

The Consumer/Survivor Information Resource Centre of Toronto

BULLETIN

**Information for consumer/survivors of the mental health system,
those who serve us, and those who care about us.**

*Distributed through generous support from the Community Support and Research Unit (CSRU)
of the Centre for Addiction & Mental Health (CAMH)*

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Waiting In Line At The Soup Kitchen

It's hard to eat slowly when you are feeling really hungry. I mean really hungry as in "haven't had a meal today and it's already 6 p.m." Many people have experienced it; I am one of them.

Another time I can remember standing in line at a soup kitchen in 2002 alongside other hungry people who were also waiting for breakfast. Breakfast was literally, a bowl of soup. And I remember being grateful for every mouthful and to those who had volunteered to serve it to a hungry crowd.

So how, might you ask, did I end up at a soup kitchen? Some people would assume it was a result of poor planning – fiscal mismanagement perhaps. I call it the luck of the draw, since I see myself as a responsible person.

My first responsibility was to pay my rent, as it is with many low-income people. After paying rent, my next priority was to pay the telephone, hydro and any transportation costs. Materials my son needed as a graphic design student needed to be purchased. Medications also tended to be quite costly without a benefit plan, which was not provided by my employer. Did I mention food? That's right, it was down there at the bottom of the list, a poor place to be!

So for many years I was in an unenviable position of having to access food banks on a regular basis. I walked when I did not have TTC fare even if it meant walking long distances in frigid weather (I worked as a front line worker in the health care sector, a job which did not pay well).

I like quality, whether it's good food, a decent place to live, good music, nice attire (I said nice, not extravagant!), and quality friendships. Not to mention a productive and supportive work environment.

Where am I going with this little narrative? Suffice it to say that when people are faced with economic challenges in addition to having to live with a psychiatric disorder, it becomes crucial to draw upon as many resources as possible. For instance, some drop-in centres provide tokens as well as a meal. I find the Free and Low Cost events section in the Bulletin to be a good resource. Walking groups, weather permitting, is another good resource. I walked with a group of people from the Mood Disorders Association one summer and recommend this type of activity. And for those who like to read, local libraries offer a variety of reading material, not to mention other programs.

When financial challenges loom large, it is important to plan well. Live small and plan well with less. Visualize the big picture and stay positive – not an easy task for most of us, I realize.

I want to add that I do not see economically disadvantaged people as the liability that some members of society do. Too often the voices of silence are the voices we most need to hear. Given a chance, many who are regarded as society's "money drain" are capable of making worthwhile contributions. The fact that many of our so-called disadvantaged members of society do not receive proper nourishment, shelter and other essentials of life, goes a long way to explain why they are not able to blossom, to reach their full potential. Investing in people with our dollars is long overdue, it seems to me.

Live small. Plan well. Visualize the big picture. And, if you haven't had the stuffing knocked out of you as a result of life's stormy side, then I applaud you! I said to my son recently, "we are tough people who have managed with grace and dignity to overcome many obstacles."

Arlene Kearn

Newsbytes

Changes to Prescribing Information for Diabetes Drug. Health Canada has identified the need for new restrictions on the diabetes drug Actos (pioglitazone hydrochloride) that is used to treat type 2 diabetes. The updated information includes:

- Actos should not be used in patients with any stage of heart failure. (Contraindications section)
- Actos is not approved for use with metformin and a sulfonylurea (i.e. the three drugs should not be taken together.) (Warnings and Precautions section)

The updated Health Canada-authorized labelling (Product Monograph) for Actos is available, by search, from the online [Drug Product Database](#). Consumers requiring more information about this advisory can contact Health Canada's public inquiries line at 613-957-2991 or toll free at 1-866-225-0709. ("Updated Labelling for Diabetes Drug Actos and Risk of Heart Failure", Information Update, 2008-185, December 19, 2008. For immediate release). http://www.hc-sc.gc.ca/ahc-asc/media/advisories-avis/2008/2008_185-eng.php.

Peer Support Helpful for Postnatal Depression. A recent study reports that women who received peer support from women who have experienced postnatal depression reduced their risk of postnatal depression by half. Cyndy-Lee Dennis, an associate professor at the University of Toronto, led the study of 701 women receiving telephone peer support from other mothers during the first two weeks after the birth. ("Postpartum depression: Studies show how peer support, trained nurses can help". Friday, January 16, 2009. Canadian Press Newsletter/News Component/NewsLines/Byline). <http://www.cbc.ca/cp/health/090116/x011602A.html>.

Wish List

We have received the following donations: a bed frame that is 77 by 56 inches with mattress, box spring, and headboards that are curved with railings; a toaster oven that has definitely seen better days but still works; and a CD tower.

We have received requests for:

- a vacuum cleaner
- a bike for a 7 year old girl
- a bicycle lock
- old magazines for making collages
- cookbooks

Some of the items that have been successfully matched with recipients recently include a sofa, a new toaster, a small fridge, lots of hats and mittens and a collection of cookbooks. A frequently requested item is cookware, especially pots and pans. If you can fulfill any of these requests, have something to donate or would like to make a request for something, please call us at 416-595-2882 or email us at <mailto:csinfo@camh.net>. We are not always successful in making a match but it is always worth a shot!

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C/S Information Session

The February C/S Information Session on ODSP will be held on Thursday, February 19 from 2 – 4 pm in the Malcolmson Lecture Theater at CAMH, 1001 Queen St. West, in the main Admin building. Light Refreshments will be served before our expert speaker's presentation. See you there!

C/S Online

<http://www.mentalhealthrights.ca/news.html>

The Mental Health Rights Coalition of Hamilton has published *Journeys: A Peer Support Primer* that is available on their website for viewing and printing. The *Primer* presents a useful introduction to peer support principles and techniques. Approximately half of the 30-page booklet consists of very fine consumer/survivor artwork produced by Hamilton C/S artists in the Hamilton Cottage Art Studio. Each artist's work is accompanied by a comment on the role peer support has played in their lives.

Job Postings

Lef Jobs - Job Postings

(Last updated January 20, 2009)

- ECE (Experience with 5 – 6 year olds). Split Shift. 35 hrs/wk. Royal York & Lakeshore. Call Clohe.
- CNC Programmer (Master CAM or Catia). Temp/Possible Perm. 3:30 pm to 12:00 am. \$14 - \$16.00/hr. Dufferin & Finch. Call Clohe.
- Response Centre Operator (Eng & French). 11:00 pm – 7:00 am. Mon – Sun Shifts. \$14.50/hr. Don Mills & Eglinton. Call Juanita.
- Response Centre Operator (English & Cantonese). 3:00 pm – 11:00 pm. Monday - Sunday Shifts. \$14.50/hr. Don Mills & Eglinton. Call Juanita.

For more information regarding the listed jobs please call the appropriate Job Developer:
Clohe Williams at 416-760-2573 or Juanita Yundt at 416-760-2574.

LEJobs is sponsored by the **Learning Enrichment Foundation**, a non-profit organization funded by the Federal, Provincial and Municipal Governments.

For more LEF job postings visit <http://www.lefca.org/>.

Toronto East Job Fair

February 10, 2009

1:00 pm – 5:00 pm

Scarborough Civic Centre

150 Borough Drive (Scarborough)

Employment opportunities for all job seekers, including persons with disabilities, newcomers, women, and youth, in a variety of industries including hospitality, retail, customer service, administration, financial services, IT, sales, marketing and engineering. Sign language interpreters, note takers, coaches corner, employment assessments, and resume reviews are available on-site.

Free registration at the door.
Bring your resume and dress to impress.

For more information contact Scarborough Centre for Employment Accessibility at 416-396-8100 or email scea@tdsb.on.ca.

St. Christopher House Employment Preparation Program February 2009 Workshop Calendar

St. Christopher House
1033 King Street West

Smart Serve Training

Wednesday, February 11 at 9:45 am to 4:30 pm

Gain industry-required certification on how to serve alcohol beverages responsibly.

Facilitator: Laurie Reiner

Call 416-848-7980 x248 to register. **Cost: \$21.50**

Cash Register Training

Wednesday, February 18 at 10:00 am to 2:00 pm

Practice using a cash register and basic math skills, identify counterfeit bills and learn how to handle credit cards. Receive a certificate of attendance.

Facilitator: Shannon Wood

Call 416-848-7980 x244 to register. **Free**

Customer Service Training

Wednesday, February 25 at 1:00 pm to 4:00 pm

Learn the fundamentals of dealing successfully with the public in various work environments. Receive a certificate of attendance.

Facilitator: Shannon Wood

Call 416-848-7980 x244 to register. **Free**

Food Safety and Handling

Tuesday, February 24 at 1:30 pm to 4:30 pm

Learn about cooking temperatures and storage temperatures, sanitization and the dangers of poor food handling practices. Receive a certificate of attendance.

Facilitator: Kate Green

Call 416-848-7980 x222 to register. **Free**

Space Is Limited.



Skilled Trades Opportunities Program (STOP) Automotive Service Technician Pre-Apprenticeship Program for WOMEN!

- For women interested in following a career path in the automotive sector.
- Willing and able to commit to a 36 week program – full time from March 2 - November 13, 2009.

On-Track for Women has partnered with Centennial College to provide an Automotive Service Technician Pre-Apprenticeship for Women. We are actively recruiting for the program which will commence on March 9, 2009. The program will be 36 weeks and will be at The Ashtonbee Campus of Centennial College. Ashtonbee is located on Ashtonbee between Warden and Pharmacy Avenue, south of Lawrence, just north of Eglinton East.

WHAT DOES THIS PRE-APPRENTICESHIP PROGRAM OFFER WOMEN?

- First step toward finding an apprenticeship
- Earn Level 1 Automotive Service Technician Training
- Get training specifically designed to help women succeed in the workplace
- Get on-the-job training with a 12 week paid work placement

ELIGIBILITY

- An O.S.S.D. (Grade 12 Diploma) or its equivalent
- You are 16 years of age or older
- Legally entitled to work in Canada and to participate in government funded training
- Have a valid Ontario Driver's License (or you must have before work placement begins)

Contact On-Track for Women at 416-283-5229

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Inclusion of an announcement is *not* an endorsement of the views of any organization or individual.

2009 RAISE YOUR VOICE!

Voices from the Street, a collective of individuals who use their personal experiences with homelessness and poverty to educate the public and push for change, is looking to recruit new members.

YOU GET:

- 12 weeks of intensive training in public speaking, leadership, conflict resolution, diversity issues, and facilitation
- A small cash honorarium of \$60 per week for participating
- A TTC Metropass
- A hearty lunch on the days you are training
- A connection to others who have similar experiences and a desire for change.

YOU GIVE:

- Your time (every Tuesday, Wednesday and Thursday between 10:00 am and 3:00 pm from March 31st to June 18th)
- A desire to speak openly and publicly about your personal experiences with homelessness and poverty
- An ability to work well with others and a respect for diversity
- A passion for social justice and a desire for change
- Your leadership skills back to your community.

If you are interested in becoming a member of Voices from the Street, please submit a letter (legibly written or typed) detailing why you would like to join, what you feel you would bring to the group, any leadership experience you have, and details about your previous or current involvement in the community. Letters should be submitted by February 27th, 2009 to:

VOICES FROM THE STREET
C/O ONTARIO COUNCIL OF ALTERNATIVE BUSINESSES
1499 QUEEN STREET WEST, Suite #203
TORONTO, ON M6R 1A3
FAX: 416-504-8063
E-MAIL: speakersbureau@bellnet.ca

For those interested in more information, Information Sessions will be held on February 18th at 1:30 pm at the Gerstein Centre (100 Charles Street East) and on February 10th at 1:30 pm at the Ontario Council of Alternative Businesses (1499 Queen Street West, Suite 203). Attendance at these sessions is encouraged, but not mandatory. TTC tokens will be available.

The Dream Team Annual Fundraising Dinner (Toronto)

Thursday, March 19th at 6 pm
Lithuanian Hall (downstairs)
1573 Bloor Street West, (a block west of Dundas West Subway Station)
Tickets cost \$30 each

This supportive housing advocacy group of 23 mental health consumers and family members is funded mainly by the Ministry of Health and Long-Term Care through their sponsoring agency, Houselink.

Dinner is provided by the Houselink Community Kitchen with stories from four new Dream Team members, poetry readings, standup comedy, and singing.

For information call:

Interim Coordinator Pedro Cabezas at pedroca@houselink.on.ca or 416-516-1422 x263, or
Outreach Coordinator Lindsay Kochen at lindsayko@houselink.on.ca or 416- 516-1422 x250

The Dream Team's brand new website is up and running at: <http://www.thedreamteam.ca/home>.

Sick and Tired of Being Sick and Tired: Taking Action on Poverty, Poor Health and Bad Jobs

Join the Community Social Planning Council of Toronto, Wellesley Institute and University of Toronto's *Social Assistance in the New Economy Project* for this research and action forum.

Monday, February 9, 2009
9 am - 3:30 pm
Metro Central YMCA
20 Grovesnor Street (NW corner of Yonge & Grosvenor)

Keynote Speaker: Dr. David Mckeown, Toronto's Medical Officer of Health

Research findings presentations from the new report *Sick and Tired: The Compromised Health of Social Assistance Recipients and the Working Poor in Ontario* and discussion of research findings from our recent release *Poverty is Making Us Sick: A Comprehensive Survey of Income and Health in Canada*.

Afternoon action workshops on poverty reduction campaigns, labour market and income security initiatives, and health equity advocacy. Workshop speakers include Dr. Gary Bloch (Medical Reform Group), Anne Egger (Health Providers Against Poverty), Jacquie Maund (Campaign 2000), Neethan Shan (Colour of Poverty Campaign), Nancy Vander Plaats and Mike Yale (ODSP Action Coalition), and many more.

Registration is required. To register or for a full agenda of the day's events visit www.socialplanningtoronto.org.
Lunch is provided. This event is free of charge.

Gaining Autonomy with Medication (GAM)

A One Day Train the Trainer Workshop

Wednesday, February 18
9:30 – 4:30 pm
Family Outreach Response Program
901 King St. West, 500A

Self-Management of Psychiatric Medication is something survivors have been doing with very little support for a long time. An alternative mental health coalition in Quebec has created a resource guide and a training program (GAM) that offers essential support to survivors who are seeking to navigate the medication maze.

The GAM model helps one understand the effects of psychiatric medication on all aspects of a person's life. It is about questioning one's needs and preferences with respect to medication. It is about making decisions, self-advocacy, engaging external supports, taking risks and taking charge. The ultimate goal of this process is to achieve a more satisfying quality of life.

Quebecoise GAM facilitator and psychiatric survivor, Celine Cyr, will share an approach which you can use to help others to create their own plan for their use of psychiatric medication. She will also outline the steps that can be taken to reduce or get off of medication if the person is interested in exploring this direction.

The workshop is aimed at psychiatric survivors who are actively working in the field and who have opportunities to apply this learning within their own communities. However, it is also useful for families, professionals and allies.

Cost: Mental Health workers \$125
Survivors and Family Members \$75

Space is limited to 20 people.

Lunch and Materials provided.

Call Brian McKinnon at 416-285-7996 x227 or Leslie Morris at 416-482-4103 x227 for registration details.

PLACES TO GO... PEOPLE TO SEE...

Free and Low-Cost Events for February 1 – February 15

Art/Exhibits

January 9 – March 29 from 12 – 5 pm daily. **Wish You Were Here – postcards from Toronto.** Group exhibition curated by Katherine Mulherin. Gladstone Hotel. 3rd and 4th floor. 1214 Queen St. West. For details call Katharine Mulherin at 416-993-6510 or email <mailto:info@katharinemulherin.com>. FREE

January 27 to February 5 from 1 – 5 pm daily. Environment Show. **Man's Abuse of the Earth - ain't that a kick in the head?** Group exhibition of artists concerned with the environment. People aware/sensitive to environmental issues either show their artwork or simply cooperate to raise awareness/funds for future environmental campaigns. Ben Navaee Gallery. 1111 Queen St. East. Call 416-999-1030 or visit www.BenNavaeeGallery.com. FREE

Comedy

February 2 at 8:00 pm. **The Incubator.** Impatient Theatre Company presents comedy shows Sundays through Wednesdays. The shows are held in the evenings. The ITC is Toronto's leader of longform improvisation, in performance, coaching and training. No other company in the city, or country, devotes as many resources to the continuous development, exploration and presentation of the art and craft of longform improvisation. Impatient Theatre. Savannah Room. 1722 Queen St. West. Call 416-238-7337 or visit <http://www.impatient.ca/calendar/2009/02/>. Most shows are FREE or \$5.00.

Festival/Celebration

February 6 and 7 at 7 pm. Toronto's Winter City Festival. Part of the WOW! Series. **Spectacle Show: Pi-Leau by Close-Act.** North American Premiere! Dutch street theatre troupe, Close-Act, transforms Nathan Phillips Square into a mythical under-water world that floats high above the audience. Themes of global warming and environmental struggles are evident, but at its heart this spectacular open-air production of Pi-Leau is a story of forbidden love that combines theatre, music, fire, dance and incredible props. It is a 60 minute show. Nathan Phillips Square. 100 Queen St. West. For more information about Close-Act street theatre troupe visit www.closeact.nl. For more information about Toronto's Winter City Festival, visit http://www.toronto.ca/special_events/wintercity/about_wow.htm. FREE

February 7, 8, 14 and 15. **KUUMBA. African Heritage Month Festival.** Two weekends of events celebrating African culture. Various locations at Harbourfront Centre. Take the 510 Spadina Streetcar south from Spadina subway station. For details visit http://www.harbourfrontcentre.com/kuumba/kuumba.cfm?festival_id=28. FREE
Some highlights of the festival include:

- February 7 at 12:00 noon. **Sabar Drum and Dance** with Daniel Joof and Tamsir Seck. The drum workshop features instruction in a traditional Sabar rhythm. Participants are asked to bring their own Sabar drum or djembe. The dance workshop highlights the fundamentals of Sabar dance, starting with basic movements, and then progressing to a short sequence of choreographed dance steps. Clothing should be loose and comfortable for both drum and dance (workout clothing is fine). The dance workshop will be done in bare feet for both men and women. A very limited number of drums will be available. Participants are asked to bring their own drum. Harbourfront Centre. Brigantine Room. 235 Queens Quay West. Visit <http://www.baobabafrikanarts.org/>. FREE

- February 7 – 8. **Somaliwood Film Festival**. OLOL Film Productions is the first Somali-owned film company in the world and is committed to creating opportunities for provocative and engaging work of the highest quality and representing the Somali Culture. Join us for the first Somaliwood Film Festival in Canada featuring drama and documentaries that explore Somali culture from the world capital of Somali filmmaking, Columbus, Ohio. For details of times and locations call 416-973-4000 or email info@harbourfrontcentre.com or visit http://www.harbourfrontcentre.com/whatson/today.cfm?discipline_id=&mode=day&month=2&year=2009&day=7&week=6. For further info about OLOL Film Productions visit www.olofilm.com. FREE
- February 7 at 8:00 pm. **Kuumba Choreographer's Congress** with five of Toronto's finest choreographers. The Kuumba Choreographer's Congress celebrates and pays tribute to the regions of African dance and the ongoing negotiation between a traditional and contemporary dance form. Harbourfront Centre. Lakeside Terrace. 235 Queens Quay West. Call 416-973-4000 or visit www.dlmstudio.net. FREE
- February 7 at 2 pm. **Griots with Katenen "Cheka" Dioubaté**. Among the Mandé peoples of western Africa, caste is destiny; among the Dioubaté clan of Kankan, Guinea, the men and women are born to sing. Whatever else they do - going into business, higher education, or homemaking - each generation of Dioubaté is responsible for learning its society's history, its favourite stories, and its great people's lineages, and for entertaining its audiences therewith in song. Each generation is responsible, in short, for serving the world as *jeli* (known in the West as griots). Katenen "Cheka" Dioubaté will perform a variety of Griot music as part of this weekend. Harbourfront Centre. Brigantine Room. 235 Queens Quay West. Call 416-973-4000 or visit www.myspace.com/katenen. FREE
- February 7 and February 8 from 1 – 6 pm. **HarbourKIDS. African Wall Hangings**. Create fabric wall hangings inspired by African arts and culture with artist Nazreth Mebrahtu. Harbourfront Centre. Miss Lou's Room. 235 Queen's Quay West. Call 416-973-4000. FREE
- February 7 at 5 pm and February 8 at 5:30 pm. **Hiplife**. Hosted by Trixx and featuring Bonital L and Stevano UGO. A fusion of Ghanaian highlife and hip-hop. Harbourfront Centre. Brigantine Room. 235 Queens Quay West. Call 416-973-4000. FREE

Lecture

February 5 at 6:45 pm. **Artist Lecture – Lisa Jevbratt**. Presented by Ontario College of Art and Design. Jevbratt is an Associate Professor at the University of California, Santa Barbara. She will discuss her online participatory art projects and her exploration of "interspecies collaboration," including her current project, "ZooMorph," a series of Adobe Photoshop plus-in filters that simulate how a large selection of animals see. Ontario College of Art and Design. 100 McCaul Street. Visit <http://www.ocad.ca/home.htm>. FREE

Music

February 1 and February 8 at 4:30 pm. **Jazz Vespers**. Great music with some of Canada's finest jazz musicians! This evening service of music, a reflective reading, prayers for our city and the world, and a jazzy congregational hymn is one of our most popular services - with wonderful music, and with some of the finest jazz artists in Canada. Christ Deer Park Church. 1570 Yonge St. 2 blocks North of St. Clair. All are welcome! For information call 416-920-5211.

- Sunday, February 1 at 4:30 pm. **Murley & Occhipinti**: Mike Murley (saxophone) & David Occhipinti (guitar). Christ Church Deer Park. FREE
- Sunday, February 8 at 4:30 pm. **George Martin** (piano), with a bassist TBA. George is the talented pianist who has been entertaining us while we have coffee after Jazz Vespers services for a number of years now. We are pleased and delighted to feature him at one of our services. Christ Church Deer Park. FREE

Saturdays from January 17 – December 31, 2009 from 3:30 – 5 pm. **Mara Tone. A music Marathon of Tone.** Presented by Ben Navaee Gallery. A lengthy year long contest that includes musical performances by local artists in any musical genre. Ben Navaee Gallery. 1111 Queen St. East. Interested musicians please call 416-999-1030 or email lenka@BenNavaeeGallery.com or visit <http://www.BenNavaeegallery.com/>. FREE

Peer Support

Ongoing. **Like-Mind(s)2 Peer Support Mentorship Program.** "Talk to someone who's been there." The mentorship program matches individuals between the ages of 18-35 living with a mood disorder (participants) with other individuals living "successfully" with a mood disorder (mentors). Our mentors offer peer support to participants by sharing their own knowledge and experience living with a mood disorder. For further information or to become a participant or a mentor please call 416-486-8046 x303 or email likeminds@mooddisorders.on.ca or visit <http://www.mooddisorders.on.ca/>. FREE

Recreation

Sunday, February 15 at 2 pm. **Lost River Walks.** Mayim Creek in Leslieville. Start at Pape subway station and trace the course of a lost creek that ran past two Jewish cemeteries - hence the name Mayim - Hebrew for "waters". End at Leslie & Queen. Moderate difficulty (streets and some alleyways - may be cold). Leader John Wilson. Visit <http://www.lostrivers.ca/WalkSchd.htm>. FREE

Theatre/Performance Art

Ongoing. **Theatre Passe Muraille.** Saturday matinee performances are pay what you can subject to change for individual productions. Theatre Passe Muraille. Arts Box Office. 16 Ryerson Ave. Call 416-504-7529 or visit the <https://www.artsboxoffice.ca/scripts/max/2000/maxweb.exe> (the Arts Box Office) for details. PWYC

Workshops

Thursdays, February 12 to March 19 from 1 – 3 pm. **Stress to Strength.** This six-week group offers women a holistic approach to dealing with stress in their lives. Take this opportunity to look at the sources of stress in your life. With greater awareness and practical tools, we will work towards coping with stress and being more effective in your life. North York Women's Centre. 201 Caribou Road. Note: Tokens are provided for women who otherwise would not be able to attend the workshops. Child minding may be available with advance notice. To register call the NYWC at 416-781-0479 between the hours of 10 and 4 pm, Monday – Thursday, or use our online registration form at http://www.nywc.org/programs/form_wks.html. For further details email info@nywc.org. FREE

Saturday, February 7 from 2:30 to 4:30 pm. **Understanding Alzheimer's Disease and Dementia.** The Alzheimer Society of Toronto discusses Alzheimer's, a progressive, degenerative disease of the brain, and other forms of dementia. Toronto Public Library. York Woods Branch. 1785 Finch Ave. West. Meeting Room 1. Register in person or call 416-395-5980. FREE

February 21 and March 21 from 11 am to 12:30 pm. **Yoga and Meditation Workshops.** A teacher from Yoga Meditation Canada provides basic methods of meditation and simple yoga exercises. Bring yoga mat or towel. Toronto Public Library. Albert Campbell Branch. Multi Purpose Room. 496 Birchmount Rd. Register by calling 416-396-8890. FREE

Ongoing. Sundays at 4:45 – 5:15 pm. **Free Laughter Yoga Class for Everyone.** This is an initiative of the Ben Navaee Art Gallery. 1111 Queen St. East (between Pape and Jones). It is necessary to register through Facebook because the organizers do not have the resources to handle registrations over the phone. Register at <http://bennavaeegallery.com/LaughterYogaforEveryone.aspx>. FREE

Thursday, February 26 at 2 pm. **The Power of Story: A Storytelling Workshop for Adults.** Find your storytelling voice and learn how to select stories with long-time storyteller, Mariella Bertelli, a teller of tales nationally and internationally. She is a member of the Storytellers School of Toronto and Storytellers of Canada/Conteurs du Canada, where she is also the Ontario Coordinator. Toronto Public Library. Deer Park Branch. 40 St. Clair Ave. East. Register in person or call 416-393-7657. FREE

Writers/Books

CALL FOR SUBMISSIONS. The **2009 Annual POSTCARD STORY COMPETITION** for the best Canadian story of 250 words in the English language. Sponsored by the Writer's Union of Canada. The fee is \$5.00. The prize is \$500.00 and publication in the Union's Newsletter. Deadline for submissions is February 14, 2009. Entries must be mailed to: PCS Competition, 90 Richmond Street East, Suite 200, Toronto, ON, M5C 1P1. Visit <http://www.wcdr.org/wcdr25/?p=1211>. Results will be posted at www.writersunion.ca. \$5.00

Ongoing. CALL FOR SUBMISSIONS. **Nature Canada** accepts nature-related poetry, short stories and art to publish on the Creative Corner of their website. No compensation and no guarantee when your submission will appear on their site but they will "try our best to post your masterpiece quickly!" Visit http://www.naturecanada.ca/take_action_creative_corner_poetry.asp. FREE

February 14 and 28 at 2 - 4:30 pm. **Phoenix Poets Workshop.** Longest running poets group in Toronto. Bring copies of one poem for constructive critique. Hear other poets read their work! All ages. Toronto Public Library. College/Shaw Branch. 766 College St. Call 416-393-7668 or visit www.torontopubliclibrary.ca. FREE

C/S Words to the Wise

Untitled

I don't know what I need to find peace in my life. Though the search is worthwhile it is also frightening because it involves crawling deep down into the crevices of my brain into places I am afraid to go, for fear of what I may confront. I need someone to guide me, to shine a light into these crevices, to illuminate what is in the deepest recesses. I might find something disturbing, lodged in there from some time long ago; or I might find answers, definitive ones, to where the fears began; or maybe just a peaceful nook where I can go to take refuge from the noise in other chasms. Whatever is there, I can't find it alone. I can rely on my own brain only to a certain extent. If only it were lined with rubber like a safe room in an insane asylum, then all the voices and taunts could bounce off the walls, cushioning my cranial wiring, where the delusions await activation. Or perhaps I could develop selective amnesia, turning off the painful channels in my life, focusing instead on the good ones, the good people – the pillars.

And there *are* pillars to lean on in my life. But no matter how present or solid they are, I am still like a small child who despite parental assurances that there are no monsters under her bed, can still hear them breathing. I must learn to trust. I can't control the thoughts of others so I must learn to control my own. That is what I need to be well – control. And buttressed by my pillars, through time and past torment, I'm hoping I will get there.

Kathe Symington

To subscribe to the *Bulletin* or *The Wellness and Recovery Newsletter*, call the Consumer/Survivor Information Resource Centre of Toronto at 416-595-2882 or email us at csinfo@camh.net. The *Bulletin* is published twice a month on the 1st and 15th. The *Wellness and Recovery Newsletter* is a joint production of Community Resource Connections of Toronto (CRCT) and the C/S Info Centre. It is published 4 times a year. Both are posted on the CRCT website at www.crct.org, and both publications are free to receive. We encourage people to subscribe by email if they can so we have the resources available to mail to those who do not have access to a computer or the Internet.