



2100 Ellesmere Road, Suite 245, Scarborough, Ontario M1H 3B7

TEL. (416) 439-7111

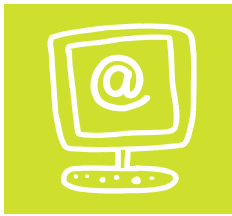
FAX. (416) 439-6999

TDD (416) 439-7321

email: ed@scarboroughwomenscentre.ca

web: www.scarboroughwomenscentre.ca

Women at the Centre Winter 2005 Newsletter



HAVE YOU SEEN OUR WEBSITE?

It's full of information regarding programs, volunteering and special events.

Visit us at:

scarboroughwomenscentre.ca

You're invited to our wonderful Spring Tea. Good company, silent auction, and an interesting speaker. Bring a friend! Check out our website for details.
Saturday, May 7th, 2005



A woman who has used our case management service, wanted to share her story with you.

SHERAH'S STORY

I was physically and mentally abused from the age of 8 till I became a teenager. My abuser was my father who later turned extremely violent and started sexually abusing me. I used all my skills and survival tactics to get away from him but I never said a word to anyone for fear of bringing heartache, shame and trouble to my family. I was always afraid that my past would catch up with me. I was in mortal fear of succeeding in life because I thought I did not deserve to live. Depression hit me like a ton of bricks. I could not concentrate on anything pleasant in life. All that I enjoyed doing vanished into thin air.

When I first started to go for counseling at Scarborough Women's Centre I thought that this was going to be a waste of my time. I have known other people who have been through abuse of many kinds that have not found any help in going for therapy. But once I got to know Tahereh, the Case Manager/Counsellor and we started talking, it dawned on me that she really cares. This is what I needed to open up.

One day after my third session with her, I realized that I was not afraid. I stood up for me. I realized that if I do not stand up for myself then no one else was going to do this for me.

It took me a long time to realize that I can overcome any obstacle that comes my way, if only I put my mind to it. It's never too late to move on in your life and to say that you can do what ever you want. I made myself happy by getting rid of my demons. I cannot play the victim anymore. I am a survivor and I respect myself for that. Life may throw you many curve balls, but knowing how to play it, is the game.

Now I am a happy woman who truly enjoys her days. I go for walks, do art work and have interests outside my work. To live life to the fullest is a wonderful thing. To wake up every day and say that I am going to make a difference in my life. Once you start thinking positive then this overflows and touches other human beings. I need to thank the SWC for taking me in and guiding me through the dark tunnel towards the light.

I would have never been able to build those bridges and make the connections if not for them. Thank you!

HAPPY 25TH BIRTHDAY, HOME DEPOT!!

Home Depot celebrated its 25th anniversary by undertaking a number of projects for charities in their communities called "The Decorating Challenge." The Centre was honoured to have the support of the McCowan and Eglinton Store, managed by Mr. Gaetano Berardi, Store Manager. Four staff of the store volunteered their time over the course of a week to paint our program room and 3 offices used for counseling and interviews, as well as install chair rails and fresh blinds. They did this right before the fall programs began so we were able to welcome women to a freshly painted, pleasant space, which is encouraging and comfortable.

We especially want to thank Mike Willis, Dave Sunn, Jake Besa and Peter, who gave so generously of their time. They did very professional work, and were good-humored, as well as sensitive to the nature of our work at all times.

We had been anxious to re-paint our well-used offices but unable to afford the labour and materials that would be involved in doing so. Home Depot made that possible. Thank you so much!



WELCOME NEW BOARD MEMBERS!

At our Annual General Meeting this fall, the membership elected five new Board members. We now have a full complement of 12 Board members, who are responsible for the overall direction of the agency. Please join us in welcoming the following wonderful women:

♥ Sarah Ahmed is a Certified Management Accountant with a BA in Economics. Sarah has held progressive accounting and financial analysis positions since 1987, and is currently Financial Consultant of a private Scarborough firm. Sarah has volunteered with Urban Alliance on Race Relations; and the Ontario Federation of South Asian Students

♥ Susan Dandy has been employed in the banking industry for the past 13 years, including 3 years as a branch manager; and is currently Facilitator/Senior Technical Trainer with the bank, responsible for teams in Ontario and Atlantic Canada. Susan's volunteer experience includes Big Brothers and United Way of Greater Toronto

♥ Xiaolin Ni has a Masters of Education from the UK and a BA from East China Normal University. Her employment experience includes progressive sales and business operations positions in UK and Canada. She is currently employed as Project Control Officer, Global Resourcing for an international business consulting services company. Xiaolin's volunteer experience includes an East Asian Network Group, and the Toronto Food Bank.

♥ Julie Sagara has an Honors BA in Anthropology and a Bachelor of Laws. She was called to the bar in 1994, and is completing her Certified Financial Planner designation. Professional experience includes 5 years as the partner in a law firm specializing in family and immigration law; instructor in the Bar Admissions Course for the Law Society of Upper Canada; Acting Director of Alumni Affairs for a Toronto law school. She is currently employed as a consultant on financial planning for professional practices. Julie's volunteer

experience includes the National Association of Japanese Canadians; Japanese Social Services; and Scarborough Women's Centre. Julie previously sat on our Board of Directors from 1994 to 2000.

♥ Marie Veitch has an Honors Bachelor of Science in Zoology and Sociology. She has been employed in progressive policy analysis positions with the Government of Ontario since 2000 and is currently a Program Consultant on health related matters. Marie's volunteer experience includes United Way charitable activities.

Our thanks and appreciation to retiring Board members, Lynn Fournier-Ruggles and Denise De Sousa. Denise has served one year on the Board, including membership on the Program Evaluation Committee.

Lynn joined the Board 5 years ago and has served on the Strategic Planning Committee, Program Evaluation Committee, and Human Resources Committee, as well as being the Board Liaison for the Building Agency Capacity project. One of her most important contributions was her lead role in the establishment of our agency Strategic Planning process. Thank you Lynn!

Call us if you are interested in Board membership!

WOMEN AT THE CENTRE is a publication of Scarborough Women's Centre.

Letters and suggestions are very welcome.

Please forward to
Lynda Kosowan, MSW, RSW
Executive Director.

e-mail:
ed@scarboroughwomenscentre.ca



A THREE DIMENSIONAL VIEW OF EVENTS

We are surrounded by our environment, relationships and the events that take place in our lives. Some events are pleasant and some are not. Some events invite togetherness and some invite disconnection. As human beings, we respond to pleasant and unpleasant events differently. Some of us respond to events optimistically and others respond pessimistically. Why is it that some people respond to an unpleasant situation more optimistically than others? The answer is not that they are luckier than others or they don't get into these kinds of situations. The answer, I think, is that they interpret an unpleasant event differently; they have less pessimistic internal dialogue with self; they have fewer critical voices and try to make things easier for themselves.

In this article, I am going to explain how I think that our thoughts, feelings, and behaviours influence each other; how they generate a feeling, thought, or action that gives us a pessimistic or optimistic view, and how they make our lives fulfilled or miserable. I am going to give you a few pointers on enhancing your relationships with self and others.

I am hoping that you will see how these three domains work together, and how you can have control over your thoughts, feelings and behaviors. Let's start with an example.

A friend is to meet you for dinner at your house at 6:00 p.m. But it's now past 7:00 p.m. and there's been no sign of her, not even a phone call.

How are you going to think, feel, or behave about this?

Well there's more than one possible answer: **You** may be person #1, #2, #3, or #4

#1. What you think: She might have been hurt on the way here.

How you feel: Worried or nervous

What you do: Call hospital to find out if she is there

#2. What you think: She didn't bother to let me know she was delayed

How you feel: Upset or angry

What you do: Criticize, or act chilly, when she does show up

#3. What you think: It doesn't matter to me whether people are on time.

How you feel: Indifferent

What you do: Nothing in particular

#4. What you think: I needed the time to fix the house up anyway.

How you feel: Relieved

What you do: Relax and call her later

These are different ways in which someone might interpret a friend's being late, and different ways in which one might react emotionally and behaviorally. This is how a person 1 is different from a person 4. Your feelings follow your thought processes and therefore lead your mood into different directions. The important note here is that your thoughts about your friend's lateness don't affect just your feelings, they can also influence the actions you take.

"The thing that upsets people is not (so much) what happens (to them) but what they think it means." Philosopher Epictetus.

People routinely distress themselves and others with arbitrary interpretations of what is going on. Sometimes this is done out of habit, learned from others, or under the influence of past experiences; sometimes it happens for quite other reasons, which we may not understand. However what is crucial here is not WHY we make arbitrary interpretations of events but HOW to not make them.

Our pathway to either a fulfilling or sad life is based on how we perceive an adversity in our life. It is not about the nature of the adversity or difficulty that we experience or its severity, it is mostly about how we perceive an adversity, how we explain it to ourselves and how we interpret it. We have the capacity/ability to look at an adversity differently, to explain it optimistically, and to interpret it realistically. Our understanding of these three domains will allow us to develop strength in ourselves and in our thinking, feeling and behavior in general. In conclusion, one small change in one domain - either thoughts, feelings, or behaviours - will affect the other domains. Our behaviors, feelings and thoughts are not totally out of our control. We are able to direct them in the direction of well-being and in a new pathway of life experience. I suggest that you pay attention to the way you perceive your current adversity and then think how you could make a small change in one of those domains to have a different view of it.

Happy possibilities!

Tahereh Barati
Case Manager

Acknowledgements & Appreciation

(August - November 2004) We gratefully acknowledge the support received from Canadian Women's Foundation; City of Toronto; Human Resources Development Canada; Maytree Foundation; Trillium Foundation; United Way of Greater Toronto; the Government of Ontario through Ontario Women's Directorate and the National Crime Prevention Strategy.

SWC thanks the following **individuals** for their generosity: Sarah Ahmed; Marie Veitch; Roxanne Brown; Amanda Bunday; Sheila DeSouza; Namrata Kocher; Deborah Gardner; Marcela Kupfer; Evelyn Hill; Joyce Archer; Nan Kosowan; Lynda Kosowan; Gloria Costello; Catherine Hanbidge; Darlene Watman; Jeannette Thompson; Julie Sagara; Eva Halter; Diane Bestvater; Sean Noble; Penni Stuart; Ramratie Autar; Angela Boucher; Tahereh Barati

SWC gratefully acknowledges our corporate supporters: OPG Employee's Trust

SWC appreciates the contributions of these groups: Malvern Cricket and Social Club

Special Thanks for In-Kind Donations to: Souleppper Theatre Company; The Elgin And Winter Garden Theatre Centre; The Home Depot Canada; AGF; Tarragon Theatre; Cineplex Galaxy LP; Licks; The Fairmont Royal York; Pizza Nova; University of Toronto Bookstore; Radisson Hotels; W.TT; The Bradford Group; Vidal Sassoon Salon; Lorraine Kimsa Theatre for Young People; Ontario Science Centre; Wild Water Kingdom; Famous Players; Stage Centre Productions; Kids Can Press; Town Florist; Aloette Cosmetics; TDL Group Company; National Ballet; Mandarin Restaurant; Abachi Handbags; Bijou; En Vogue Salon; Sears Hair Salon; Timex Canada; Gap Inc; Walmart Scarborough Town Centre; Theatre Passe Muraille; CN Tower; Oasis Massage Therapy; Paramount Canada's Wonderland; Paramount Home Entertainment; Toronto Blue Jays Baseball Team; Toronto Raptors; HBC Foundation; Swati Kothar; Exclussif Spices; Alliance Atlantis; Art Gallery of Ontario; Umbra; Optical 20/20; Medieval Times; Staples; Harper Collins Canada; Revlon; Fit for Life; Curves; Big Stretch Yoga Centre; HMV; Housewares and Company; Paper Tole Art; Reva Nelson; Bulova; Tim Hortons; Chamber of Commerce; Novopharm; Tonja Kristensen

SUPPORT THE CENTRE!!

Make a donation, become a member, or volunteer

Name: _____ Address _____

Apt. # _____ City/Province _____ Postal Code _____

Phone: _____ E-mail _____

I would like to be a member of the Centre. _____ Please send an information package. _____

My donation of: \$200. _____ \$100. _____ \$50. _____ \$20. _____ Other _____

Enclosed is my cheque for \$_____ payable to Scarborough Women's Centre.

Visa Card _____ Expiry Date: _____ Signature: _____

Registered Charitable # 10795 9660 RR0001

Yes, you may acknowledge my donation in your newsletter and website and send me occasional mailings about future activities.