



Mood
Disorders
Association
of
Ontario

DONATE

Insights:
MDAO Newsletter
Winter 2017

Hi there,

We hope you are having a great December! Before the year comes to an end and your calendar fills up with holiday celebrations, we want to remind you all to take some time for yourself this holiday season. With 8 out of 10 people reporting that they feel more stressed during the holiday season, it's so important to practice self-care this time of year. Check out this issue of Insights for tips for staying well and to learn about upcoming programs at MDAO.

*"Rest and self-care are so important. When you take time to replenish your spirit, it allows you to serve others from the overflow. You cannot serve from an empty vessel."
- Eleanor Brown*

Tips for Managing Holiday Stress

Set a budget and stick to it. Setting a limit on how much you want to spend over the holidays will help ease the financial stress the holiday season brings.

Bring a friend with you to holiday parties. If you experience social anxiety in large groups, plan ahead and ask a friend to come with you to your holiday party.

Know what conversations you are comfortable with at family gatherings. Your family may mean well when they ask for updates on your life, but you can choose what you are comfortable with sharing. Be aware of which topics you do not want to talk about and have a plan for how you will change the conversation if these topics come up.

WRAP For The Holidays

Register now for our **WRAP For The Holidays** workshop on December 20th. This FREE workshop is open to anyone who has completed a WRAP program and wants a refresher, and those who have not taken WRAP but are interested in the program.



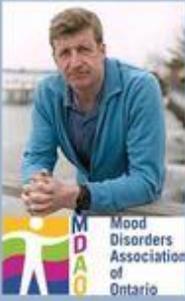
Spots are limited and are filling up quickly so don't delay!

Register online [here](#).

JOIN US FOR

*An Evening With
Patrick J. Kennedy*

MARCH 27, 2018 6:30 P.M.
AT THE
ROYAL ONTARIO MUSEUM



Mood Disorders Association of Ontario

For more information, call us at 416-486-8046 or visit www.aneveningwithmdao.ca

An Evening With Patrick J. Kennedy

On Tuesday, March 27, 2018, Patrick J. Kennedy will once again be joining us to speak about his experience with mental illness and addiction.

The event will be held at the Royal Ontario Museum in Toronto where guests will enjoy dinner, a silent auction, and will have the chance to network with prominent business leader.

Don't miss out! Enjoy a special early bird rate until February 2, 2018. To purchase tickets to the event, contact Rachel at rachel@mdao.ca.

For more information about the event, or to learn about sponsorship opportunities, visit our website [here](#).

Partnership with Sunnybrook and St. Michael's Hospital

You likely know about our drop-in groups, Warm Line, and Recovery Programs, but did you know that we also have partnerships with some of Toronto's top hospitals?

One of our central strategic goals is to strengthen existing relationships, establish community linkages and forge partnerships with like-minded clinical and research organizations. Over the years, we've established strong relationships with **Sunnybrook** and **St. Michael's Hospital**.



Volunteer Peer Support Program at Sunnybrook Hospital

The Volunteer Peer Support program will be welcoming a new group of volunteers to the inpatient unit of **Sunnybrook Hospital**. This program has been one of the many beneficial aspects of the partnership between Mood Disorders Association of Ontario and Sunnybrook Hospital.



Through this program, patients within the inpatient unit will have access to both group

and one-on-one peer support twice a week for 2 hours. In the past, the program has been very successful in offering patients compassionate, empathetic and authentic support from volunteers who identify with similar mental health challenges themselves. Both staff and patients of the hospital have been very appreciative of this source of support, and we are delighted to offer this valuable source.

Program volunteers have been selected after an extensive interview process, and have all received certificates of achievement after completing our Peer Support Training program. We are very excited to be able to continue to offer our support to this pivotal program with **Sunnybrook Hospital**.

Volunteers will be co-supervised by both the Sunnybrook Psychiatry Occupational Therapist, Lesley Breen, on the inpatient unit and by MDAO Peer Support Coordinator, Allison Dunning, in the community of practice sessions.

If you are interested in getting involved with the Sunnybrook Peer Support Volunteer Program, or for more information on the program and to learn about the application process, please contact Allison at allisondunning@mdao.ca or Lesley Breen at lesleyb@sunnybrook.ca.

WRAP For Families

We'll be running another **WRAP for Families** program this winter!

This program is focused on the well-being of family members and supporters of people with mental health and addictions issues. Families will develop and practice self-care strategies, learn the key concepts of mental health recovery and be introduced to the experiences of peer support.

Program Dates:
Tuesday evenings, 6-8:30 p.m.
Jan.16, 23, 30, Feb. 6, 13, 20, 27, Mar. 6



Wellness
Recovery
Action
Plan® for Families
A program for family members and supporters

St. Michael's
Inspired Care.
Inspiring Science.

An information session will be held on **Tuesday January 9, 2018 from 6:00 to 7:00 pm at St. Michael's Hospital**, 30 Bond St., 17th Floor, Cardinal Carter South Room, Room 17 - 008. Registration will take place after the information session.

RSVP to Eric at erici@mdao.ca or 416-486-8046 ext. 224.

For more information, visit our website [here](#).



St. Michael's

Inspired Care.
Inspiring Science.

STAR LEARNING
CENTRE
A Project of the Urban Angel Fund for Homeless People

Laughing Like Crazy

This January, we're collaborating with the **STAR Learning Centre at St. Michael's Hospital** to run a Laughing Like Crazy program, an intensive 16-week group that teaches participants how to develop a stand-up comedy routine based on their experiences of mental health issues and the mental health system. Each meeting combines mutual support and group building with learning how to write, hone and deliver a stand-up routine. At the end of the program, participants will perform their stand-up comedy routine for the very first time.

Dates: Starting Tuesday January 9, 2018 and runs for 16 weeks
Location: Toronto Reference Library

To register, contact Eric at ericj@mdao.ca.

Managing Your Depression and Anxiety

Registration for this 8-week educational recovery group is now open for those interested in developing understanding and tools to cope with depression and anxiety.

Participants will develop an understanding of how thoughts, feelings and behaviours contribute to depression and anxiety, acquire skills to manage thoughts, feelings and behaviours related to depression and anxiety, and learn strategies to better manage stress, worry and anger. Each session will involve an information presentation, facilitated discussion, and a skills building activity.

We will be holding an **information session** on Wednesday January 10, 2018 from 4-5:00 p.m.

Program Dates: Wednesdays 4-6:30 p.m.
from January to March

Location: St. Michael's Hospital, 30 Bond St.,
17th floor, Cardinal Carter South
Room 17-008, Toronto, ON

You can register for this program [here](#).

Update: Youth Advisory Committee

Thanks to our **Youth Advisory Committee**, we're revamping our **Peer Support Training** to offer an online version to youth across the province. We'll be launching the online peer support training in the new year, so keep an eye out for more information if you're looking to become a certified peer supporter.

We will also soon be offering a **WRAP Program for Youth**. The Youth Advisory Committee has given us their feedback and has helped us design a new WRAP program tailored to the needs of youth and transitional aged youth. We'll be announcing start dates for the program in the coming months, so make sure you check our website regularly!

Ontario
Trillium Foundation



Fondation Trillium
de l'Ontario



CAN-BIND Research Expo Day

As part of St. Michael's Hospital Research Month, we recently had the opportunity to celebrate our collaborative research partnerships with [CAN-BIND](#) (Canadian Biomarker Integration Network in Depression), and [ASR](#) (Arthur Sommer Rotenberg Chair in Suicide and Depression Studies) at their **Research Expo Day**.

Among our collaborative research partnerships is our knowledge translation initiatives of the **CHOICE-D** project. The goal of this project is to create an easy-to-understand set of guidelines to help individuals understand their depression treatment options.

We are also working together with [Whitefish River First Nation](#) teams to support First Nation youth around suicide awareness and prevention

Dr. Juan Pablo Lopez, a postdoctoral fellow at Max Planck Institute of Psychiatry Department of Stress Neurobiology and Neurogenetics in Germany, presented at the event on "MicroRNAs as Biomarkers of Antidepressant Treatment Response."



Update on CHOICE-D Guideline Project

Our team has been hard at work and the **CHOICE-D Guideline Project** is almost finished! The **CHOICE-D Guideline** is an easy to understand version of the CANMAT 2016 depression clinical guidelines. Our goal is to increase public knowledge about depression treatment options. Written in lay language, these guidelines will help individuals understand their treatment options and engage in informed conversations with their healthcare providers.

This project was created in partnership with an amazing writing team, drawn from 64 applicants from across Canada, each with their own personal experience with

depression.

Early Psychosis Intervention Family Forum

Do you have a loved one experiencing early signs of psychosis? Register for our [Early Psychosis Intervention Family Forum](#). Based on the **Family Matters Open Family Forum** model, this peer support/psychoeducational group is open to families with a loved one experiencing psychosis. This group meets on the 2nd and 4th Thursday each month from 7:00-8:50 p.m.

The purpose of this group is to provide peer support, psychoeducational tools and resources to support communication, coping with stress and psychosis. If you are interested in attending an upcoming session, RSVP to Stacey at staceyb@mdao.ca.



Early Intervention Program

Early Psychosis Intervention Family Forum

2nd and 4th Thursday of the month
from 7:00-9:00 p.m.
36 Eglinton Ave. West, Suite 602, Toronto

January 11, 2018 – Relationship Building
January 25, 2018 – Communication and Boundaries
February 8, 2018 – CBT Strategies for Psychosis Part I
February 22, 2018 – CBT Strategies for Psychosis Part II



Wellness Recovery Action Planning

Information Session

Wednesday January 10th
2:00 to 4:00 pm

Limit of 15 people
36 Eglinton Ave West, Suite 602, TO

Upcoming WRAP

Are you looking for support with a mood disorder? Register now for our **Wellness Recovery Action Planning** program. **WRAP** is a non-medical approach to recovery which gives participants the knowledge and ability to reclaim their power, find and connect with community, create their own recovery journey, and get well and stay well.

An information session will be held on January 10, 2018 from 2-4:00 p.m. at 36 Eglinton Ave. West, suite 602, in Toronto. The program will run on Wednesday afternoons from January 17 to March 7, 2:00 to 4:30 p.m.

You can register to attend the information session [here](#), or contact Eric at ericj@mdao.ca for more information.

Note: We will also be commencing another **Janna's WRAP** program in March of next

year. Thanks to the **Janna Richmond Memorial Fund**, we are able to run this program for women to help them create a plan to recover and heal. Stay tuned for more information in the new year.

Lit From Within Award Winner

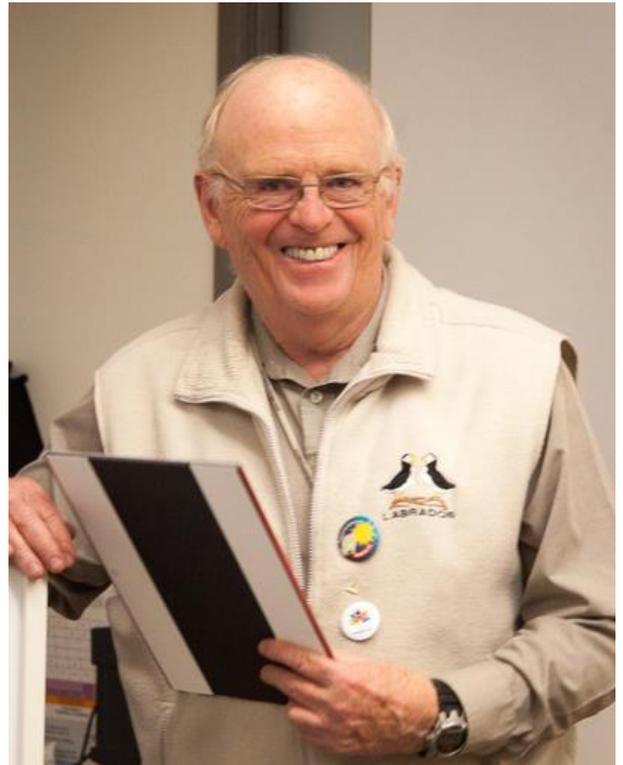
We are pleased to announce that **Ross Knechtel** is this year's recipient of the **Karen Liberman "Lit From Within" award**.

Ross has been volunteering at MDAO for more than five years and has demonstrated tremendous leadership and dedication as he has served as a lead facilitator, board member, and group leader for the Mood Disorders Support Group of Guelph, and regional leader overseeing groups in Guelph, Hamilton, Georgetown, and Vineland.

As a retiree, Ross keeps busy by volunteering at a number of organizations in the Guelph area. In 2015, he was awarded the Senior Citizen of the Year Award for Guelph for his work with the Wellington Men's Club, the Evergreen Seniors Centre, the Guelph Wellington Seniors' Association, and the distress call centre. However, Ross says that his work with the MDAO and the Mood Disorders Support Group of Guelph is where his greatest passion lies. Highlights include arranging a Laughing Like Crazy program for participants in Guelph, arranging WRAP Level 1 training in Fergus, and organizing our regional conferences in 2015 and 2016.

We are so grateful for Ross and the work he has done to bring MDAO programs and services to the Guelph Region.

Congratulations on your award, Ross!



Annual General Meeting and Distinguished Speakers

Last month, we held our Annual General Meeting at St. Michael's Hospital in the Li Ka Shing Knowledge Institute. The meeting was followed by a **Distinguished Speakers Series** with **Dr. Tom Ungar**, who delivered the keynote address on stigma, followed by our lived experience speaker, **Neri Paul**, who spoke about self-stigma.



Dr. Tom Ungar is the Psychiatrist-in-Chief at St. Michael's Hospital, an Associate Professor, Psychiatry, at the University of Toronto, and creator of Think You Can Shrink? He is an award winning educator and one of Canada's leading voices of mental health care. He has experience as both a family physician and psychiatrist. He spoke about **"Reducing Mental Illness Stigma in Health Care."**



Neri Paul shared her story of self stigma. She is a mental health survivor and has been in recovery for several years now. She is also a volunteer at the Mood Disorders Association of Ontario where she offers peer support on the Warm Line. Neri shared her speech, **"Surviving Mental Illness: Never Giving Up,"** her personal story of living with a mood disorder and self-stigma.

Giving Tuesday Update

We would like to give a huge "thank you" to everyone who donated during our Giving Tuesday campaign. Your generosity will help us to support **3 Laughing Like Crazy participants, 5 WRAP participants, and 15 drop-in group participants.**

One behalf of all staff and volunteers at MDAO,

THANK YOU

Give Back This Holiday Season

Looking for a unique gift idea? Want to make a charitable donation before the year end? Skip the holiday crowds and the stress of last minute shopping by making a donation in someone's name to the MDAO.

You will help people in your community access free peer support and recovery programs to recover and heal from a mood disorder. Donate now to one of our programs, events, or funds, such as:

WRAP (Wellness Recovery Action Plan)
Laughing Like Crazy
WRAP For Families
An Evening With Patrick J. Kennedy
One-on-One Peer Support
Managing Your Depression And Anxiety
Janna's Richmond Memorial Fund

Donations of \$25 and over will receive a tax receipt for the 2017 tax year.

DONATE

Rendezvous With Madness Film Festival

Last month, we had the opportunity to co-present director Kalina Bertin's film *Manic* at the 25th **Rendezvous With Madness Film Festival in Toronto.**

In her family's archive of home movies, filmmaker Kalina Bertin finds traces of the potential solution to a mystery: why is mental illness so rampant among her siblings? And what does it have to do with her father, a charismatic but wildly unstable cult leader who spread both his word and his seed as far as the remote Caribbean island where the filmmaker was partly raised? Bertin's captivating documentary roots the chaos firmly in the soil of a long unspoken family secret.

You can view the film trailer [here](#).



Holiday Hours

Please note the following office closures and modified hours over the holiday season:

Monday December 25th (Christmas Day) - **CLOSED**
Tuesday December 26th (Boxing Day) - **CLOSED**
Wednesday December 27th - **Open 9:00-5:00 p.m.**
Thursday December 28th - **Open 9:00-5:00 p.m.**
Friday December 29th - **Open 9:00-5:00 p.m.**
Monday January 1st (New Year's Day) - **CLOSED**
Tuesday January 2nd - **Open 9:00-5:00 p.m.**
Wednesday January 3rd - **Open 9:00-5:00 p.m.**
Thursday January 4th - **Open 9:00-5:00 p.m.**
Friday January 5th - **Open 9:00-5:00 p.m.**

This means that all drop-in groups, one-to-one services, and recovery programs that normally run outside of these hours will be **cancelled**. For a full list of drop-in groups that won't be running, visit our website [here](#).

We wish you all a joyous holiday season! We will resume our regular office hours on Monday January 8, 2018.

Joke Of The Month

**“Did you hear about the disease going around?
It's called 'normal' and there is no cure.”**

- Christine W., [Laughing Like Crazy](#) Graduate

**Get social with
us!**

