
Self-Help News

The Newsletter of the Self-help Resource Centre

Winter 2008

The Story of the Health Whisperers

By Tina Wilson, Ryerson Social Work Student

The Self-Help Resource Center's Health Whisperers are a group of volunteer lay health promoters who conducted informal research over the summer of 2007 in a variety of neighborhoods in Toronto. They were trying to find out what newcomer women understand about breast health and what they know about the breast cancer resources that are available in Ontario.

The working assumption was that women would have less accurate information about breast health because of the lack of a formal health care system in their countries of origin and because they are still unfamiliar with (and may have barriers in accessing) the Ontario health care system. The Health Whisperers story gathering was informed by a broader understanding of the social determinants of health, community development and peer-based education.

In late November four of the Health Whisperers presented their experiences and made recommendations based on their story gathering. An overview of the project's methodology and the major findings. It was attended by breast screening clinic and public health staff, community development workers, women's health agency staff and college students. Response was extremely positive, with a lively discussion following the presentation.

Download a copy of the report at
<http://www.selfhelp.on.ca/resource/search.html>

Thanks to Our SHRC Volunteers

by Aleksandra Vasic
Coordinator, Volunteer Resources

SHRC thanks all of our wonderful volunteers for their tremendous gifts of time and energy and would like to extend a good-bye and best wishes to the following volunteers: Kevin Frankel, John Gontor, Elena Kozlenko, Yuvadee Leelapornpisid, Deqa Dahir, Cameo Grant and Yvonne Harris.

A special mention must be made of two volunteers in particular: Cameo Grant, who completed 12 years of service to the SHRC and Yvonne Harris, who volunteered over 150 hours of her time over a 3-month period to the Family Councils Program.

With much regret we much also mention the sudden passing of one of our newer volunteers in May of this year, Helen Nolan.

We would also like to welcome the following new volunteers to our agency in 2007: Dianne Boyce, Karin Davis, Sunita Karmakar and Kimberley Spevack. We look forward to working with you in 2008!

If you are interested in volunteering your time, especially in an administrative capacity, contact me at volunteer@selfhelp.on.ca or call 416-487-4355.

2008 Workshop Series

Our fall workshop series was a great success. Half-day workshops were offered on the topics of Building Community Groups That Work, Transitioning from professionally led to member run support groups, and The ABCs of Volunteer Management for the Non-Professional Volunteer Coordinator. Our 2008 topics will include: Humour and Creativity, Self-Help 101, and Role Playing to Deal with Difficult People.

For advance notice of these workshops sign up for our free e-newsletter at www.self-help.on.ca For a complete list of our workshop topics visit: www.selfhelp.on.ca/workshops

The SHRC Annual General Meeting

At the Annual General Meeting in September, The Self-Help Resource Centre celebrated its 20th anniversary. We were honoured to have founders Rubin Todres and Zelda Harris attend.

Current Board President Beth Hoen explained the history of the SHRC, which was started as a clearinghouse where people could call for referrals to support groups. Now the SHRC hosts two provincial programs, and provides training, consultations and conferences across the province.

Our celebration included guest speaker Marion Kitamura from the Roots of Empathy, live music from Elvis (aka Jim Karry) and, of course, cake.



The Board of the Directors of the Self-Help Resource Centre celebrate the 20th anniversary with founders Rubin Todres and Zelda Harris.



Guest speaker Marion Kitamura from the Roots of Empathy organization poses with AGM entertainer "Elvis" (aka Jim Karry).



Volunteers from the Self Help Resource Centre's Health Whisperers project meet with our Ryerson placement student, Tina Wilson



SHRC staff and volunteers spend the day at an information fair, helping educate the public about the value of mutual aid and self-help.

On Sale Now

2008 Directory of Mutual Aid and Self-Help Groups

The Directory of Mutual Aid and Self-Help Groups is an excellent resource for any professional or agency working with healthcare, health promotion, social issues or community development. It lists over 400 mutual aid, self-help and support groups in the Greater Toronto Area, including professionally led groups, as well as many affiliated organizations.

The Directory is easy to use. You can find a group by category. There are 19 different categories such as addictions, bereavement, cancer and seniors. Or if you are looking for a specific group - there is an alphabetical index of every group. Each listing gives the name and objectives of the group, their activities, how frequently they meet and how to contact them

The 2008 Directory at a Glance:

- Over 400 mutual aid, self-help and support groups in the GTA
 - Easy to use - find a group by category or by a specific name
- Learn the basics of self-help: how it works and how to pick the right group for you
 - Contact information for self-help organizations across Ontario and Canada

To order a copy of the Directory, call 416-487-4355, Toll Free: 1-888-283-8806 or visit our website to download the order form at <http://www.selfhelp.on.ca/faxorders.html>

Did you know?

Canada's charitable sector employs more than 2 million people — almost as many as the entire manufacturing sector and 2 1/2 times the number in the construction industry. It represents almost 8 per cent of the Canadian economy, more than the retail industry, mining, oil and gas together.

Source: A speech given by former Prime Minister Paul Martin, autumn 2007.

The Self-Help Resource Centre

Our Board of Directors: Beth Hoen, Ruth Lerner, Althea Joseph, Estelle Eisenberg, Rama Fayaz, Lynn Laccohee, Matthew Lerner, Debbie Thompson, Sharifa Gomez, Roberta Albert, Alex Tarantino, David Michaels, Enrique Robert and Mandy Myronuk.

Our Staff: Executive Director - Roya Rabbani, Rick Henry, Aleksandra Vasic, Spencer Brennan, Gillian Kranias, Carolyn Burley, Julie Curitti, Barbara Leja, Neil Muscott and May Karry.

Our Volunteers: Elsie Barclay, Dianne Boyce, Karin Davis, Monika Goodluck, Zeld Harris, Jean Hynes, Sunita Karmakar, Mary Lynch, John Robinson, Yue Yin and Deena York.

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