

WELCOME
To The
BETWEEN US/ENTRES NOUS
Fall 2010 Edition



ENJOY!
The OCC/CCO Editing Team

[Rose Anthony](#), [Candice Lawrence](#), [Shivon Raghunandan](#)



CHAIR'S MESSAGE

Jim Lees

Hello everyone,

Welcome to the Fall edition of *Between Us/Entre Nous*. We head into the academic year with another full slate on the OCC Executive. A warm welcome to a couple of new members: **Carla Green** joins us from Canadore College as our new Northern Representative. **Linda DeJong** of Sheridan College, while not exactly new to the Executive after serving for many years previous to 2008, is our Chair-Elect, assuming the lead of OCC in 2011.

Some very exciting times lie ahead for us. In this message, I'd like to focus on two important upcoming events.

Firstly, the Ministry's push to address the mental health needs of our students, fully recognizing the key role we play in providing support to the demographic most at-risk of the onset of mental health and addiction difficulties. I quote extensively from the recent study by Ontario College Health Association entitled "*Towards a comprehensive mental health strategy: the crucial role of colleges and universities as partners*" (December, 2009).

"University/college students are some of the brightest and hardest working young adults in our society. They are on the cusp of their wage-earning careers. Many have the potential to be leaders in the next generation. At the same time, however:

Most postsecondary students fall into the highest risk age group for mental illnesses and substance dependencies.

According to Statistics Canada, teenagers and young adults aged 15-24 were the most likely to report mood disorders and substance dependence problems (18% in comparison to 12% and 8% in 24-44 year olds and 45-65 year olds respectively).

University students are more likely to report mental illness symptoms than non-university students.

A survey of mood disorder symptoms, carried out by Adalf (2005) showed that forty-two percent of Ontario university students, compared to 17% of Ontario adults aged 18 to 29 years, reported elevated distress. (Adalf, 2005, p.112)

Ontario University students report having mental distress that significantly impacts their lives.

51% - 60% of students reported feeling hopeless; 33-43% reported feeling so depressed they were not able to function; and 6-9% seriously considered suicide in the 12 months prior to the questionnaire. (ACHA, 2009, unpublished data from six Ontario university campuses).

Although some of these statistics focus on university students, I'd be surprised if there was a significant difference when we considered the college population. Discussions with OCC colleagues all reveal the same experience - meeting the needs of students with mental health and addiction issues is a significant challenge for colleges generally and counselling departments specifically (and helps to explain why we are all so tired!)

At press time the first ever **Mental Health and Addictions in Postsecondary Education Summit** will have occurred on October 29th.

The summit will bring experienced practitioners and administrators from every post secondary institution in Ontario, to discuss the systemic challenges related to the improvement of services for students with mental health and addictions issues. Five themes have been identified for the day: Education and Training of Post Secondary Staff, Health Promotion, Student Support Services, Postsecondary collaboration with external partners and Legal and Institutional issues.

And to my second point, the regulation of psychotherapy, something that has probably been thirty years in the making, is upon us. In

2012 the **Ontario College of Registered Psychotherapists and Registered Mental Health Therapists (OCRPRMHT)** will be functioning and will have a profound impact on the practice of the majority of OCC members. The professional development part of this year's Joint Regional Meeting highlighted Joyce Rowlands, the Registrar for the Transition Council of the OCRPRMHT, on November 5th, 2010. Joyce shared some very important details that are very close to becoming our reality.

Thanks for listening. Be careful out there!
Jim



Sab·bat·i·cal

–adjective

1. of or pertaining or appropriate to the Sabbath.
2. (lowercase) of or pertaining to a sabbatical year.
3. (lowercase) bringing a period of rest.

–noun

4. (lowercase) sabbatical year
5. (lowercase) any extended period of leave from one's customary work, esp. for rest, to acquire new skills or training, etc.

Origin:

1605–15; < Gk sabbatikós

sabbatical year

–noun

1. Also called sabbatical leave . (in a school, college, university, etc.) a year, usually every seventh, of release from normal teaching duties granted to a professor, as for study or travel.
2. Chiefly Biblical . a yearlong period to be observed by Jews once every seven years, during which the fields were to be left untilled and all agricultural labors were to be suspended. Lev. 25.

Source: dictionary.reference.com



Sabbatical Research Report: Personal Counselling and Retention

*Shirley Porter, M.Ed., R.S.W., C.C.C.
Counsellor, Fanshawe College*

First off, I would highly recommend a sabbatical to anyone who hasn't had one before! What a gift it is to have the opportunity to do a different kind of work for a year.

My intention during my sabbatical, was to do some in-depth analysis of the data collected through our counselling database, to get a better picture of the work we have been doing with some high-risk student groups, and to find out what the relationship is between personal counselling and student retention (*Note: My analyses did not include disability services counselling data*). To do this, I undertook three separate analyses.

1) Counselling Trends – Assessed trends regarding personal counselling, triage, and pre-admission counselling contacts over the past six academic years (2003-2009)

Highlights:

- 28,001 individuals received counselling services during this time period (which accounted for approximately 56,000 counselling contacts)
- The average number of counselling contacts annually was 8562
- On average, 26.1% of **FTE** students used counselling/triage appointments each academic year

2) Personal Counselling, Client Usage, and Retention - For the 2008-09 academic year, assessed overall retention rates of first year students using personal counselling services (i.e., regarding psychosocial, academic, career and/or disability screening related issues) and compared them to the first year student population as a whole, and secondly, identified three client groups (i.e., Confirmed Disabilities (CD), Probable Disabilities (PD), and No reported Disabilities (ND)) and assessed their usage of personal counselling services (with particular attention to counselling regarding psychosocial issues) and consequent retention rates.

Highlights:

- Average number of personal counselling appointments per student was 2.3
- Students in level 1 of their programs who utilized personal counselling services enjoyed a *6-8% higher retention rate* than that of the first year general student population
- CD and PD clients attended significantly more personal counselling appointments than ND clients.
- CD students who attended counselling for psychosocial issues had a significantly higher rate of retention (i.e., 15% greater) than PD students.

3) Counselling, Suicide Risk Assessment and Retention – Identified the number of suicide risk assessment (SRA) protocols completed by our counsellors over five academic years (2004-2009). Obtained information from these protocols regarding risk factors, interventions utilized by counsellors, and the academic progress and retention rates of clients who continued in their studies during the academic year in which their SRA was completed.

Some Highlights:

- An average of 34.4 SRA protocols were completed annually.
- In 54% of cases, clients reported a suicidal ideation intensity score in the 7-10 range (on a scale of 1-10).
- Specific suicide plans were reported in 43% of cases, and availability of means to carry out plans were recorded in 38.4% of cases.
- Counsellor interventions were specific to individual cases and were sometimes dependent upon community resource availability at a given time.

- Among the group of students who remained in their studies, with counselling and/or medical supports, despite the challenges of suicidal ideation:
 - 75.7% had a Grade Point Average (GPA) \geq 2.0,
 - 42.1% had a GPA \geq 3.0, and
 - 73.8% met the criteria for academic retention.

Conclusions

The findings of these studies underscore the essential role of personal counselling as an effective student support and success mechanism in the post-secondary environment – particularly with respect to at-risk student groups.

Full reports for these studies will be available in the near future, pending publication



HIGHLIGHTS OF THE 2010 OCC CONFERENCE

Ida Gianvito and Melissa Mask

Late last year, a new position was created at the OCC executive to develop and implement a cost effective OCC conference for the spring 2010 year. A conference planning and professional development coordinator position was created in late November 2009 with both Melissa Mask and Ida Gianvito eagerly taking on the co-positions. With limited months in front of us, we took on this task with great enthusiasm, hopefulness, and pride for our profession.

We ventured and created a NEW hybrid college hosted conference model for the OCC which was adapted from both feedback from previous conferences and current trends. At this time, Jim Lees our chair was being asked to attend the Student Retention Conference in May, so we made an attempt to partner and piggy back on the Colleges Ontario *Student Retention Conference* scheduled for May 17-19th in Toronto. Central Region happened to be the next region hosting, so we decided to set the OCC Conference date for May 20th and 21. Now our mission was to find a central venue, and thanks to Liz Sokol, we secured Humber College as our central venue. Our conference title was *Recent Trends In College Counselling from Student Retention to E-Counselling*.

Here's a brief summary highlighting some of the 2010 OCC Conference achievements: The 2010 OCC Conference attracted **47 counsellors** from around the province with representation from the North, Central, West, and Eastern Region. As you would expect, the Central Region had the most colleges represented with 7 but the eastern region came 2nd with 6 colleges attending.

We offered a program menu of options similar to a *5 course meal* with choices that included:

- 1) Attending the full conference
- 2) Attending the 1 day Collegial Professional Development Sharing with the Banquet
- 3) Attending the AGM only

- 4) Attending the Banquet only
- 5) Attending the Professional Development Full Day.

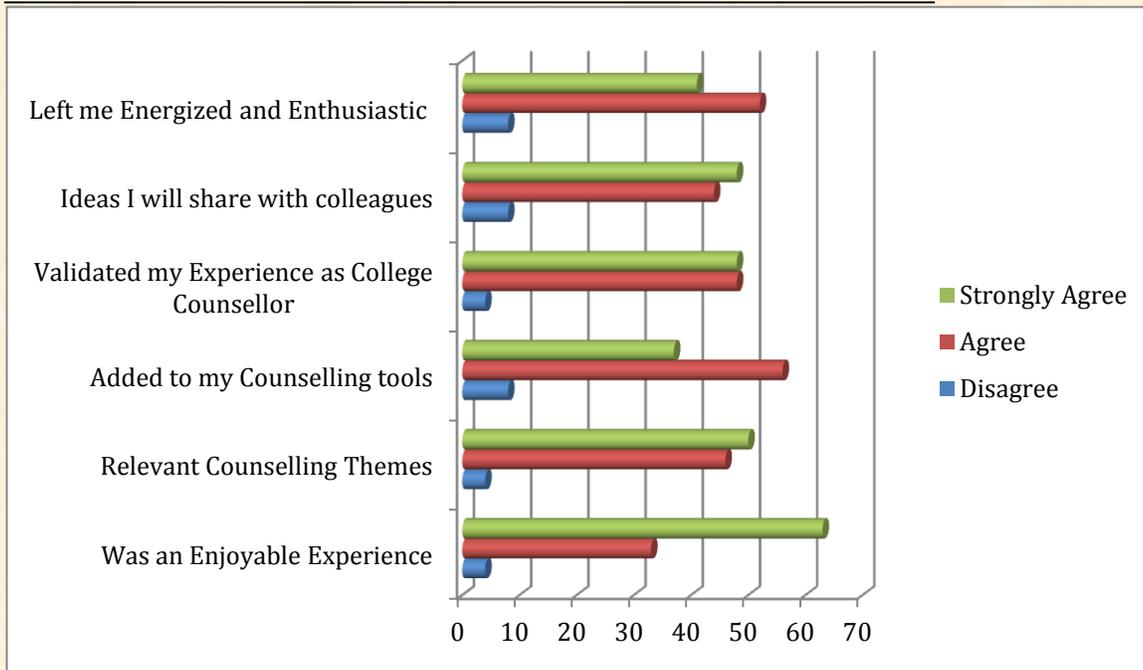
Prices for the various conference packages ranged from \$50.00 for the Banquet only, \$125.00 for the 1 Day Professional Development Day to \$300.00 for the full conference (excluding accommodations).

Having this many options for our profession seemed like we hit the jackpot because we had:

- ❖ The highest attendance at the AGM ever with a record 27 people attending!
- ❖ Great representation of Ontario colleges with **75%** (19/24) of colleges attending some part of the conference!
- ❖ Inspiring and validating workshops from 2 of our very own college colleagues: Melissa Mask presenting on *Career Counselling* and Robert Malowney and Diana McIntyre presenting on *Team Based Learning*
- ❖ 2 Professional Development 1-day workshops with keynote speakers on topics of *Cyber-counselling* with Dr. Lawrence Murphy and *Dialectical Behavioural Therapy (CAMH)* with Lindsay Davies.
- ❖ Our *classroom style lunch room transformed into a great little Banquet room, where we were able to have an intimate dinner and awarded the much deserved Audrey Healy with the OCC Leadership Award.*

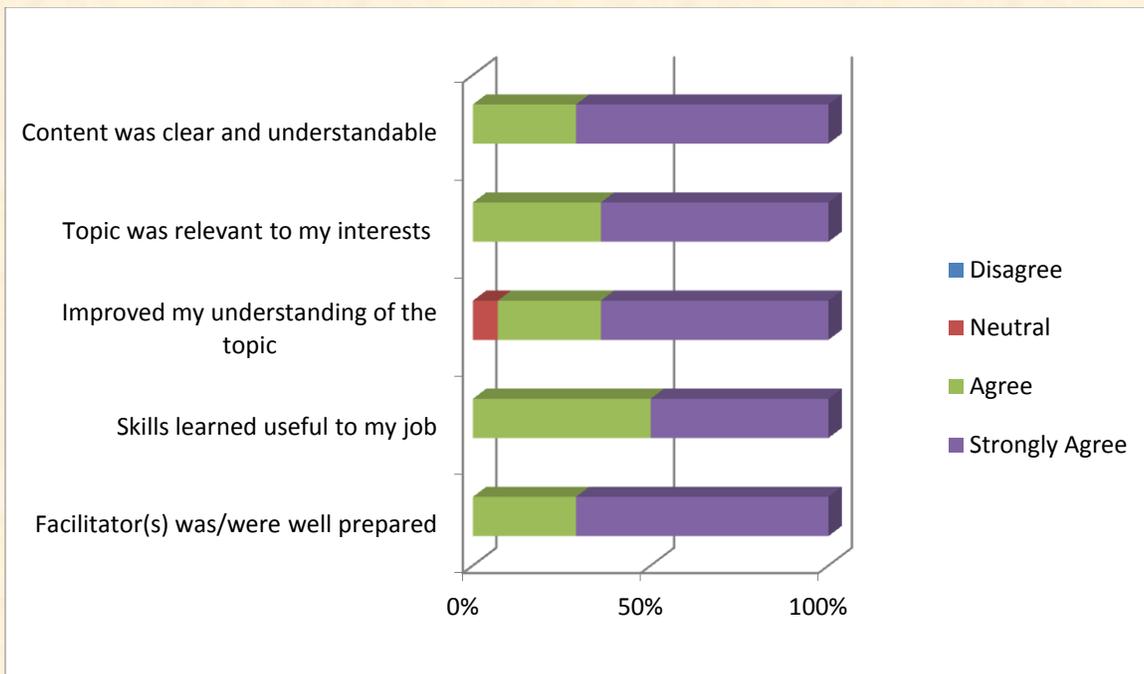
We want to thank all of you who responded to the OCC post-conference survey and would like to share the results. We had a 55% response rate (27 people) with very positive results overall. The following charts demonstrate your ratings in percentages. Although not charted, we also received very positive ratings on the conference venue, customer service, and food provided.

2010 OCC CONFERENCE OVERALL CONFERENCE EXPERIENCE



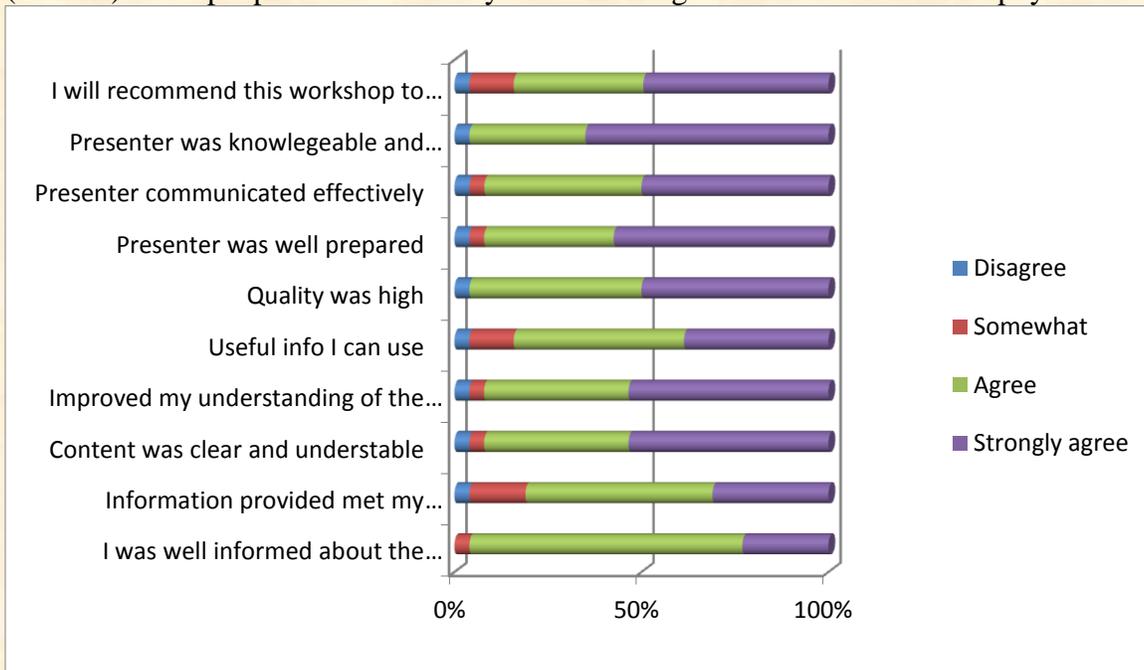
PLENARY WORKSHOP FEEDBACK

15 of the respondents attended a plenary workshop. Of those 15, 5 attended career counselling presented by Melissa Mask and 10 respondents attended team based learning.



PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT 1- DAY CONFERENCE FEEDBACK

26 people attended the Professional Development 1 day workshop. Of those 18 people attended the Introduction to Dialectical Behaviour Therapy and Borderline Personality disorder with Lyndsay Davies (CAMH) and 8 people attended the Cybercounselling with Dr. Lawrence Murphy.



Our conference gave us a valuable opportunity to share and network with other counsellors, and provide opportunities for skill and professional development tailored to the unique needs of college counsellors. It was one of the few places where you could look next to you and feel that the person sitting beside you does a similar job that you do, and they understand the type of role juggling that you do at your college. You could also confidently say that they understand the need for self-care that you also crave, as well as struggle to find room to squeeze one more student in your schedule!

We look forward to the 2011 Conference hosted by **Algonquin College in Ottawa on May 15-17th 2011** scheduled to coincide and piggy-back on to the Canadian Counselling and Psychotherapy Conference (CCPA) offered on May 18-20th in Ottawa. We encourage OCC members to participate by offering to present or to attend the conference to expand your own knowledge and collaborate informally with other counsellors.

Looking forward to seeing you in Spring 2011 in lovely Ottawa!!

Your OCC Professional Development and Conference co-coordinators,
Ida Gianvito and Melissa Mask



Recently I had the unusual task of sorting through a deceased artist's brushes and paints. Some were hardened, some unused...

...I watch everything fade in time, continually, from the beginning. It was always there, death quietly hummed within the ambient noise of life until one day the noise got louder than any thought and never faded again; the awareness of mortality set in. Those who have left will always be gone. Life is never the same. They stay gone for the rest of our time. Oh the pain, at first, right in the heart of my heart. That's where they lived and that's where they are now missing. I try to catch them in the palm of my hand while they are still here but they slip between my fingers. Is there no way to hold life better, firmer? It continues to slip and I have no grip on it. The tighter I grip, the more they slip. Trying to hold squeezes life out of life. So I bow my head, take in another breath and look around filled with gratitude for all the beauty.

Bohdan Turok, Humber College

AMANDEEP'S GLASSES

Judith MacKinnon (Sheridan College)

Do you see these eye glasses? Well, these aren't just ordinary glasses. These glasses have a rather special background story to them, one that involves a very generous young man named Amandeep. Dear Readers, let me share with you "The Story about Amandeep's Glasses."

Several years ago I was in one of my favorite places at work, the hallway, and I was chatting with one of our Peer Mentors. Peer Mentors are students who work with us in Student Services at Sheridan College. I was telling Amandeep about my most recent misadventure, about how I had broken my glasses. I described how I had gone to the gym and put my glasses loosely in the side pocket of my jacket and somehow, in the process of getting in and out of the vehicle, the glasses slipped out and fell beneath the van...And I backed out over them, crushing them BEYOND Recognition!

And yes, the tragedy continued, in that it was less than a year since I had purchased them, so my insurance would not cover a replacement set...alas, such a tale of woe. Amandeep just laughed and said:

"Judy, you should get your eyeglasses from India...\$29.95 a pair, full prescription...I usually get 3-4 pairs when I go home for I, too, frequently break or loose my glasses...by the way, I have friends who come over every 3-4 months, the next time someone is coming, we should order you a pair...yes! That is what we should do!

"Hey, that's just cool" I said "yes, sign me up!" I was delighted at the suggestion and insisted on covering the cost in advance.

Well several months went by and I have to confess, I forgot about the glasses. I had proceeded and purchased another set. When suddenly, one Monday, Amandeep burst into the centre where I worked and said:

"Judy, my friends are coming this Friday! We must hurry. We must send them your prescription. And the type of glasses you want...we have no time to waste!"

Interestingly, I had a copy of my prescription at home, so I emailed my information to his contact and then we went online to order the frames.

We went on the Internet to INDIA.com and located Eyewear...and found a location near his home of Faridabad. We browsed the selections, picked 3 and sent along the link with the model numbers. This was completed on a Wednesday!

On the following Friday, Amandeep strolled into the Career Centre and handed me a bright orange package...it was the eyeglasses! I was so excited...Amandeep was delighted and we just laughed and laughed.I said, "Amandeep this is so generous. It was so generous of your friend to run around and look after all this on top of getting ready for a trip to Canada..."

"Well Judy" Amandeep said," it was actually my Mom...she took the lenses numbers to the optician and looked after everything and gave the glasses to my friends who were coming over..."

Well, I was extremely touched...I was already deeply impressed by Amandeep's generosity, but Amandeep's Mom? I could just picture this lady driving all over Faribidad getting eyeglasses for this person from Canada who drove over hers...such an act of total kindness from a total stranger, 1/2 way around the world. It touched and also humbled me deeply that for 2 people to go out of their way, for no obvious gain other than to simply help someone, this really had an impact on me. Even thinking about this still warms my heart and makes me smile.

That was several years ago. Where is Amandeep now, you ask? The last email was that he was in Edmonton, with a great new job! He updates us frequently with his latest adventures...most recently learning to drive a snowmobile and sky dive. I know he's spreading lots of fun and goodwill in his many travels!

And my glasses? Well, I carry them with me always...I never want to lose them, they are my back-up set. The glasses are a frequent reminder of genuine kindness and when I am working with others, I hope I can be as generous as Amandeep and his Mom!



INVESTING IN THE SUCCESS OF ABORIGINAL LEARNERS: An Interview with Diane Hill, of the Mohawk Nation and Bear Clan

Candice Lawrence (Fanshawe College)



<http://www.halfabrain.ca/interview/>

Diane Hill (Katsitsawaks) is a member of the Mohawk nation and Bear clan from the Six Nations of the Grand River Territory. For the past 20 years, she has been consulting on various Aboriginal education initiatives internationally and working to promote culturally-based educational strategies in the field of social work and in the area of portfolio-assisted prior learning assessment with the First Nations Technical Institute. Currently, Diane is completing her Ph.D. in Adult Education with a focus on Aboriginal approaches at the University of Toronto.

Diane came to Fanshawe College to speak with faculty and staff in May, 2010. She helped us understand Aboriginal worldviews, and how each individual is unique and has the ability to fully actualize, learn, heal and move forward in life. Diane Hill is a gifted and inspirational speaker and educator. In this half hour interview, learn how to better understand how these worldviews thread through every aspect of the learning process.

Find Time to “De-Stress”

Nargis Jaraar (Counselling Service Peer Mentor, Sheridan College)

It’s that time of year again—assignments, essays and presentations are due all at the same time. Many students have to face overcoming procrastination rather quickly, juggling many responsibilities while trying to complete and hand in assignments on time. It’s also the time of year that many start to feel that “stressed out” feeling. But do not worry fellow students; you are not alone in this journey! There are many ways to manage your stress, even if it is not related to your academics. Many students feel stressed about being away from their families, managing their money, personal relationships, and many more. So as students, we must find ways to manage our stress and we need to make it *FUN* and exciting. We can get our stress out by doing our favorite activities, like physical activity, drawing or writing poetry, etc. As well, we can listen to calming music, take long walks or simply take naps. We, as Sheridan students, need to make time to “de-stress”, whether that’s finding some alone time, going to our favorite place, and/or participating in an activity to release our stress.

That is why Sheridan has provided us with Counselling services, Room B230 at the Davis Campus and B103 at the Trafalgar Campus. Professional counsellors are available to support students and help them accomplish their goal of working towards student success. Some of the services and workshops they provide include:

- Coping with anxiety and/or stress
- Time management, learning strategies
- Homesickness and transition to Sheridan
- Financial problems
- Feelings of depression or sadness
- Body image and eating disorders
- Relationship and family issues
- Sexuality concerns

You can also visit our website at

<http://www.sheridaninstitute.ca/Services/Student%20Support%20Services/Counselling%20Services.aspx> to find out more about the services that we offer.

For instance you can look out for Counselling Service Peer Mentors. Peer mentors are hired every year to conduct awareness outreach in college hallways and residences on a wide range of topics that relate to the daily lives of Sheridan students. Such outreaches have included topics on how to manage your time, skills on how to work in groups, how to cope with stress and many more. As a counselling service peer mentor, we have monthly themes to promote our events and for instance, *October is Mental Health and*

Health Awareness Month. Some of the outreaches we've conducted in October are: Mental Health Awareness and Stress Buster Hallway outreach with Canadian Mental Health Association (CMHA) Peel and Halton Region at both campuses; Stress Busters outreach in both of our residences as well as Healthy Sexuality with Health Services in one of our hallway outreaches. For more information, visit our website or drop by our office, if you have any questions, concerns or suggestions on the services we offer. Remember you are not alone in this journey, we can offer help and support!



COLLEGE UPDATES

ALGONQUIN COLLEGE

Counselling Services continues to develop and change to meet the needs of the student population which is over 16,000 full-time students as well as 35,000 part-time students. We have had an exercise of being in the *Lean Process* this year, and the focus has been on examining how we do “business” in counselling, and what changes can be made to develop more efficiency and accessibility for students. As part of these changes, an intake counsellor has been hired to meet with students who self-identify whether they are here for personal or career assistance. We have undergone training and implementation of a new tool for this intake role called the *Crisis Triage Rating Scale (CTRS)* to ascertain the level of risk for a presenting student.

We have several new counsellors working with us and have said good-bye to several staff as well. A new initiative this year involves moving to more same day appointments and fewer booked appointments, in order to reduce wait times. Counselling Services will continue to offer two evenings per week and Saturday appointments for students. We now have an additional two days per week for outreach services, which allows five days per week with an outreach focus to reach the college

population on an ongoing basis. As a team, we are also well supported in our monthly peer supervision meetings.

CANADORE COLLEGE

Canadore College welcomed a new president this summer, George Burton who came to us from Loyalist College. Start-up was busy with some new initiatives designed to increase support for students including a variety of college staff taking on the role of Ambassadors. One of our counsellors, *Dawson Pratt* is on sabbatical and he is doing research on graduates with disabilities seeking employment. Beginning in November, we will be introducing a new walk-in service with the goal of being more efficient and effective. We are working closely with the Aboriginal Learning Unit and together we are offering a group for students with anxiety and depression. We are also partnering with local school boards to make the transition to college easier for students with Asperger's Syndrome. Construction on the new Learning Library is progressing and the anticipated opening is summer 2011.

CENTENNIAL COLLEGE

As student numbers continue to climb we are presented with real challenges to provide basic services. We have Counsellor/Student ratio at over 2000 students per counsellor. The question to be asked is, "Is this acceptable at Ontario's Colleges"? A quick look at research into this issue suggests that a ratio of 1,000 – 1,500 students per counsellor is a preferred model. (Very little information out there regarding this however!). I noticed that this issue was raised recently on our list serve so we are not the only College wrestling with this dilemma. For the second year in row we have sponsored the *kts2* on campus visit. What is *kts2*?

"*kts2* is an interactive problem gambling awareness program that engages university and college students in a fun and informative way. The original program, *Know the Score* (KTS) was created and developed in 2001 with input from a number of colleges and universities. Using feedback provided by students, campus contacts and other partners, *Know the Score* now called *kts2* continues to evolve to meet the ever-changing needs of post-secondary students." (Sourced from - <http://www.kts2.ca/index.php?page=34>)

They provide an informative, fun, and effective presentation to help students recognize problem gambling issues. If you haven't had them on campus it's worth checking out. See the web address above for contact info.

We continue to be concerned about our part-time, sessional, and contract faculty. We find that this group often does not have access to the information about our services and how we can assist/support them. Outreach efforts to this group include emails and broadcast messages. Our staff group remains: *Joan Lee-Ferdinand, Steven Ruhinda, Spencer Overgaard, Eric Dunn, Frank Rodick, Diane Yip, Dave Neary*. Trust all is well, take care.

CONESTOGA COLLEGE

Our fall semester start-up at Conestoga College has been quite busy which seems to match the experiences of other colleges. We are

experiencing significant growth at Conestoga with construction initiatives, increase in programming, and increase in students. We currently have 8,500 full-time students, 4,000 apprenticeship students, and 38,000 part-time students. Expansion projects are underway at the Doon campus, where a new wing is being added to the main building for expansion in the School of Health and Life Sciences (opening August 2011). At the Waterloo campus, construction of the new Roofing Training Centre was completed in March 2010 and construction is currently underway for the new Heating, Ventilation, and Air Conditioning (HVAC) Training Centre which is to be completed in Fall 2010. The new Cambridge campus which is on the other side of the 401 by the Doon campus is scheduled to open in August 2011 and will be Conestoga's main site for the School of Engineering and Information Technology, with Phase One expecting 3,000 new students. A new Power Training Centre was opened in March 2010 when construction of the new Ingersoll campus was completed. In Counselling Services, we have gotten past the buzz of Orientation activities and are now immersed in providing personal and academic counselling to our students. With Fall semester start-up during Orientation week, our counsellors were involved in various Student Success workshops (e.g. stress management, transition to college, mature student and international student transitions) as well as Family and Friends orientation, new faculty orientation, service booths, and assisting with the *PASS* transition program for students with learning disabilities and mature students. This year Counselling Services offered a new "*Bounce Back*" two-day workshop in August for students who have struggled academically, to assist these students with resiliency skills for maintaining motivation while at college, goal setting and also tips for improving learning skills. As in previous years, a counsellor also assisted with the organization and facilitation of a training series for our residence advisors on topics such as identifying students at risk, working with GLBTQ residents, culture shock,

sexual assault, and orientation to various service areas and policies at the college.

This fall our full-time counsellor complement includes *Barb Kraler* (Doon campus), *Lynn Robbins-White* (Doon campus), *Shawna Bernard* (Doon and Waterloo campuses), *Keith Martin* (Doon and Guelph campuses), *Caroline Welsand* (Waterloo campus), and *Lydia-Almorales Ray* (Doon campus). We welcome *Shelly Francis* to our counselling staff as she joins us on a contract for fall and winter semesters at the Doon Campus, filling in for *Marshall Chanda* who is on parental leave this year. *Dara Pappas* has recently been hired as our Fall semester sessional counsellor at Doon. Unlike previous years, we do not have an M.S.W. student training with us this fall due to office space. This fall we are offering a psycho-educational performance anxiety group (for students who experience test, public speaking or performance anxiety), our annual *Stress Free Zone*, outreach during Mental Health Awareness week, *Survivor Conestoga* (a health and safety workshop for international students), and also in-class workshops based on faculty request. We look forward to another busy year working with our students!

GEORGE BROWN COLLEGE

Both campuses at George Brown College have had a busy start to the semester. Our schedules are busy with scheduled workshops, in-class workshops, outreach, and of course individual counselling appointments.

Orientations

As we do every year, counsellors attended department wide orientations for all programs this year. We handed out minimal information ensuring students knew who we were and how to contact us, but being careful not to overload them with too much. This year our Student Life department organized a Service Fair in week 3 (when they were likely feeling less overwhelmed) that provided us with another chance to get more information out about our services.

Email Counselling

To accommodate students in full day placements and at satellite campuses, we've decided to offer email counselling. Email counselling will be offered only after the student has had at least one in-person appointment for intake and assessment. The counsellor will use their discretion and decide at that point if email counselling, in-person counselling or a community referral is most appropriate for the student.

Furthermore, given the information provided at the Cyber Counselling session at our OCC conference earlier this year about the lack of internet privacy, we have decided that counsellors will add a disclaimer to our email signatures indicating that email communication may not be confidential. We are also amending out "Statement of Confidentiality" to note this as well.

Workshops and Small Group Sessions

The **St. James** Counselling department has had very well attended workshops so far this semester. Some of the workshops we're currently offering include: Stress Management, Succeeding as a Mature Student, What's What: Get Organized, and Studying with Children Around. We believe that the reason our workshops were so well attended is because of the partnerships we've developed with many programs across the College.

We have also introduced a "*Skills for Success Certificate*" that students can apply for and receive once they have completed a certain amount of workshops. Students can use this certificate to add to their portfolio and/or résumé! We already have many students interested in this!

We've also introduced an online workshop this year. Students can now complete the *Stress Management* workshop entirely online.

Numbers and feedback from this project are very positive so far.

Another idea we are trying out at St. James campus are small group sessions. Our "*Wellness Break*" series consists of 4 (one per month) small group hour long sessions (6-8 students) where students can network, discuss and try out different strategies. Topics include – Juggling Parenting and Studying, Relaxation

techniques, etc. In addition, we're also introducing weekly "Escape Sessions" where students experience firsthand relaxation techniques and have a chance to unwind and escape for an hour or so.

At the **Casa Loma** campus we continue to provide in-class workshops and have presented on: Personality Dimensions, Conflict Resolutions, and Learning Styles. We are excited to share that we have begun to provide lunch time workshops for all Casa Loma students. The lunch time workshops include: Personal Wellness, Presentation and Communication Skills, Stress Management, Acing Multiple Choice and Common Cents.

Counselling Kiosks (a.k.a. Marketing Cart)

Both campuses have our Counselling Kiosk up and running again. This project has proved to be quite successful in the past at marketing our services. Essentially we have the kiosk open 4-5 days a week from 11-2 or so. The kiosk is staffed by students (who have been trained by a counsellor) and each week or two, focuses on a different issue (i.e. addictions, body image, healthy relationships).

Team Based Learning – Nursing, Construction and Technology programs

Counsellors again this year have been in classes facilitating (in partnership with Student Success) the *Team Based Learning* program. Through the Team Based Learning program students learn skills how to effectively work within a team. The TBL modules focus on the principles of a team, identifying individual strengths and conflict resolution. The program has proven to be effective and is growing more and more popular. Considering the increasing demand of the program, we are now looking into other ways to expand the program (i.e. train the trainer PD through our Staff Development dep't.)

Surveys

Last year we used *surveymonkey* to survey students that have used our services. We emailed an anonymous survey at the end of each semester to students that had at least one counselling appointment that semester. We asked them about their counselling experience, level of satisfaction, would they refer a friend,

etc. The results were helpful and will continue to be used in future planning. We plan on doing this regularly.

Joint Regional Meeting

George Brown counsellors were pleased to host the OCC JRM for the second year in a row! This year, the JRM was held at St. James campus in our new Career Centre! At the JRM, counsellors had the opportunity learn more about the progress of the Transition Council and hear updates on the Cambrian Mental Health Survey, the Mental Health Summit and College updates.

GEORGIAN COLLEGE

Like many other colleges, Georgian is experiencing the largest enrollment ever. We noticed how much busier we have been right from the very start of September.

In terms of personnel, we have added a new part-time counsellor at the Orillia Campus, *Karen Phillips* and a new full-time counsellor at the Barrie campus, *Elaine Wallis*. Elaine replaced *Joyce Cornish* who recently retired. Elaine has worked in the college system for many years, serving as a Library Technician, Disability Consultant and as an Assessment Counsellor. We have also added an aboriginal counsellor, *Patricia Meekins*, who works at both the Orillia and Owen Sound campus. Owen Sound campus has also added a part-time learning strategist, *Gerry Moss*.

On the administration side of things, Georgian has added two new VP positions at Georgian, VP of Community and Business Development and VP of HR and Organizational Planning. We are not sure how these new positions will impact our counselling department directly.

Another new item in our student success department is the increased presence of Cooperative Education. Co-op has always been a very strong part of Georgian. Recently, Co-op at Georgian has gone through some significant changes and one of these changes includes the location of the co-op consultants, who now have offices in our department. Having them this close (rather than out in their program areas around the campus) makes it easier to refer

students and touch base to consult about certain student situations.

The biggest thing you will notice visually if you drive by our college on Highway 400 going north is the development of the new Health and Wellness Center, due to be ready for September of 2011. At that time, we are anticipating over 3000 new students as well as a fairly large influx of staff. Several health science programs will be transferred from the Orillia Campus back to the Barrie campus at this time and we will also be providing nursing practitioners to the public. Barrie campus is getting closer to “running out of land” and is starting to look for more space in Downtown Barrie.

HUMBER COLLEGE

There have been many recent changes in our Department. First, our department formerly known as Student Services has been changed to *Student Success and Engagement!* We also have a new Director, Jen McMillen, who now oversees Counselling Services, Disability Services, Health Centre and our Test Centre. We have also welcomed a new Counsellor working at both the North and Lakeshore Campus, *Risa Handler*.

This semester continues to be a busy one beginning with orientation, workshop requests, and student’s increased demand for Counselling. We have added a few new workshops to our roster, namely *Healthy Relationships* (with contributions from George Brown College and Conestoga College – Thank you for your help!) and *Learning Styles*. *Vinnie Mitchell*, Counsellor, continues to be heavily involved in the Transitional Council for the College of Registered Psychotherapists and Registered Mental Health Therapists for Ontario. *Sophia Barna*, Counsellor, is supervising University of Guelph-Humber’s Family & Community Service students as they complete their independent research project. *Bohdan Turok*, Counsellor is supervising an intern from OISE, *Susan Zhao*.

LOYALIST COLLEGE

Loyalist College now boasts two full-time counselors, *Rebecca Lazar* and *Adam Gosney*, who started with in October 2010.

NIAGARA COLLEGE

What’s Happening...

A record 4,500 first-year students started classes at Niagara College this fall, an increase of more than 300 students from last year’s intake.

Overall, Niagara College’s total full-time post-secondary enrolment for Fall 2010 is 8,000 students. When combined with apprenticeship, English as a Second Language (ESL), and Winter term starts, this year’s full-time enrolment will top 9,000 students for the first time in Niagara College’s history.

Capacity has been expanded at the College through a \$90 million campus redevelopment project, and through five new programs, including Brewmaster and Brewery Operations Management; Computer Systems Technician; Digital Photography, Recreation Therapy and Welding Technician.

Included in Niagara College’s record enrolment is a growing number of mature students who are seeking new skills in order to reintegrate into the workforce. The College’s international reputation is reflected in a record international enrolment of more than 800 students from 60 different countries.

New and returning students found new facilities at both the Welland and Niagara-on-the-Lake campuses, including five new buildings at the Welland Campus, and two at the Niagara-on-the-Lake Campus. At the Welland Campus, new facilities include a new academic wing, Athletic Centre, Student Centre, Learning Commons and technology expansion. At the Niagara-on-the-Lake Campus, expansion of the Niagara

Culinary Institute and a new Teaching Brewery opened its doors this fall.

In addition to welcoming first year students during this year's orientation, and providing 1:1 counselling services/supports, Niagara College Counsellors participated in a number of on-campus activities and student success workshops.

Finally, we are very pleased to announce that full-time Counsellor, *Jason Burdon* joined our Student Success Centre team in September 2010.

SHERIDAN COLLEGE

Trafalgar campus:

During the summer session *Kanchan Kurichh* developed and facilitated a therapeutic workshop called '*Being Comfortable in Your Own Skin!*' at the Trafalgar campus. The group ran for 5 weeks and students explored solutions to issues of loneliness, creating healthy relationships, dealing with conflict, increasing self-awareness and recognizing their own personal strengths and weaknesses. The workshop was modeled after classic group therapy format and included psycho-education and expressive arts exercises. This pilot was a success and will be running again in the fall semester; it will be co-facilitated by *Kanchan* and *Nancy Harries*.

Davis campus:

The Peer mentor program is an initiative from the Student Engagement and Leadership department involving all Student Services and pertinent academic programs providing invaluable assistance to fellow students.

Peer mentors have good academic skills and are genuinely interested in helping other students succeed at Sheridan. Counselling Service Peer mentors promote the counselling department by engaging the student community via college events, hallway and residence outreaches, as well as writing articles and creating monthly bulletin boards on relevant themes impacting students. They help encourage timely and effective use of all Student Service resources and programs empowering students to achieve success. Counselling service peer mentors also strengthen the Sheridan Community by helping to foster a climate of learning and acceptance through inclusive, educational collaborations across programs and student services. This year two initiatives have been added to the Counselling Service peer mentor program: the *Matched Peer 2 Peer* and the *Anti-stigma Mental Health Campaign*. Counsellors make referrals to the Matched Peer-2-Peer program where a student is matched with a peer mentor. Whether it's needing assistance in finding resources, finding a student in their program for moral support or just needing someone to talk to. The Matched Peer-2-Peer program is a great opportunity for students to mentor students. While the anti-stigma mental health campaign involved training peer mentors on the difference between mental health and mental illness. Counselling Service Peer mentors have been educated and introduced to themes along this continuum focusing on mental health promotion by means of research and creating interactive activities to promote mental health awareness and de-bunking the stigma behind mental illness.



Healthy Relationships & Kids

Maria Taylor (Algonquin College)

I'm trying!

Every parent wants to be the best parent they can be. We have good intentions and strive to hear our child, be patient, accept them fully, have compassion for their needs and respect their rights. So, it can be very upsetting when we are working hard to have a great relationship, and then blow it by reacting with anger and then end up feeling regretful and guilty. We all do it, regardless of our good intentions.

A toddler has had a toilet training accident and you thought that stage was done, a preschooler writes with marker all over your new chair, an eight year old throws a rock and breaks a window, your preteen daughter spills nail polish on the rug, your teenage son misses curfew...again! Whatever your situation is...it happens, and when you're in that moment, you need to help yourself so that you can effectively help and deal with your children.

Self-Awareness

One thing we can do in regards to healthy self-relations is gain self-awareness about our own internal triggers and be self-reflective about our reactions. This helps us manage our responses and can lead to some teaching moments with our kids. One great way to do this is paying close attention to the signals our body gives us when we are tired, anxious, or frustrated, so we can calm ourselves. Some parents are good at calming themselves in the moment with their child; others do better leaving the situation before they "lose it". Common physical signs may be feeling tension, a headache, rapid heart rate or stomach knots.

Once we have awareness of bodily cues, we are able to notice them easier and interject a "pause" of self-care, to prevent an overreaction. Calming activities may be taking focused deep breaths or singing a favourite tune in your head. Releasing activities might be yoga, jogging, punching a pillow or doing laundry.

What are my **calming activities**?

What are my **releasing activities**?

What is anger anyways?

Anger has the purpose of helping us either block or discharge painful levels of stress. It enables us to defend against painful feelings of anxiety, hurt, guilt, worry or loss. We all have examples with our kids of when we feel triggered and then react with anger. Let's look at a couple of examples where the parent was not angry, rather they were experiencing a deeper emotion and not aware of it.

1. Meg's fourteen year old daughter Kim was supposed to be home by 10pm. When Meg heard Kim come in at midnight, her anger discharged the **pain** of two hours of **worry**.
2. Eight year old Bobby was showing his dad a new trick he had learned on his skateboard. When a car turned the corner and just missed hitting him, Bobby's dad became angry which helped discharge the **pain** of **anxiety**.
3. Peggy was helping her daughter study for an important test. At 10pm Peggy was exhausted and found that she was being irritable and sarcastic to her daughter. This released feelings of **stress** and **fatigue**.
4. Nancy was feeling that she can't even go into a room alone without a child at her heels. If she closes the door they shout, bang, and cry. By mid-afternoon when her kids should be napping and she wants to study; her 3 year old woke the baby, and this put her into a state of rage where she spanked the boy and put him back to bed. Now both kids are crying and she is even angrier. Nancy is actually **frustrated** and **worried** because she can't do something that she needs to get done.

What are some of your triggers? Jot down a few situations with your child/children that were difficult for you to cope with.

So what do we do when we are triggered?

A child's misbehaviour or defiance is not the cause of our anger. We lose our temper because of our beliefs and assumptions we have about the child's behaviour. Those are the "trigger thoughts". Trigger thoughts can distort a situation and make it seem bigger and the child's behaviour worse than it really is. Trigger thoughts may encourage us to believe that children are "bad" on purpose, want to make us mad and defeat us. Problem behaviour in kids is then viewed as an intentional act of defiance or disrespect. We then forget to consider other reasons for the child's behaviour. This is where we can use the calming activities or releasing activities to gain some time so we can think more clearly about what is actually going on.

Step 1 is to be aware of the trigger thoughts.

Step 2 is to replace trigger thoughts with coping thoughts that can help you calm down. Coping thoughts help us put things in perspective.

Examples of **coping thoughts**:

1. It's just a stage. Kids have to go through these stages.
2. This is natural for his or her age.
3. Don't take it seriously. Keep a sense of humour.
4. This is just natural impulsiveness.
5. He or she isn't really trying to infuriate me. It's just how he or she is coping right now.

6. He or she can't help it (crying, being angry, interrupting, needing attention, etc).
7. Just get through it. You can cope. You don't have to get angry.

What are some of your own coping thoughts?

It may help you to list as many triggering situations and coping thoughts that you may experience, to help you deal with the most provocative situation you face as a parent.

No One is Perfect

There is no perfect parent or perfect parent/child relationship. Think about the health of the relationship in terms of a verb, a day to day experience where we do the best we can. Asking ourselves how we can deal effectively with a difficult situation helps us to be the parent we want to be.

Remember, parenting isn't something to do in isolation. If you have little support from family, friends, community and resources, make sure you reach out and connect with people and places that can help you. There are many resources in the community that are fabulous and can offer parents lots of support and information. Check out the Parent Resource Network on your campus (if available).