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## EMBRACING EMOTIONS

Our emotions play a large role in the way we interact with the world. While we seek out feelings of happiness, joy, and excitement, we also do our best to avoid darker emotions. It is common to try and stifle feelings of sadness, anger, frustration, disappointment, or any of the large spectrum of negative emotions. When we encounter these, we do everything in our power to escape them. Our natural reaction is to avoid, ignore, or disregard unwanted emotions. However, research has indicated that resisting negative feelings may have the potential to intensify them instead. One study found that in response to bad experiences, individuals who attempted to avoid negative emotions were more likely to experience symptoms, such as anxiety and depression, months later.

Rather than avoiding darker emotions, it may be beneficial to instead learn to embrace them. The same study found that people who make a habit of accepting their negative emotions are more likely to experience fewer negative emotions. As a result, these individuals have higher levels of mental well-being and psychological health. It appears that allowing yourself to feel bad can actually help you feel better.

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Learning to embrace negative emotions can seem easier said than done, but it is an essential skill to learn. The reality of life is that no one will be able to avoid negative feelings forever. We all experience successes and failures, hills and valleys, and changes in life that are beyond our control. Our feelings, even if they are negative, can teach us meaningful lessons and play a crucial role in shaping who we are. It is important to be compassionate and to not judge or berate ourselves for feeling the way we feel. Certain practices, such as meditation and yoga, can help us accept and work through our undesirable emotions. It is possible that by having an accepting attitude towards our darker emotions, we are not focusing on them as much, and therefore, we are able to let them go more easily. By embracing negative feelings, we may also learn to embrace our true, authentic selves.

Source: Can Embracing Negative Emotions Increase Your Well-Being? - Douglas LaBler Ph.D

# CRISIS CENTRE NEWS

## NEW EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR



**Sandra Boulianne**

The Crisis Centre for Northern BC is sad to announce that Sandra Boulianne will be leaving her position as Executive Director as of September 1. The impact that Sandra has made on the Crisis Centre since joining in 2012 is incalculable. In her time here, she has helped increase our number of volunteers and staff and has conducted hundreds of youth and adult workshops throughout Northern BC. Under Sandra's leadership, we entered into a partnership with Crisis Services Canada to provide crisis support on a national level through the national suicide hotline, Talk Suicide.

When asked about her time at the Crisis Centre, Sandra shared, "When I first started, there were four of us on staff and about six volunteers. Most of my work in the early days was on the phone lines, trying to maintain our 24/7 coverage." Hearing the voices

of distressed callers fueled her passion for recruiting more volunteers and expanding funding so additional staff could be hired. "It's been a grind but I wouldn't trade it for the world! It's been a privilege to work with such a great team. I know the crisis centre will be in good hands with Riley as the new executive director!" she remarked about working in the nonprofit organization. The pandemic shed light on the importance of mental health and thankfully, has resulted in increased government funding. As a result of these changes, the centre was able to support 30% more people in need this year compared to the year prior.

Sandra has been attending the Masters of Counselling Program at UNBC and is leaving to complete her final practicum. Sandra desires to become a registered clinical counsellor. "So many times we refer our callers to counsellors for longer term work and often they end up on waitlists. It is still my passion to be a part of this much needed work in mental health!"

We wish Sandra the best on her next adventure!



**Riley Skinner**

We are pleased to announce that filling the position of Executive Director is the centre's, Riley Skinner. Riley brings several years of crisis experience, and has a background in psychology and counselling. Riley is currently enrolled in the Masters of Business Administration program at UNBC.

"I am fortunate to have been part of this important work since January of 2019 when I joined as a volunteer pursuing education and experience in mental health & suicide prevention. Since then, my capacity and role at the Centre has shifted, and I am honored to have served as the Crisis Services Program Coordinator for the past two years.

Like every previous year, we have continued to outdo ourselves on how much growth a small organization can achieve in 12 months. In spring of 2020, we, and all our partner centres' across Canada, were declared to be an essential service. The importance of the work we do was not news to us, but official recognition on a national level was. To rise to the call of support by the communities we serve, we have had to rethink every detail of our organization from the ground up. Many of the changes that were made of necessity will remain as part of our ongoing practices. After 52 years of this lifesaving work, we continue to prove that an old dog can, and will, learn new tricks in order to redefine what it means to provide high quality, trauma-informed, crisis intervention, & suicide prevention.

It has been an absolute pleasure to be a part of this growth, for our communities, for our Centre, and for all the passionate and caring people who have put their heads together to make it a reality. As we are poised to move into this next chapter, I anticipate our pursuit of excellence will continue and I look forward to reporting our success. Thank you for this opportunity to learn and to be part of something greater."

# WORKSHOPS

**Our training includes skills training, healthy coping, communication, peer support, and education to prevent and respond to crisis and suicide.**

## COPE

- This workshop uses the principals of mindfulness to help students in grades 5,6, & 7 achieve better mental wellness and cope with issues like anxiety, overthinking, stress, self-harm, sleep loss, and social media use.

## Lifelines

- Lifelines is an evidence-based program for grades 5,6, & 7 designed to integrate youth suicide prevention into both the culture and mission of the school, which is to provide a safe learning environment for its students. Classes emphasize help-seeking behaviours and are aimed at students who encounter peers who may be thinking of suicide.

## Reaching Out

- This workshop introduces the topic of suicide to youth and teaches about warning signs, that it's okay to talk about suicide, how participants can respond to suicide, and advises participants it is okay to ask for help and to connect with a safe adult.

## Self-Care 101

- A central goal of this workshop is to invite youth to see that each of us has mental health and, similar to caring for our physical health, we can learn to nurture and improve our mental health through our actions, experiences, and lifestyle choices.

## GRASP

- This 12-hour skill building program provides youth from Grades 9-12 with self-awareness, communication, and coping skills that will aid them in their personal growth as well as contribute to an overall plan for ongoing youth suicide prevention programs within schools and communities.

## ASIST (Applied Suicide Intervention Skills Training)

- Living Works' two day, interactive workshop that prepares caregivers to provide suicide life-assisting first-aid intervention.

## safe (Suicide Awareness For Everyone) TALK

- Living Works' three-hour workshop which prepares helpers to identify persons with thoughts of suicide and connect them to suicide first-aid resources.

## suicideTALK

- Ranging from 90 minutes to a half a day, Living Works' suicideTALK invites all participants to become more aware of suicide prevention opportunities in their community.

Contact our **Community Education Coordinator** at [community.education@crisis-centre.ca](mailto:community.education@crisis-centre.ca) or 778.693.2765 for more information!

## UPCOMING TRAINING:

### Volunteer Training

The Crisis Centre is conducting our next volunteer training session in **September**. Mandatory portions of the training will take place on **September 12th, 15th, and 19th** from **6pm-8pm**.

Please contact **Liam Moberg** at [program.coordinator@crisis-centre.ca](mailto:program.coordinator@crisis-centre.ca) to apply or for more information.

### ASIST Workshop

(Applied Suicide Intervention Skills Training)

**Date: August 23 & 24**

**Location: UNBC**

Please contact **Jody Stronstad** at [community.education@crisis-centre.ca](mailto:community.education@crisis-centre.ca) to register.

## Connect with us online!

 @crisiscentrenbc contact us at  
information@crisis-centre.ca and let  
 @crisiscentrenbc us know your  
thoughts on this  
 Crisis Prevention, newsletter!  
Intervention, and Information  
Centre for Northern BC



## UPCOMING EVENTS:

### Soles Remembering Soles

Our centre has put this event together as a way to remember those lost to suicide and to bring the community together. The evening begins with opening remarks, light refreshments, and a discussion about how to get involved in creating suicide-safer communities.

At Soles Remembering Souls, we will gather in honour of those lost to suicide, and support survivors of suicide loss. Taking a walk in the garden, attendees will find placards with pictures of people who have died by suicide that include five things their loved ones would like them to be remembered by.

The event will take place on **Thursday, September 29th from 6pm - 7:30pm** at the Lheidli T'enneh Memorial Park Bandshell.

If you would like your loved one to be memorialized at the event, please go to our web page ([crisis-centre.ca](http://crisis-centre.ca)) to register.

## OUR FIVE PILLARS

The Crisis Centre for Northern B.C. has Five Pillars that are the foundation of our work. Follow Dial North over the next few editions to read about each one:

### 1. HUMILITY

### 2. INTEGRITY:

**"We value a consistent and uncompromising adherence to ethical practices, moral standards, and honesty."**

Our centre promotes itself as a safe, confidential, non-judgmental service that empowers and respects all people we encounter. Although we are not professional counsellors, we follow a trauma-informed model that we use to support our service users as they navigate their crisis. Our centre is accredited by the American Association of Suicidology (AAS), who is known as one of the top governing bodies for suicide prevention. Our responders receive extensive training before helping services users, and we consistently review policies and procedures to ensure we are up to date on current best practices.

We have entered into a pact with the people of Northern BC to provide the least invasive methods of crisis intervention and the highest quality service. We stay true to the agreement we have made with the people we serve, both on and off our service lines.

### 3. ACCOUNTABILITY

### 4. COLLABORATION

### 5. SERVICE

## Crisis Centre for Northern B.C. Resources

- Northern B.C. Crisis Line: **250-563-1214, 1-888-562-1214**, 24/7
- Northern B.C. Youth Line: **250-564-8336**, 24/7
- BC Suicide Line: **1-800-784-2433**, BC-wide, 24/7
- 310-MENTALHEALTH: **310-6789**, BC-wide, 24/7
- Talk Suicide: **1-833-456-4566**, National, 24/7



**Crisis Prevention,  
Intervention & Information Centre  
FOR NORTHERN BC**

*We are here for you 24-7*

**Crisis Prevention, Intervention, & Information Centre for Northern B.C.**

#101-2700 Queensway, Prince George B.C., V2N 1L2

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