



THE INSIDER

INSIDE THIS ISSUE

PROFILE OF LARRY DUPONT	2
MILESTONES	2
HOUSING OUTREACH PROGRAM	3
NEW UNION EXECUTIVE	3
THE CHANGE PROCESS	4
OTHER RESOURCES	4

STATISTICS

RELATIONSHIPS BETWEEN HOMELESSNESS AND TRAUMATIC BRAIN INJURY: A study by researchers at Toronto Rehabilitation Institute shows that more than half of homeless people in Toronto have experienced a traumatic brain injury. For 70% of these people, their injury occurred before their first experience of homelessness. The findings indicate that early screening of people with traumatic brain injuries may help prevent homelessness.

(Oct. 7, 2008 of the Canadian Medical Association Journal).

OUR MISSION STATEMENT - IN CASE YOU DIDN'T KNOW

The Mission of the Society is:

To promote and lead effective, just, and humane responses to the causes and consequences of crime and poverty by working directly with individuals, service providers and the broader community.

In furtherance of our Mission, the Society shall use the following methods:

- Provide safe and supportive housing alternatives that meet the needs of people who are homeless, at risk of being homeless, or who are marginally housed
- Promote public safety through community and social development activities
- Build programs and services for people who have come into conflict with the law and those whose life circumstances and choices put them at risk of coming into conflict with the law
- Review, evaluate and advocate for changes in the criminal justice process
- Engage in public education on matters relating to criminal behavior and crime prevention

A NEWSLETTER AND CONTEST

This is our inaugural newsletter issue for staff. We hope to have a couple of issues early in the year to start the ball rolling and then establish a schedule for production every three to four months. As not all the staff has access to email we are starting with a paper version. We are hoping to branch out to online versions, one for an internal audience as an email version, and one for the public as a web version.

We want this newsletter to be interactive with suggestions and articles from both union staff and management. For starters we are holding a newsletter contest to name it. We can't promise any grand prizes but the winner will have the honor of seeing their banner on the masthead.

Email your ideas for our newsletter name to:

johnhowardsociety@shaw.ca

Or drop off in Barb's mailbox.

PROFILE OF LARRY DUPONT

I am a Residential Worker and have been working for the John Howard Society of the North Okanagan/ Kootenay Region of BC going on nine years. Prior to my employment here I had several years experience dealing with the general public in Vancouver and Vernon. I have also spent thirteen years as an Auxiliary RCMP Officer, which has given me experience with the street people.

Since being employed here I have seen this organization go through major changes. When we were a half-way house we were governed under a contract with Corrections Canada and had some stringent guidelines that we had to follow. Corrections Canada never did like the idea that we also housed what we called transients at that time - the

politically correct term is now Emergency Shelter people or ESPs. When we dealt with people on the street we did not provide the services that we do now - just shelter and meals.

Our primary mandate was to help provide the Federal parolees with reintegration into society. We went through some trying times after the Eric Fish incident precipitating uproar within the community. We lost some very dedicated employees and even though we were hurting financially we managed to stay open as a men's shelter, thanks to Barb Levesque coming on board as Executive Director.

I have found myself going from a very rules oriented and regimental way in dealing with the clients to a more compassionate nature. Believe me it is a

hard thing to do when you are used to dealing with matters in a different way but change is always good. Don't get me wrong, I still believe in following rules as laid out but now I also consider the nature of the client I am dealing with as to whether or not I should enforce them [strictly]. I like change in the workplace as there is an old saying that "change is good as a rest." It has been a challenging and often rewarding experience as changes take place within the house. I feel that some changes were long overdue when dealing with the homeless here in Vernon. For the younger employees I can see that there are now many opportunities for promotions that we did not have in the past; it is up to each one of you to take advantage of them.



"I have found myself going from a very rules-oriented and regimental way in dealing with the clients to a more compassionate nature."

MILESTONES



Wade Cairns and Cal Watson received plaques for service over 10 years at the Annual Christmas Dinner at the Schubert Centre on December 5, 2008. Tiny MacDonald was also due for an award plaque but was away on holiday. Blair Feden, Board President, gave the award speech.

HOUSING OUTREACH PROGRAM:

A day in the life of an HOP Co-ordinator

By Randel Erbacher

The Housing Outreach Program (HOP) is a provincial initiative of which the John Howard Society of the North Okanagan/Kootenay Region of BC is one of the twenty agencies delivering the program in BC. The purpose of the program is to connect homeless people with private landlords who are willing to work with the HOP coordinator in their area to support clients in learning how to be responsible tenants and to keep housing. To be succinct, the rules are: pay the rent on time, keep your place clean, and don't disturb neighbors.

As the Housing Outreach Coordinator, each day is different from the next. I have a drop-in time at both the Gateway Shelter and the Upper Room Mission. At the Upper Room Mission I do an intake where the client does the necessary paperwork in

order to best serve them. At the Gateway Shelter, I set up both the intake and computer work to find the client suitable housing. For the client who, for whatever reason, cannot make the drop-in times, I am also available for appointments at my office [at the First Nations Friendship Centre].

A misconception of my job is that I find housing for my clients. I explain to my clients that I do not find them housing but help them find housing. My philosophy is: the clients do what they can and I help with the rest. I also explain to the client that if they do not put out the effort, chances are they won't be housed.

Many of the low cost rentals in Vernon are owned/operated by only a handful of people. Keeping a good relationship with these landlords is paramount to the success of my program.



Once the client has found housing, I perform follow-ups to make sure the tenant has the skills to maintain the rental. I usually take the client for coffee within the first couple of weeks after he/she has moved in, explaining that they can contact me anytime for whatever questions they may have. I also try and work with the landlord to let them know that if they have any problems with my clients, I would be more than happy to work with the tenant to fix any concerns they may have in order to help my client maintain the rental.

"I explain to my clients that I do not find them housing but help them find housing."

Since August 2008 a total of 133 unique clients have been served with an average of 8-9 clients housed per month with one month being 12.90% of the landlord involved are engaged.

NEW UNION EXECUTIVE



At the Annual Election of CUPE Sub-Local 523, JHS, on Dec. 1, 2008 the following people were elected to positions within our sub-local:

Sub-local President:

Tiny MacDonald

Occupational Health and Safety:

Cal Watson, Howard House

Will Boehmer, Gateway

Labor Management Liaison:

Larry Dupont

Cal Watson

Shop Stewards:

Larry Dupont, Howard House

Joe Harpe, Howard House

Will Boehmer, Gateway

Will Billingham, Gateway

Secretary-Treasurer:

Nina Westaway

For further

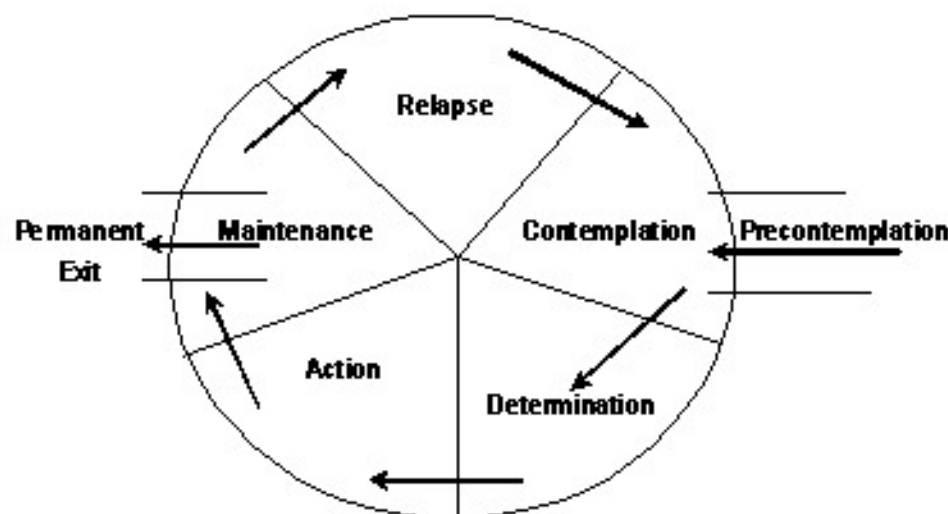
information on the activities of the

Canadian Union of Public Employees

(CUPE), visit the very informative web site at:

www.cupe.bc.ca

THE CHANGE PROCESS IN ADDICTIONS RECOVERY



"Motivation is a process, not something the client either has or doesn't have. Motivation often occurs because of the relationship and interaction between you and the client. Motivation involves a cooperative effort by both the client and you to:

- Recognize a problem
- Develop an appropriate strategy for change
- Carry out the strategy."

This model for change has been explored by J.O. Prochaska and C. DiClemente and has been applied to many different health and social problems.

Source: Prochaska, J.O., & DiClemente, C. (1982). *Transtheoretical therapy: Toward a more integrative model of change.*

Psychotherapy: Theory, Research and Practice, 19, 276-288. As cited in Miller, W.R. & Rollnick, S. (1991). *Motivational Interviewing: Preparing people to change addictive behavior.* New York, N.Y.: The Guilford Press.

Check out the Internet for more information on the change process.

SUMMARY of the CHANGE PROCESS

The change process involves several steps:

- ◆ Precontemplation
- ◆ Contemplation
- ◆ Determination
- ◆ Action
- ◆ Maintenance

OTHER RESOURCES

We would like to have the practice of sharing resources that will enhance our professional work as well as our personal and individual goals. Some of these resources are too long for a newsletter so can only be referenced. A Mind/Body/Spirit Wellness Index is a self inventory that deals with the body (sleep, diet, addictive substances, exercise), general health, emotions and spiritual life. Look for a copy of the Wellness Index in your staff mailbox soon.

Kelly Fehr is also building a workshop on documenting client care.



Resident artists of Howard House working on a new mural utilizing West Coast indigenous art motifs for the dining room. Left to Right: Russ, Calvin, and Daniel.