another family member?

When the wheels are turning in my mind, it feels pretty good!"

Patti Zane, FAC Chair

The FAC represents the diverse voices of families within Vancouver Mental Health and Substance Use Services and acts in advisory, advocacy, and educational roles to improve the care experience. Membership consists of family members, people with lived experience and mental health and substance use professionals. Interested in becoming a member? Let us know!



*One of our recent support groups developed this beautiful document about hope.
What a wonderful example of creative collaboration!*

Reflections on hope from members of the Family Connections Support Group.

Why HOPE? What is the role that HOPE plays in your life? Why is it important?

Hope is “possibility” and if I pursue positive possible outcomes I may not achieve them but the pursuit might bring meaning and connection. My quote for this would be: “I can do it. Even if it can’t be done. I can do it”

Without hope there is the temptation to sink into despair, which is hope’s opposite. Hope lifts you up. Despair makes you sink.

It is what holds me up when experiencing feelings of grief or deep disappointment. Gives me the strength to walk in the dark valleys... and a place to move towards.

Hope ignites life. Hope Enables Love... as love enables hope.

It helps me to put one foot in front of the other and keep going – even when all I want to do is crawl under the bed. It lets me find joy with the smallest things. I realize hope is not about the big things – the perfect life, an illness cure, winning the lottery. Hope is about every little thing.

When I’m dealing with the really tough stuff everything is grey and dark and I can’t find my way out. I need to know there is a place (that I can’t imagine right now) that is better than what I see. This is important so that I won’t bail on my loved one and on my other relationships.

Hope holds the world together just like gravity holds the cosmos in play.

Hope keeps me centered, keeps me thinking about me and my life, my goals and wishes. Hope gets me up every day to pursue life.

Hope is part of being Human. Sometimes it is all we have – but it can be painful, it can be dashed repeatedly. Like moss growing in a forest, it is simple, it gets trampled on, lacks water and sunshine, but given the right conditions it will recover and grow.

Hope is a tiny, maybe even dim, glimmer of light when I’m in the dark tunnel of depression. It winks at me, showing there is a way out.

What does hope sound like? What are the words or phrases you associate with hope?

It sounds like “what are you grateful for?” It sounds like “what are you looking forward to?” It sounds reassuring.

One of your favourite songs – e.g. U2’s “It’s a beautiful day” (for me)

Hope sounds like “I love you”. Hope sounds like Leonard Cohen saying hi depression finally lifter when he was 77 years old. Hope sounds like my father saying “you can do this”

For me, hope involves faith, determination, courage, optimism, humour, creativity, love, pain (when hope seems dashed), etc. It’s a number of things – and everyone has different ways to express hope.

Hope sounds like laughter, joy, feeling secure even at times when all security of your life seems to be disappearing.

Hope sounds like promise of a better tomorrow.

Words I associate with hope: foundational but sometimes elusive, wonder and mystery working side by side.

I can and will do my best.

Sounds of hope ... birds twittering, tree leaves rustling, small children’s voices, someone practicing an instrument, my 94 year old mom’s voice.

Art brought me out of isolation and gave a way for me to connect with others.

HEALING THRU ART

by Sandra Yuen MacKay

I have dealt with mental illness for 35 years. Family have given me a home, supported and cared for me over the years. My symptoms have decreased over time with medication, age, and stress management. I learned to ask my husband for reality checks to maintain objectivity. He is forgiving and patient. He encourages me to make independent choices as an entrepreneurial artist and as a volunteer Board Director for Coast Foundation Society, and to find my own circle of friends and occupations on my own. A caregiver should support their loved one to make their own decisions, be responsible, find meaningful activities, and live as independently as possible.



After my last episode, I joined The Art Studios, which grounded me through art and writing. Art brought me out of isolation and gave a way for me to connect with others. Art is my passion, leading to changes in my thinking, purpose, and life direction. Painting is a way of life, opening my mind to possibilities and sharing my personal vision of optimism and hope.

My suggestion to people with lived experience of mental illness living in the community, is to surround yourself with people and activities that affect you positively. Volunteering for a cause, creating, playing music, singing, exercise, coffee with a friend, etc. – all these things can give you a richer life. Self-affirmations and completing a project or task can give a sense of confidence and satisfaction and a better outlook on life. Be kind to yourself and take care of your physical health.

Years ago, I didn't know what was in my future. It took decades to develop insight into my illness and make steps forward to find peace. So stay hopeful, because opportunities are there if you look for them. Be proactive in your recovery and be your own advocate.

Bio

Sandra Yuen MacKay is a visual artist and author of *My Schizophrenic Life: The Road to Recovery from Mental Illness* and *Chop Shtick*, and co-author of *From New York to Vancouver: Stories on the Fly*. She earned a Fine Arts Diploma from Langara College and an art history degree from the University of British Columbia. She has received the Courage to Come Back Award and the Queen Elizabeth II Diamond Jubilee Medal. Sandra is also a public speaker on mental health.

CREATIVITY, PUPPETRY ... AND SALMON!

By Isabella Mori



Painting by Jay Peachy

Jay Peachy describes himself as a “Certified Creative Mind ... a contemporary outsider artist who believes in the healing properties of the natural environment.” He is a painter, puppeteer, arts and environmental activist, poet – and the list goes on. He has also had a diagnosis of bipolar disorder, and has experienced certification and hospitalization. He says that in the past he worked “in a dysfunctional fast paced high-stress corporate environment which became so overwhelming it destroyed [my] spirit and mental stability.” Jay has a particular affinity for salmon. He finds that “the parallel between the power of corporations and the

effect on the environment (and by extension wild salmon) are now becoming more topical as the consciousness around the environment are more in the public discourse and the collective anxiety for many.”

I connected with Jay the other day to talk about his projects, and particularly puppetry. Puppetry, he says, “is a way to deliver a positive message. It harnesses the power of creativity and art and can really shift things for people.” Through his work, Jay hopes people will better understand the reciprocity or interdependence between humans and their natural environment, and particularly the salmon. Using interactive puppetry, he helps his audience understand the salmon’s experience, and how powerfully salmon influences and interacts with our ecology.

“The salmon’s journey – it’s insanity what he has to go through, in the most reverent sense of the word.” Apart from the ecological message, salmon’s journey can also be a metaphor for our journey – a version of the famous Hero’s Journey, perhaps. Influenced by Indigenous ways as well as great personal successes with CBT (cognitive behaviour therapy), in his puppetry performances, Jay uses what he thinks of his own ‘CBT medicine.’ “Rollerblading fish doing rap? People don’t know what’s happening to them,” says Jay, talking about an element of his puppetry.

Well, I don’t know what’s happening to me, either, because that kind of paradox sounds more like hypnotherapy to me than CBT. But my mind – my cognitive apparatus – is definitely engaged, and my behaviour is influenced, because my fascination with Jay’s work leads to writing this article. Maybe that’s what Jay means with CBT medicine.

What Jay likes about puppetry is that it is so multidisciplinary. He can deliver the message in



Puppetry is a way to deliver a positive message. It harnesses the power of creativity and art and can really shift things for people

many different ways – visual, tactile, scent, taste, dance. Will The Salmon, one of the main puppets, adds physical comedy. During Fish Fest, salmon shows up as food or “gastrointestinal performance art” – a term coined by Jay. People accept all this mind-bending because it’s so entertaining. Part of Jay’s inspiration also comes from WP Puppet Theatre, a group that enlightens people about mental health through puppetry and masks.

How does all of this relate to mental health? “A lot of where my mental health issues come from ... there is something in my spirit that requires a larger space for expression ... having lived in the corporate world like an Orca that’s living in a swimming pool ... my mind is a wild and free spirit but the corporate world was like a fish bowl always, you always get the same food and live just long enough to be used up. Artistry and expression allow my mind to exist in this world. There is more room now for my emotions to go where they want to go. In the creative fields and non-profit fields, there is a different language that is healthier for the human spirit. In the corporate world, you are like fish in the fish bowl. People may not necessarily see that when I say it but they get it when I do it in puppetry.”

More about Jay Peachy here <https://jpeachygallery.com/> and about WP Puppet Theatre here <https://www.educationmatters.ca/using-monologues-and-masks-to-spark-mental-health-discussions/>

CREATIVITY AND LIVING WITH MENTAL ILLNESS

By Laura Stewart

For many years my children journeyed along a path where anxiety, anorexia, depression, and anger became perilous parts of the terrain. There were many moments of love and of joy in our family as well. I didn’t realize that there were traumatic events kept secret. I was living through some of my own. Then a few years ago, three of our adult children had severe life-altering panic attacks, deep depression, psychosis, suicide contemplation and an attempt. Our search for a way through these unfolding events stretched us into many unknowns.

My husband and I were on-call. Crisis intervention became a core part of our lives, as did providing financial support. We designated one small space in our home where we didn’t talk about these evolving and profound stories.

I started drumming the African Djembe during one particularly difficult time. Immediately, and still years later, the drum nourished my Spirit. Drumming brings me focus, calm and the freedom to soar with other drums. It connects me to the heart-beat of life. Hands moving, bodies swaying, and the music of the whole gives me emotional and physical strength. I develop new skills, open unseen channels to ancient rhythms.

Because of where we live, the Pacific West Coast, the First Nations Drum and the ancestral songs have become a powerful source of ceremony, community and healing. I was taught to make my own drum, by three dedicated leaders. This



Balance is hard to find in the middle of chaos. Drumming and singing bring me a sense of balance and joy.

process was full of magic and opened me to new levels of empathy. Respect for the deer whose hide I used for the drum skin, the wood of the frame, the birthing of sound from our new creations, these experiences feed and inspire me. Drumming in circle deepens my love of traditional wisdom and connection with the living earth, the sun and moon, the waters and the Infinite.

Balance is hard to find in the middle of chaos. Drumming and singing bring me a sense of balance and joy. Our traumas become offerings that rise on the sound. They are active forms of therapy.

Writing words on a page has been a constant and powerful tool to maintaining my own mental health. It links head to heart to hand. Since I was a teenager, and first travelled by train across Canada, I have written in a journal. I suspect it began as the need to witness my own life. I have shared many short pieces with other writers, over the last 20 years, almost always with the same writing mentor. Occasionally I've put things out to share in public. Writing fiction allowed me to express, through characters, the issues and challenges of my life, and to gain some clarity, some perspective. Writing without editing, until you reach deep into your own truth. Editing comes much later.

More recently, I've learned to play with rhythms on the page. Poetic expression began by the full moon, while drumming by the waters of Deep Cove. Writing and speaking my poetry in public has given me the impetus to do more. Surprisingly, I love to present my own work, unlike any other public speaking I've ever done. It has helped me face the truth of the terror I've felt, and the qualities of beauty and healing in Nature, in relationship, in self-expression.

Writing is also practical. During recent medical crises and surgeries, I found a mantra to rely on. Four words: Resourcefulness, Resilience, Tenacity and Hope.

Creativity is different for everyone. There are many avenues and possibilities. Reaching out for help is essential. I was able to be part of a Mindfulness Based Stress Relief group. It was so timely that I wept. We learned to train body and mind to come into the present moment. What a discipline. What a gift!

I am not a knowledgeable gardener, but I do love working in the soil, watching the blooms of my passion flowers, a gift from my daughter. And today, I watch the morning sun on the Angel Trumpets. Hands in the dirt is a good antidote to stress.

Throughout these years I have become a soup maestro. My Mother made kickin' good soups. So do I. The satisfaction, the blending of ingredients, the taste. Aah. And the nourishment.

Each adult child has travelled their own unique path. Each discovered that there truly is thriving and rebirth after a crash. We have all had to find our way through, creatively, with kindness to ourselves and determination. Reach out, reach in and breathe.

MY ARTIST'S CORNER

By MAC members (Barb Wendzich, BCJP, Shamin Mawji, Marcia)

What is MAC?

MAC is a peer led art program for adults living with mental health issues. The program is based in Burnaby and serves residents of Burnaby & New Westminister. Our Vision is **Make art. Be well.** 'We find that the creation of art can be deeply healing and is often a powerful force for recovery' – MAC Coordinator. My Artist's Corner offers instruction, artist grade materials, participation in community art events, and two major shows each year. MAC is connected to the ECHO Clubhouse in Burnaby.



MAC member Barb Wendzich feels that music helps her creativity (the image of the dancing couple is hers). One of BCJP's pictures is shown below, Marcia gives us a poem, and Shamin talks about her creative activities with MAC. The image on the front of this newsletter shows an array of paintings by MAC participants – beautiful art by beautiful people.

Shamin Mawji

Starting with the MAC program in the year 2011, coming with my worker it was new starting to join in MAC, and very exciting for me. I was introduced to ECHO staff members and Teresa. Art was not new to me but still I was nervous to move to the ECHO program and art. The art program is helping in many different ways. It helps to improve your health, is good for the mind, and for socializing with others. I am learning many different techniques, doing volunteering service, and do different activities like playing bingo, bochee game, and going to the Actively Artistic group. I attend different presentations, go for walks with a staff member and some members. All this makes a lot of difference and helps. I write in the creative writing group. I have a delicious lunch every week with many members and help with that, attend members' meetings, give different ideas, and we share our ideas with each other. I help in many different ways, which helps me move ahead with my life. I learn computer skills, play games, attend the talent show and take part in the talent show. Singing is fun!

A Poem by Marcia

Roses are red,
Violets are blue
Small white flowers
Are precious too.

Some come in clusters
Some rarely stand alone
But then all make good bouquets
They do in any time zone.

Painting also
by Marcia



*The Vision
of My
Artists
Corner is:*

*Make
art.
Be well.*

Thoughts for the Day, a painting by MAC member BCJP



*At Stand
Up For
Mental
Health
mental
health
consumers
turn their
problems
into stand-
up comedy*

CREATIVE PROGRAMS IN VANCOUVER

By Isabella Mori

Here is a sample of programs and places in Vancouver that offer creative opportunities specifically for people with mental health and/or substance use challenges.

Imagining Inclusion - <https://imagininginclusion.ca/>

Imagining Inclusion is a research project that focuses on community inclusion, health, and wellbeing for people with lived experience of mental illness. Imagining Inclusion has used a project called Photovoice to explore the lived experience of mental illness by equipping participants with cameras and asking them to take photos based on specific research questions and their personal experience. After taking the photos, participants fill out reflection sheets relating to the research question. The following week, participants meet in a group led by peer facilitators where each photo is discussed with the photographer and then opened up to the rest of the group for further dialogue. Photovoice exhibitions have been part of some of our family conferences.

Stand Up For Mental Health - <http://standupformentalhealth.com/>

“Most people think you have to be nuts to do stand up comedy ... Counselor and Stand Up Comic David Granirer offers it as a form of therapy!” (from the Stand Up web site)

In David’s Stand Up For Mental Health course, mental health consumers turn their problems into stand up comedy, then perform their acts at conferences, treatment centers, psych wards, for various mental health organizations, corporations, government agencies, on college and university campuses, and most importantly for the general public. “We use comedy to give mental health consumers a powerful voice and help reduce the stigma and discrimination around mental illness,” says Gra-

nirer. “The idea is that laughing at our setbacks raises us above them. It makes people go from despair to hope, and hope is crucial to anyone struggling with adversity. Studies prove that hopeful people are more resilient and also tend to live longer, healthier lives.”



Art Studios - <http://recoverythroughart.ca/>

The Art Studios (shown above) has been recognized nationally and internationally as a model of psychosocial rehabilitation for mental illness or substance use issues. It is a safe, respectful and accepting community where people with major mental illnesses or substance use engage with rehabilitation staff to recover and grow through art. The Art Studios offers free classes and workshops on painting, ceramics, printmaking and more. Close to 4000 clients have been helped since its beginning in 1994.

Gallery Gachet - <http://gachet.org/>

An artist-run centre located in the Downtown Eastside, Gallery Gachet is an exhibition and studio space built to empower participants as artists, administrators and curators. Through artistic means, the gallery aims to demystify and challenge issues related to mental health and social marginalization in order to educate the public and promote social and economic justice. The organization’s cultural services have grown from the operation of a small basement studio in downtown Granville South, offering one exhibition a year in 1993, to coordinating approximately 1500 square feet of public-access arts space with up to 12 exhibitions each year, in addition to residencies, workshops, artist talks, symposia, special projects and other events. Exhibitions feature a range of contemporary and experimental artwork in all media in addition to community arts programming.

Megaphone Magazine - <http://www.megaphonemagazine.com/about>

While not specifically intended for people who live with mental health or addiction issues, Megaphone still deserves a mention. Megaphone produces a monthly magazine and the well-known annual Hope In Shadows calendar that low-income and homeless vendors sell on the streets of Vancouver and Victoria to earn income and build community. The magazine produces media focused on community, social justice, and independent culture in Vancouver and Victoria. It amplifies the stories and perspectives of people marginalized by poverty, and regularly features writing and photography from their vendors, writing workshop participants, and low-income community members.

*Mega-
phone
amplifies
the
stories
and
perspec-
tives of
margina-
lized
people*

Nov
21st
2019

SCULPTING VOICES WORKSHOP



KAREN TAYLOR

Registered Mental Health Nurse (RMN), Director of Working for Recovery
www.workingtorecovery.co.uk

Karen Taylor is a world renowned expert on voices and recovery. Hearing voices can take over a person's life until they feel they are existing rather than living. We know through the many people who have challenged this perception that people can go on to live a full life even when they hear voices.

This one day workshop will explore the work needed to make this possible. From building initial coping skills, to building a better understanding of voices through voice profiling, to learning how to support people to dialogue compassionately with their voices and learning what the voices may represent, it is possible to leave the illness trap.

Nov 21 10:30am-4:30pm
Paetzold Auditorium
1st Floor, Jim Pattison Pavilion
Vancouver General Hospital

Suitable for: Mental Health Supporters including but not limited to: Counsellors, Psychiatrists, Psychologists, Nurses, OTs, Youth Workers, Addiction Workers, Hearing Voices Group Facilitators, Caregivers, Peer Support Workers.

Cost: \$100

To register, please visit:

<https://www.regonline.com/sculptingvoices2019>

Contact Gill Walker:

gill.walker@vch.ca | 604-649-1983

Learning Objectives:

- Understand the relationship between voices and the narratives of the person, and learn how to explore the metaphors and spiritual frameworks some people have in a safe and inspiring way.
- Learn about the three stages of voice hearing: startling phase, organizational phase and stabilization phase.
- Learn specific techniques used in the Voice Sculpting Approach.

Karen Taylor is a RMN with 16 years of experience in the National Health Services (NHS) in England. She has personal experience of designing, implementing and managing innovative community care services. After leaving the NHS Karen managed a company *Keepwell Limited* for two years. Whilst there, she co-authored the workbook *Working to Recovery* and ran a psychosis resolution service based on recovery. Now based in Scotland, and co-director of *Working to Recovery Limited* with Ron Coleman, Karen has also been involved in introducing recovery training into Australia, New Zealand, Palestine, Denmark and Italy as well as the UK.

Co-Hosted by:



BC Hearing Voices Network

Vancouver
CoastalHealth

AND THEN THERE'S WRITING ...

By Isabella Mori

And then there's writing and poetry. I've never told a personal story here in the newsletter, but maybe this is a good time. My childhood was – let's just say colourful. My parents tried the best they could but they had to battle their and their parent's trauma from the two wars, my father's concurrent disorder, my mother's anxiety, my sister's disability, and poverty. Undiagnosed and unacknowledged depression and anxiety plus a great bewilderment over how to live this life were a constant companion for me until well into my 30s. I honestly don't know how I would have survived all of this without journal writing and poetry. Here is an attempt to talk about how for the longest time, I could not let anyone see what was going on for me:

i've been carrying around with me
for all these years
a hidden suitcase of despair

once in a while
i go and open it
inspect it gleefully
under the covers of my sheltering bed

i am delighted at its contents:
colourful puppets and leftover trinkets
spill out
and one or two caterpillars, brilliant
in the half shade of what little light pierces
the soft, warm clouds of my duvet

then, when i hear footsteps
i close it
camouflage it
so that no-one can steal
not even with a glimpse
my precious suitcase
brimming with exquisite anguish

I was not able to explain in rational language to others, and more importantly, to myself, how warped my inner life felt. But I could do it in poetry, and that was immensely helpful. Fortunately I had a therapist to whom I could bring these poems. It often felt like I was a little hunting dog, rooting around in the forest, bringing back those poems to my therapist-hunter, looking up at him hopefully for approval. He never disappointed. How lucky I was!

Today I still write, but now it is mostly to keep what precious sanity I slowly achieved. Creativity is part of a daily practice to which I devote at least fifteen minutes, often much longer. I write a lot of haiku.

sixty-four and still
i play at being an adult ...
my teddybear smiles

(If you're interested, I will also be involved with an event at the Heart of the City Festival—Poetry on Page and Stage on November 5—see next page.)



Downtown Eastside Heart of the City Festival
Wednesday October 30 to Sunday November 10, 2019

Over 100 events at over 40 venues throughout the Downtown Eastside

The 16th annual Downtown Eastside Heart of the City Festival offers twelve days of music, stories, theatre, poetry, cultural celebrations, films, dance, readings, forums, workshops, discussions, gallery exhibits, mixed media, art talks, history talks and history walks. This year's theme ***Holding the Light*** has emerged from the compelling need of DTES-involved artists and residents to illuminate the vitality and relevance of the Downtown Eastside community and its diverse and rich traditions, knowledge systems, ancestral languages, cultural roots and stories.

The mandate of the *Downtown Eastside Heart of the City Festival* is to promote, present and facilitate the development of artists, art forms, cultural traditions, history, activism, people and great stories about Vancouver's Downtown Eastside.

Two events specifically talk about mental health:

The film ***Cracking Up***. "Twelve people, multiple personalities, one dream – standup comedy". Written and directed by Tara Shortt, produced for CBC, *Cracking Up* follows a year in the life of brave individuals who take a course in stand-up comedy through David Granirer's program *Stand Up For Mental Health*. November 1, 4pm - 5pm, Carnegie Theatre, 401 Main Street, *Free*

Life Lessons From A Cycle Across A Continent —In the summer of 2018 Suzie O'Shea decided to make the journey home to Ireland by bicycle. Passionate about mental health, she has been sharing openly and honestly about her experiences of the cycle across Canada. Join Suzie for an evening of storytelling as she brings you on a visual journey of the ups and downs, twists and turns of the 7,500 km road home. November 6, 7pm – 8pm náca?mat ct Strathcona Branch (Vancouver Public Library), 730 E. Hastings, *Free*

For more information, visit <http://www.heartofthecityfestival.com/>

The Family Connections Support Group

The *Family Support and Involvement Team* has a support group for family and friends of individuals with mental illness and/or substance use concerns. The group is co-facilitated by a Family Support & Involvement Coordinator and family member.

We aim to create a welcoming and supportive space in which family members can share their experiences with each other and feel supported and strengthened in their efforts to help their loved ones. The group has a small educational component. Participants also receive twice-monthly emails with the contents of the educational part.

Family and supporters are free to attend on a regular basis or drop in as needed. We hope that having the group on the VGH campus makes it easier for families to attend who are supporting a loved one at the Psychiatric Assessment Unit (PAU), Inpatient Psychiatry or Willow Pavilion, though all family members and supporters are welcome.

DATE: Every first Thursday and third Monday of the month

TIME: 6:00 – 8:00 p.m.

PLACE: 2nd floor boardroom, Joseph & Rosalie Segal & Family Health Centre, 803 W 12th Ave (at Willow; can be approached from W 10th Ave, behind the Blusson Spinal Cord Centre at 818 W 10th Ave).
A map is at <http://www.spotlightonmentalhealth.com/segal-building-map/>

For questions or more information please contact

isabella.mori@vch.ca, 604-314-9032



*A space in
which
family
members
can share
their
experiences
with each
other and
feel
supported*

MORE FAMILY SUPPORT GROUPS



Parents Forever – For families of adults living with addiction. Group meets every 2nd Friday at St. Mary's Kerrisdale, 2490 W 37th Ave., Vancouver. Contact Frances Kenny, 604-524-4230 or fkenny@uniserve.com

BC Schizophrenia Vancouver Family Support Group - for family members supporting someone with serious mental illness. No meeting in August. Starting September, the group will be meeting on the 2nd Tuesday of the month. Marpole Community Centre, 990 W 59th Ave, Social room 2nd floor, 7:00-8:30 pm

GRASP Support Group – Peer-led, for families or individuals who have had a loved one die as a result of substance abuse or addiction. 2nd Thursday of each month, 7-9 p.m. at Gilmore Community School 50 South Gilmore Ave, Rm 207. Please email graspvancouverarea@gmail.com to register.

First Nations Talking Circle - Weekly Talking Circle co-ed group for adult family and clients interested in learning more about First Nations Culture, sharing, expressing thoughts, and experiencing traditional ceremonies. Every Wednesday from 10:00 at the Carnegie Community Centre. Third floor 401 Main Street/Hastings, Vancouver. Contact Perry Omeasoo @ 604-306-7474

St Paul's Hospital Family Support Group- Support for families who have a loved one living with mental illness. Last Thursday of each month, evenings at St Paul's Hospital, 1081 Burrard Street. Please pre-register at 604-682-2344 local 62403

VCH Eating Disorder Program – Family Support Group – for friends and family members of individuals living with an eating disorder. 1st Wednesday of each month, 6-7:30 pm, 3rd Floor, 2750 East Hastings, Vancouver. Contact Hella @ 604-675-2531 ext 20689.

Borderline Talks - for individuals living with Borderline Personality Disorder (BPD) or Traits, and their loved ones. Every Wednesday from 6:00-8:00. Coast Mental Health: 293 E. 11th Ave., Vancouver, BC Contact: Coral More, coralmore@gmail.com

Family and Friends SMART Recovery Meeting, Raven Song Community Health Centre, 2450 Ontario Street. Every Tuesday 6-7pm. No registration required. Contact: Jimmy Sigmund at 604-675-3988 x20258

Richmond, Tri-Cities, North Shore & Beyond

Pathways Clubhouse Chinese Family Support Group – Education sessions for Chinese families who have a loved one living with mental illness. 2nd Saturday of each month 1-4:00 pm, Room 345/50, 7000 Minoru Blvd, **Richmond**. Contact Lorraine Ng [Lorraine Ng](mailto:Lorraine.ng@pathwaysclubhouse.com) or 604-276-8834, ext 215.

Hope 4 Families Support Group

This group is a regular support and information meeting for family members of those in the acute care unit at the Hope Centre in **North Vancouver**. Meetings are held every second Thursday from 4-5 PM at the HOPE CENTRE MAIN FLOOR, GROUP ROOM 4. A social worker or family therapist and a family member from the North Shore Family Advisory Committee attend each meeting. The remaining 2019 dates are: Apr.11,25; May 9,23; June 6,20; July 11,25; Aug.8,22; Sept.5,19; Oct.3,17,31; Nov.14,28; and Dec.12.

Pathways Serious Mental Illness (formerly Northshore Schizophrenia Society) - groups in **West Vancouver, Tri Cities, Squamish and Whistler**. Call 604 925 0856 or email info@pathwayssmi.org