



People. Place. Potential.

a BCHC & BCHLA Newsletter • Volume 20 • February 2010



THE NEWS

What's New with BC Healthy Communities?

BCHC has been busy over the past year. One key highlight is our recent partnership with the **Community Energy Association** to deliver our Climate Action Bootcamps for local governments. We congratulate Quesnel, Cariboo Regional District, Qualicum Beach, Parksville, Lantzville, Ladysmith, Burns Lake, Regional District of Bulkley-Nechako, Vanderhoof, Fraser Lake, and Telkwa for their commitment to community climate action and for participating in the bootcamps. To find out more about how to book a bootcamp please contact us at bchc@bchealthycommunities.ca.

We are also offering a wide variety of capacity building workshops for the upcoming year such as: Healthy People. Healthy Communities: Integrated Practices for Health and Wellness; Developing Communities, Developing Ourselves: Citizenship and Community Development; Getting to the Root of it: Influencing Change that Matters; and For Youth By Youth: Integral Youth Engagement.

To date we have distributed almost 90 Seed Grants for capacity building for healthier communities and have worked closely with over 100 communities on projects ranging from community gardens, to community emergency response initiatives for remote communities. We thank you all for your tireless, and many times unacknowledged, efforts to building healthier, resilient, and sustainable communities. We look forward to working with you over the upcoming year.

INSIDE	
Integral Youth Capacity Building <i>By Caitlin Schwarz</i>	p. 2
The Community Houston HOPE: Healthy Options for People and Earth <i>Submitted by Dawn Hanson</i>	p. 3
The Champion Stella Gauthier <i>Submitted by Heidy Kux-Kardos</i>	p. 3
The Practice <i>Integral at Work</i> <i>By Jodi Mucha</i>	p. 4
Upcoming Opportunities	p. 5
The Readings	p. 5
Contact BCHC / BCHLA	p. 6

Integral Youth Capacity Building

By Caitlin Schwarz

Community development is participatory. Most practitioners will agree that the integrity of their practice lies in the diversity of the perspectives it represents. Youth encompass a substantial perspective as they stand to absorb the implications of today's decisions. This has lent itself to the increased popularity of links between youth engagement and capacity building.

The Healthy Communities Integral Capacity Building Framework (ICBF) suggests that we first acknowledge and **learn** about existing opportunities, then **engage** and mobilize relevant stakeholders to strategize and **expand assets**, and finally **collaborate** to support each other. This approach is a cyclical one that feeds back into itself to inform future manifestations around new or related topics.

Motivational speaker Anthony Robbins said: "If you do what you've always done, you'll get what you've always gotten." In other words, when we use only past perspectives to inform new practices, we cannot expect different results. As a generation born into the capacity of today's world, young people have greater potential than ever and it is this unique opportunity that will enable them to facilitate social change. How can we build capacities for a future we can't conceptualize?

Practitioners and participants who engage in an authentic **learning** process are part of a reciprocal structure, whereby there are opportunities to simultaneously learn and teach. To create such an environment, it is important to spend time building trust. Young people neither function nor communicate the same as elder generations. To **engage** youth consistently, flexibility is essential. Young people can readily assess

authenticity; they can tell when their input is valued, and when it isn't. Therefore, communicating engagement intentions at the onset of any program allows for greater success.



Assuming an asset-based approach with youth is highly beneficial in that it provides an effective foundation to build from. As we can well appreciate, it is intimidating and disheartening to consistently face challenges. When **expanding assets**, effective facilitators work with youth to assess perspectives and reframe challenges in a solution-oriented way. Reciprocity is embedded in learning when stakeholders are asked to **collaborate** and generate an action plan.

Change is not linear; nor should we expect it to be. Change is a complex and dynamic process and often youth are more adaptive to it than those facilitating change. What makes working with youth unique is that they simultaneously represent a range of special interest groups. Furthermore, none of the aforementioned strategies are particularly innovative, they are simply highly effective community engagement strategies that we have identified through the Integral Capacity Building Framework to be especially important when working with youth.

THE COMMUNITY

Travel 300 kilometers west from Prince George along Highway 16 and you will come to the small northern town of Houston. Surrounded by forest and lakes, it's also noted for having the world's largest fly fishing rod, which just happens to point towards the Pleasant Valley Farmers Market, one of the many projects of HOPE.

Healthy Options for People and Earth (HOPE) is a community group of activists, concerned citizens and business owners united by the principles of participation, collaboration, inclusivity and diversity. Committed to working together for a healthy, balanced, local community, they build and nurture the potential for social and environmental change, create a safe climate for learning and community engagement, and develop partnerships to foster prosperity in their community.

An amalgamation of three community groups, they are involved in an amazing diversity of projects including: a recycling initiative with the Regional District, an assessment of healthy food and beverage sales with the District of Houston, the Link to Learning Community Garden and annual Harvest Festival, and the Farmers Market. Together, the community garden and market provide the opportunity for Link to Learning literacy program participants to grow their own food, apply for permits, develop budgets and market their produce and crafts. HOPE is an inspiring model of people-powered, community focused work for social and environmental change.

For more information about HOPE contact Cindy at ckeeper@telus.net or Belinda at blacombe@thehub.literacy.bc.ca

THE CHAMPION

Community and healing gardens were established in Chetwynd and surrounding area in Northeastern BC, with one of these gardens being placed on the land of the Sauteau First Nations. This new garden is an exciting part of growth and returning vitality to its community.

Stella Gauthier from Sauteau First Nations has been instrumental in keeping this new community garden planted, watered, weeded and harvested. With hundreds of hours invested over the past summer to ensure that deer and horses were kept at bay, and that the grounds received all the TLC a new garden needs, Stella has made it possible for the garden to flourish.

In addition to weekly thinning and producing fresh romaine, lettuce, spinach and Swiss Chart, by the end of the summer Stella oversaw harvesting close to 1500 pounds of potatoes, carrots, squash, rutabega, turnips, broccoli, onions, garlic, beans, peas and corn.

And continuing trend of generosity that has developed through this garden, the community gardeners decided to donate 10% of their proceeds to a huge Harvest Feast for the entire community, while the rest was preserved for future use.

With champions like Stella Gauthier, next year's garden will be twice as bountiful for the Sauteau Nation.



THE PRACTICE

Integral at Work

Our work at BC Healthy Communities is centered around the Integral Capacity Building Framework (ICBF). This is the 'how' of the work we do with communities across the province.

The integral aspect of the framework allows us to map out and identify community assets and barriers from four key perspectives, or quadrants: Physical/Behaviour, Systems/Structures, Culture, and Psychological/Spiritual. This process can be applied to address any complex community or personal issue where you live, work and play.

Since we spend at least 70% of our time in a work environment, where, for most of us, our work is also our life passion, let's take a look at the conditions that cultivate leadership, self-expression and collaboration. From an integral lens, we have mapped out some of the qualities of a healthy, pragmatic and effective organizational culture, where strengths are leveraged, success is defined by the triple bottom line (profit, people, planet), multiple constituencies are considered and a wide range of intelligences are valued.

What the organization does/how it acts (It)

- Balanced decision making
- Efficient behaviours
- Follows through on promises
- Adaptive to life conditions
- Leverages strengths, manages around weaknesses

Supportive systems and processes (Its)

- Small, flexible work teams
- Adaptive systems
- Sustainable resource consumption
- Recognition of multiple social contexts (political, social, ecological, economical, etc)

Shared space/common vision (We)

- High trust, low fear
- Strategic collaboration

- Clear communication
- Appreciative inquiry, open questions
- Values and encourages learning
- Leaders causing leaders

Who in the organization/individuals working there (I)

- Comfortable with complexity
- Adaptive, innovative
- Open, desire to learn and grow
- Integrity, responsibility, accountability
- Horizontal relationships, equality



Within an integrally-focused organization, practices for self reflection are also encouraged. One such practice is Reflection on Action. This process entails allocating time to explore why we acted as we did in our practice. By doing this we arrive at questions and ideas about our activities that we can draw upon in future decision making.

An example of weekly reflective questions that members of the BCHC team use include the following:

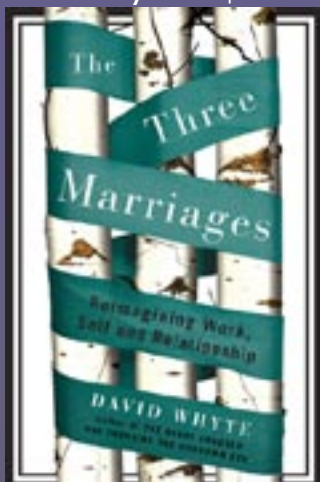
1. Describe activities I worked on this week.
2. What was significant this week and why?
3. What is the biggest learning from this week?
4. What am I left thinking about or wanting to know more about?
5. What can help me be more effective next week?

For more information on using the integral approach in the workplace please contact BCHC. We will also be offering workshops on Reflection on Practice in the upcoming year. If you are interested in hosting one in your community please let us know.

THE READINGS

The Three Marriages: Reimagining Work, Self, and Relationship

By David Whyte \$28.50



David Whyte knows there are three crucial relationships, or marriages, in our lives: the marriage or partnership with a significant other, the commitment we have to our work, and the vows, spoken or unspoken, we make to an inner, constantly developing self. In "The Three Marriages," the bestselling author, poet, and speaker argues that it is not possible to sacrifice one relationship for the others without causing deep psychological damage. Too often, he says, we fracture our lives and split our energies foolishly, so that one or more of these marriages is sacrificed and may wither and die, in the process impoverishing them all. Whyte looks to a different way of seeing and connecting these relationships and prompts us to examine each marriage with a fierce but affectionate eye as he shows us the importance of cherishing all three equally.

UPCOMING OPPORTUNITIES

BCRPA is pleased to announce their **2010 Symposium: Come Together - Embracing Today, Planning for Tomorrow**. They have developed a diverse and topical line up of educational sessions and gathered together an exciting roster of presenters around six main streams: The Art of Leadership, Working Together, Inclusive Communities, Investing in Infrastructure, Healthy People, and Sustainable Communities. Within each, a wide array of subject matter is explored, covering emerging trends, hot issues, and new practices. The program has something for everyone, from senior managers to volunteers to front line staff; enabling delegates to learn with and from each other.

Date: May 12-14

Location: Penticton, BC

Website and Registration Details: http://www.bcrpa.bc.ca/training_symposium/symposium/2010.htm

Digital Innovation: New Tools for Engagement

Social Media is dramatically changing the way we build relationships, lead our organizations, and inspire social change. Coupled with new technologies is an increased demand from consumers and clients for accountability, access to information and transparent institutional conduct.

This course will focus on how your organization can make the cultural shift required to capitalize on technology's capacity for creating meaningful public participation and social change. You'll leave this course with fresh perspectives and concrete ideas about how your organization can embrace technology to further your social mission.

Date: March 5, 2010 9:00 AM - 5:00 PM

Location: Justice Institute of BC Vancouver Campus

Website and Registration Details: <http://www.jibc.ca/leadership/specialevents/jasonmogus/>

Winter Active - Planning for Communities

Transportation during the winter can be challenging for commuters – from pedestrians to drivers, and public transit users, getting around during the slippery snow or cold, icy conditions can present significant safety concerns. Winter weather and limited hours of daylight often bring out the natural instincts of hibernation and staying inside. Even people that actively commute (walk, cycle or roll) throughout spring, summer and fall become less active when winter arrives.

A recent BCRPA Built Environment and Active Transportation Summit in Terrace brought people together from eleven BC communities to address topics related to winter planning and design guidelines, snow removal and how it can impact pedestrians.

Patrick Coleman from the Winter Cities Institute in Alaska encouraged municipalities to become aware of opportunities to enhance winter lifestyles and overcome the challenges winter can present. He emphasized that winter conditions affects not only the ability, but also the desire to be outside.

Winter communities in BC have discovered that building on the positive aspects of winter helps maximize appeal to new business, investors and residents. In fact, it is just as important as summer in terms of hosting exciting community events and generating tourism.

Fort St. John has put itself on the 'winter' map through its Winter Lights and High on Ice celebrations. High on Ice features professional and amateur international ice carving competitions, a winter curling bonspiel, ice fishing derbies, and other activities in a local park. The events generate not only a huge local following, but are a major draw for tourists.

The District of Kitimat's Winter Carnival is extremely popular with youth. Snow cleared from the roads is used to create a snow park for snowboarding tricks and jumps.

Other Suggestions to Build on the Positive Aspects of Winter:

- Plan activities and events during the winter to get community members outside and active;
- Encourage public art using snow and ice;
- Create multi-use surfaces for skiing, walking and biking using sand, gravel and compact snow;
- Use city parks for activities such as ice-skating sledding, snow shoeing, or hockey.
- Promote winter tourism through special events and community festivals.

"If we are to respect, appreciate, and celebrate winter, we shall have to improve the livability in cities during this lengthy and sometimes harsh season in a way that can help us enjoy its beneficial qualities."

Norman Pressman, Winter Cities Institute

When communities begin to assess their built environments for summer and winter livability, they can implement the initiatives most important and cost effective for their community in the long term. Costs should be evaluated in terms of safety/risk, the priority the community places on pedestrian mobility, and over the long term, rather than by each winter season.

www.PhysicalActivityStrategy.ca (BEAT)
www.wintercities.com

How can BC Healthy Living Alliance support your community?

- Providing knowledge, skills and easier access to healthy food choices at school, work, and play so families can make better food choices.
- Creating opportunities and overcoming barriers to make physical activity a priority for everyone.
- Reaching young adults where they work, learn, socialize and live, with smoking prevention, protection and cessation initiatives.
- Building stronger networks, leadership and skills to support the development of healthier communities.

For more information about BCHLA please contact us at 604-629-1630 or log onto our website www.bchealthyliving.ca



The Canada Cancer Society's BCHLA Community Capacity Building Team

An initiative of these BC Healthy Living Alliance members



How can BC Healthy Communities support your community?

- We support communities to see capacity building as an ongoing part of how they can reflect on and respond to changing issues and conditions.
- We support communities, organizations, local governments and individuals to see their work as part of a 'bigger picture', working with the whole system, acknowledging interconnections and patterns.
- We support communities to think about community engagement and collaboration as well as how this is supported by political commitment and policy.

For more information about BCHC please contact us at 1-250-356-0876 or bchc@bchealthycommunities.ca

