

TRANSITION

FALL 2019

Section 1 - page 3 CMHA SK Pages

News and Views from friends, members and staff of CMHA in SK including

Page 4
Spotlight on CMHA's new Rosetown Branch

Section 2 - page 7 TRANSITION Pages

Page 7
LIVING THE LIFE
A case study of the benefits of cognitive therapy for depression

Page 14
WRITING THE LIFE
The Domes - a new piece of fiction from Shirley Callaghan

... and more

Section 3 - page 21 WFYL Pages

The theme of this issue's contest was The Most Memorable Day of my Life and the submissions are 'unforgettable'

Enjoy!



Canadian Mental
Health Association
Saskatchewan
Mental health for all



TRANSITION

PUBLISHER:

Phyllis O'Connor, Executive Director
Canadian Mental Health Association
(Saskatchewan Division) Inc.

EDITOR: Ted Dyck

MANAGING EDITOR: Lynn Hill

Our Mission:

Founded in 1950, The Canadian Mental Health Association (Saskatchewan Division) Inc. is a volunteer-based organization which supports and promotes the rights of persons with mental illness to maximize their full potential; and promotes and enhances the mental health and well-being of all members of the community.

TRANSITION Magazine is published three times a year by the Canadian Mental Health Association (Saskatchewan Division) Inc, 2702 12th Ave., Regina, SK S4T 1J2.

First serial rights reserved.

© Copyright 2019 The Authors

Reproduction in whole or in part without written permission from the author and acknowledgement of first publication in TRANSITION, is prohibited.

Statements, opinions and viewpoints made or expressed by the writers do not necessarily represent the opinions and views of the Canadian Mental Health Association (Saskatchewan Division) Inc.

Readers' views are welcome and may be published in TRANSITION. Comments and views should be forwarded to the Division office c/o TRANSITION Magazine, at the above address, or:

Call 306-525-5601 or toll-free 1-800-461-5483 (in SK)

Fax 306-569-3788

E-mail: contactus@cmhask.com

Website: sk.cmha.ca

Printed in Canada

ISSN 1913-5394

Cover art: JUDY SWALLOW

Special acknowledgement is given to the Saskatchewan Lotteries and the United Way for financial support



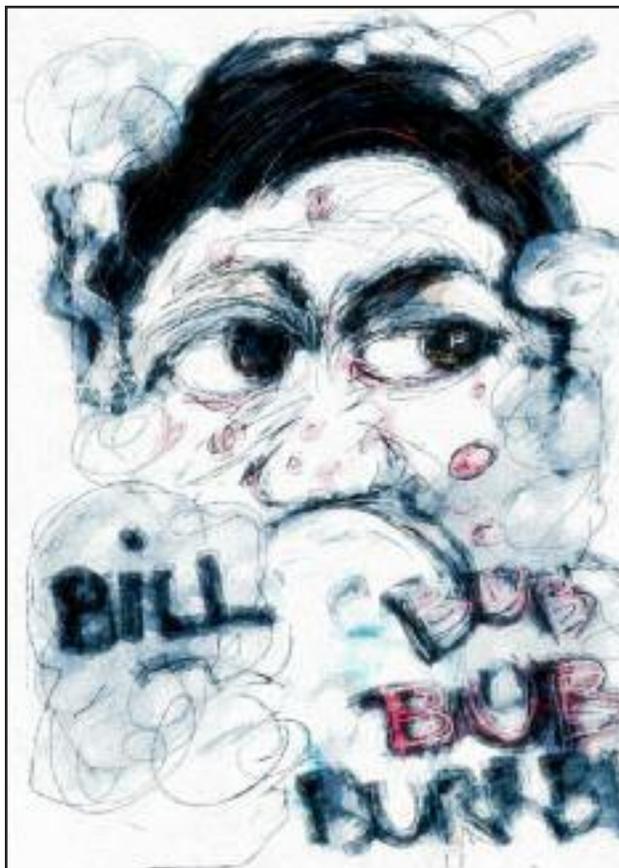
CONTINUOUS SUBMISSION GUIDELINES FOR TRANSITION 2019

TRANSITION is published two times a year (Spring and Fall) by the Canadian Mental Health Association (Saskatchewan Division) Inc.

Subscription by joining CMHA (SK) at \$15 / year.

1. Send original and unpublished articles, fiction, non-fiction, poetry, and visual art that represent current mental health issues and reflect on their impact on individuals.
2. Maximum manuscript lengths: prose – 10 ms pages; poetry – 10 poems or 5 ms pages, whichever is less; visual art – 5 pieces.
3. Reprints and simultaneous submissions (to several magazines) are not considered.
4. Turnaround time is normally one issue or up to 4 months: do not send a second submission before the first has been reviewed.
5. Payment is \$50.00 per printed page (\$25/half page); \$40.00 per published visual art work; and \$200.00 for cover art. Cap on contributions: \$200/author.
6. Only electronic submissions including full contact information and a brief bio are accepted.
7. Submit manuscripts in MS Word format (12-point Times New Roman, double-spaced, normal margins) as e-mail attachment to contactus@cmhask.com; or directly to the Editor at tdyck@sasktel.net.
8. Surface mail should be sent to:

TRANSITION
c/o CMHA (SK)
2702 12th Ave.
Regina, SK S4T 1J2



Dancer by Rene Diedrich



CONTENTS

2 TED DYCK
Editorial

CMHA SK Pages

- 3 PHYLLIS O'CONNOR
Executive Director's Report
- 4 CARMEN LEDDING
Rosetown Branch Report
New Branch joins CMHA family
- 5 JAYNE MELVILLE WHYTE
Older adults face loneliness:
A CMHA response
- WORKPLACE MENTAL HEALTH
- 5 New training available
- 6 Health and Safety Advisor training

TRANSITION Pages

LIVING THE LIFE

- 7 KELLY LESLIE, MD
A Literary Case Study of the
Benefits of Cognitive Therapy
for Depression

TRANSITION Pages

WRITING THE LIFE - FICTION

- BYRNA BARCLAY
- 12 Clothed in Sun, an excerpt
- SHIRLEY CALLAGHAN
- 14 The Domes
- MAREIKE NEUHAUS
- 15 The Bitch
- ROLLI
- 18 Daft Tadhg
- 19 Liz

REVIEW

- TED DYCK
- 20 Writing depression

WRITING FOR YOUR LIFE (WFYL) Pages

- BYRNA BARCLAY
- 21 Judge's Comments

EASTEND

- 22 Caitlin Arnal

PRINCE ALBERT

- 22 Debbie Cochrane
- 23 Sherry Favreau
- 23 Wendel Guedo
- 23 Ian McIntyre
- 24 Paige Peekeekoot
- 24 Dot Settee
- 24 Mark Teskey

REGINA

- 25 Jennifer Nixon

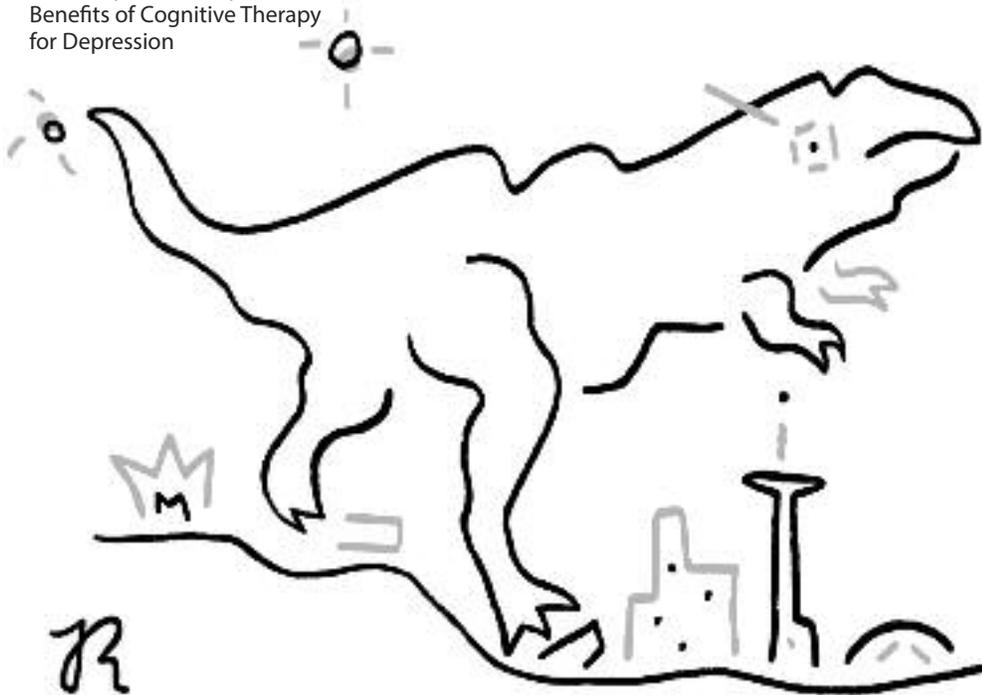
SASKATOON

- 25-26 Chelsea Daniels
- 26 Naomi Doell
- 26 Stephen Dunster
- 27 Camille Golding
- 27-28 Samantha Hansen
- 28 Van Han Ngo
- 29 Derek Sarazin
- 29 Gabriel Seely
- 30 James Skelton
- 31 Shane Small
- 31 James Snyder
- 31-32 Brenda Stretch
- 32 Kirk Taylor
- 32 Cory Weibe
- 33 Naomi Zuzak

WEYBURN

- 33 Larry Lauder
- 33 Jennifer Morin
- 34 Kevin Prokopetz
- 34 Shara Schaff
- 34 Nina Schad
- 35 Barry Styre
- 35 Eric Valentine

- 36 Notes on Contributors



Time Is A Dinosaur by Rolli



EDITORIAL

On Editorials

TED DYCK

An editorial is really just an essay in the original, radical sense. *Essayer*, the French verb from which the word derives, means *to try*, or *to attempt* – but *to try* or *attempt what?* Well, to try or attempt to put one's thoughts on a subject into writing. In this case, the editorial case, my thoughts on the issue of TRANSITION (Fall 2019) to which this editorial belongs.



TED DYCK
EDITOR

That's the radical quirkiness of the editorial/essay talking to you, the circularity. You writers might say that an editorial *represents* the issue of which it is a part; you might suspect that a trope is lurking in the weeds – can you find Nemo?

An editorial, like the essay, is a quirky critter – informative, yet uncertain; finished, but incomplete; half-wild, half-tame; both hunter and hunted.

That's why an editor enjoys writing editorials.

On CMHASK PAGES

Phyllis (E.D.) O'Connor's update demonstrates that CMHASK is one happenin' organization: a new strategic plan; the expansion of programs like OSI-CAN into other provinces; a brand new branch opening in Rosetown – to mention just a few of these happenings.

Kudos to Phyllis and CMHASK staff, and welcome to the new Rosetown Branch!

On TRANSITION PAGES

We're finally catching up on the submissions backlog because of our anniversary issue one year ago (Fall 2018). I think we're doing better on the distribution front, especially for our contrib-

utors. And that brings me to yet another reason an editor likes writing editorials.

Writing the editorial requires me to learn what [how] each of its three sections is about [something]. The first and last of these sections are easy, because their *what* and *how* are determined by the division director and the contest judge, respectively. But the TRANSITION PAGES – are you ready? – invent themselves.

Of course the general shape of the TRANS-PAGES, as outlined in the table of contents, is mine; and within each generic subsection of this one-third, the alphabet arranges the order. But here's the rub – the pieces choose themselves. I simply read my way through the [virtual] pile in the approximate order the submissions came in, and – *voilà!* – each piece tells me whether to publish itself or not.

It's what I've elsewhere called *deep editing*. The un/conscious algorithm of the reader / writer's mind takes over. The hair rises on the nape of your neck; your breath shortens, quickens; your heart beat becomes the felt da-da-dum of life; and you just *know*.

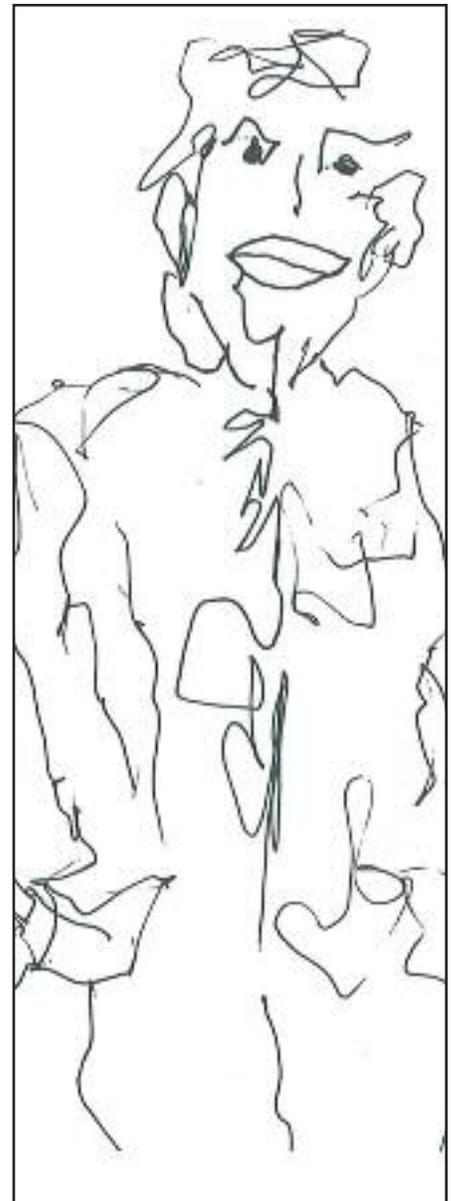
Only later can you articulate the overall shape of the pieces that selected themselves. In this issue, it's all prose.

On WFYL PAGES

It's a pleasure to work with this issue's contest judge and the founding editor of TRANSITION, Byrna Barclay. She demonstrates her editorial chops in her assessments of the "most memorable moments" submitted by the contestants. And then she writes about a fictionalized "most memorable moment" of her own in a contribution to the TRANS PAGES.

A new kind of WFYL group is about to be launched. The Eastend Writers Group will be facilitating writing for mental health workshops at the Okimaw Ohci Healing Lodge from Sep-

tember 2019 to April 2020. Support for this expansion comes from Correctional Services Canada: the federal *jail* system recognizes the *liberating* value of writing for mental health; and it addresses the needs of a severely marginalized sector of our society. *Vide* the Truth and Reconciliation Commission's Calls to Action.



Young man by James Skelton

New branch opens in Rosetown

PHYLLIS O'CONNOR

Another year has passed, and it was a year of opportunities and growth for CMHA Saskatchewan Division.

On Jan. 12, 2019 the CMHA Saskatchewan Division Provincial Board adopted a new three-year strategic plan entitled "Reflecting Back, Moving Forward – A Strategic Plan for CMHA Saskatchewan Division." A copy of the strategic plan can be viewed at <https://sk.cmha.ca/about-cmha/>.

I have also had the opportunity to participate as a member of the CMHA National Provincial Executive Team in providing input to the new CMHA National Strategic Plan. Work is currently still under way.

In November 2018 Rebecca Rackow, Director of Advocacy, Research and Public Policy Development, and Dave Nelson, Senior Policy Consultant, had the opportunity to meet with the Executive Director of CMHA Manitoba Division and staff of the Canadian Human Rights Museum in Winnipeg. This resulted in a number of recommendations being presented regarding the mental health and addictions component of their displays. CMHA has been added as a stakeholder consultant as the work moves forward in this area.

Rebecca Rackow and Dave Nelson have also been involved in several research projects such as the Saskatchewan Polyttech Research Project which explores the relationship between mental wellness and recovery in the workplace as well as the development of the Refresh Wellness app. They also developed and submitted a proposal for a CMHA Metis Mental Health and Addictions Program for Saskatchewan. This proposal was accepted, and the first year consultation and research component is currently under way. CMHA Saskatchewan Division now also has representation on the Western Canada Metis Addictions Council Saskatchewan.

In January 2019 we were excited to open our newest CMHA Branch in Rosetown, SK. Carmen Ledding has joined our team as the Branch Coordinator, and she has been very busy setting up the office and getting all the training she will need to provide the mental health education services in Rosetown and area.

Our Justice Community Support Program has now expanded into the north with a JCSP worker established in Creighton, SK. This will be a busy time making connections and setting up partnerships in this new area.

We were also excited to have our OSI-CAN program expand into Manitoba early 2019. We are also currently in the process of starting the expansion into Alberta and hopefully by fall 2019 some groups will be up and running there. We have also had interest from some groups operating in British Columbia. This has been an extremely successful program in helping our veterans and community first responders suffering from an occupational stress injury to move forward in their recovery. Discussions continue with CMHA National regarding a possible national rollout of the program.

Our partnership with Service Hospitality continues to flourish and we are getting mental health in the workplace information out to over 4,000 businesses in Saskatchewan. Through this partnership the "Difficult Discussions – Managing Mental Health in the Workplace" training was developed. This is a brand new training program that offers attendees a safe way to practice their skills through the use of professional improv actors and scenarios that reflect real situations that may arise in the workplace. The CMHA National Workplace Director has conducted some research and was unable to find anything like this training in Canada. It is also being considered for rollout as a CMHA National training program.

We are also proud to have CMHA National ask CMHA Saskatchewan Division to take on the CMHA Certified Psychological Health and Safety Advisor training in Saskatchewan. This is an amazing opportunity with the first training having been completed in June 2019 in Regina. Our next training is set for October 10 and 11, 2019 in Saskatoon.

In June 2019 we were excited to hold our first "all staff" retreat at the Sheraton Cavalier Hotel in Saskatoon. For two days staff from all over the province came together to hear presentations from Fardous Hosseiny, Interim CEO of CMHA National, Greg Kylo, CMHA National Director of Program Innovation and Marion Cooper from CMHA Manitoba Division re work around Truth and Reconciliation. We also heard from Michael Lavis, E.D. of Creative Options Regina, about the practise of "Gentle Teaching." Lauryn Kronick of AIDS Saskatoon spoke to the group about safe consumption sites, and Amanda Guthrie presented about the work of OUT Saskatoon. John O'Connor gave us a quick update on how to avoid the pitfalls of working in an online world. The final afternoon Margot Weiner facilitated a "World Café," and staff had an opportunity to "blue sky" about issues in our areas, possible areas of collaboration, and what we would like to see CMHA look like in five years if we had no financial or human resource constraints. Some great ideas came out of these discussions, and CMHA Saskatchewan Division is going to take a hard look at areas where we can make improvements or increase collaboration with our branches. The conference wound up with CMHA Regina Branch guiding us in designing

Continued next page . . .



PHYLLIS O'CONNOR
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

NEWS AND VIEWS from friends, members and staff of the Canadian Mental Health Association in Saskatchewan



Canadian Mental Health Association Saskatchewan Division Inc.

ROSETOWN BRANCH REPORT

Support for new branch ‘overwhelming’

CARMEN LEDDING
BRANCH COORDINATOR

On January 3, 2019, I officially became the Branch Coordinator (Mental Health Worker II) for the new CMHA Rosetown Branch in Rosetown, Saskatchewan. Rosetown is a community of roughly 2500 people in West Central Saskatchewan, and we are the central hub for Sunwest School Division and Heartland Health Region (now part of Saskatchewan Health Authority). I have an educational background in psychology, have worked in the educational sector with both adults and students with disabilities, and have promoted Family Literacy in the West Central Region for the West Central Literacy Committee. I have strong working relationships with educators and mental health workers in our area, and I know that having such a scattered population over a large region means families have to travel a great distance to receive mental health services. We have to be creative in order to meet the needs of our communities in this area. To combat feelings of isolation in rural areas, we must play to our strengths of supporting one another as volunteers and using the sense of *community* to fill gaps in centralized mental health care in our region.

I have focused on training, as well as painting and decorating our new branch, for the last few months. My training has included the Living Life to the Full Facilitator Training in Toronto, ASIST Training, Mental Health First Aid Training, and the C.A.R.E. Program in Regina. I am happy to announce that the grand opening of Canadian Mental Health Association in Rosetown took place on Friday, May 10 to celebrate Mental Health Week. The event was advertised in *The Rosetown Eagle*, on local radio, and digital signs in town. I personally invited mental health practitioners from Saskatchewan Health Authority and Sunwest School Division to join me for coffee. The support has been overwhelming.

During this time, I have identified two major initiatives for our branch:

... continued from previous page

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR'S REPORT

Retreat amazing event

our own wellness kits to take home with us. This was an amazing event and I sincerely thank all the branch and division staff who attended and participated so freely in the discussions. It was wonderful to meet so many folks in person, and I hope this is an event we can replicate in the future.

CMHA Saskatchewan Division is always looking to form new partnerships and to take advantage of new opportunities to advance the work of pushing mental health forward in our province.

Thank you again to all the staff throughout the province who work so tirelessly in support of our work. We couldn't do it without you.

1. To develop and host an interagency network for Rosetown and District for mental health practitioners, the school division, RCMP, the ministerial association, Kindersley Mobile Crisis Unit, and other interested parties. This network will meet quarterly to discuss local mental health initiatives. It is difficult sometimes for many different sectors to know who to contact in the face of mental health crises in a rural setting, and such a network is crucial in order to work in a supportive community with limited resources. I am partnering with Kindersley Interagency Network to develop this platform.
2. To develop a support program for parents of children who suffer from mental illness (to be labelled "behavioural challenges" to combat stigma). Local mental health workers and community members expressed a need for parents to have a support group which provides information on how to navigate the lengthy intake process, what to expect, and provide a supportive atmosphere for them to socialize in.

At this time I am recruiting potential board members and volunteers, as I am the only employee of CMHA Rosetown. I have been contacted to present LLTTF for youth in Kindersley, a community to the west of Rosetown, in their schools this fall. I hope to have more to report in the future, as I am breaking new ground in our community.

CMHA Saskatchewan Division
welcomes our 2019-2020
PROVINCIAL BOARD

Susan Grohn, President
Kimberly Bitz, Vice-President
Chet Hembroff, Past President
Bryan Leier, Treasurer

Members at Large:

Grant Rathwell
Jasmine Beriault
George Marshall
Marcie Nugent
Myla Wollbaum

Regional Delegates:

Darrell Downton, Moose Jaw
Micheal Halyk, Melville
Erskine Sandiford, Weyburn
Bill Pringle, Saskatoon



Older adults face loneliness: a CMHA response

JAYNE MELVILLE WHYTE

Loneliness can be as dangerous to physical and mental health as smoking, obesity, and lack of exercise. At the 2018 CMHA National Conference in Montreal, several speakers referred to the United Kingdom's research and actions. The Jo Cox Commission defined loneliness as "a subjective, unwelcome feeling of lack or loss of companionship." Loneliness is a *feeling* of being disconnected from meaningful involvement with others. We can feel lonely in a group of people as well as when we are isolated in our home. We can enjoy the time and freedom of being alone without feeling lonely. How can the people and programs at the CMHA Branches address this mental health issue?



JAYNE MELVILLE
WHYTE

Phyllis O'Connor, executive director of Saskatchewan Division, invited me to be a resource for Branches looking at their priorities for older adults. I (Jayne) have a long-time involvement as a person who uses mental health support and am now a pensioner. There are two parts to this project, a written resource and visits with each of the Branches.

I have prepared a workbook resource *Older Adults Face Loneliness: A CMHA Response*. A series of quizzes allow individuals to assess their own protective factors and risk factors for loneliness. Background research notes that many life factors, including mental illness, can increase the impact of isolation and a feeling of separation. The booklet also lists a wide

range of ideas that Branches may already use, or could use, to reduce loneliness as part of CMHA's ongoing programming and involvement in the community.

For the second phase of the Loneliness Project, Branch visits this summer and fall allow me to hang out with the members and staff, visiting and listening. During the visit, a workshop with members and staff will open the topic in each Branch. Participants will receive copies of the booklet and be encouraged to begin doing personal and group quizzes. Some cities are also planning more public events, because loneliness can be a mental health issue for many people.

Good ideas from each community and wisdom shared in the interactions will be woven into a follow-up report to be prepared by March 2020. Saskatchewan Parks and Recreation Association (SPRA) sponsored this initiative to address needs of older adults. Of course, the final report will be shared with Branches and available to other groups who care about older adults.

CMHA is now serving the first generation of people with serious mental illness who have not experienced long-term institutionalization. Some of us, who have been employed, are facing retirement. All of us are facing the physical, emotional, social and spiritual effects of aging. Pre-vocational and vocational training has been, and will continue to be, an important part of Branch programs. This project encourages good mental health for pre-retirement and healthy aging.

Older Adults Face Loneliness: A CMHA Response is available as a PDF or print booklet. If you want more information, you may contact Jayne at jayne.whyte@sasktel.net or through the Division office (306) 525-5601.

New training available

This training offers a unique "Safe to Fail" environment while learning the skills necessary for effective discussions with people dealing with mental health issues; their own or a family member.

The workshop teaches the principles of "Effective Questioning" and "Active Listening" as well as basic communication skills.

It then offers a safe environment in which to put those skills to the test. The "Safe" fail is provided through the use of professional improvisational actors who will be following various scenarios. However, these actors will be reacting directly to how participants approach them. This simulated interaction will help prepare participants for the real world experiences they may one day face.

The workshop is for anyone in management or human resources who may be called upon to directly interact with an



Difficult Discussions

Supporting Mental Health in the Workplace



employee dealing with mental health issues. It also is for supervisory staff who may be placed in similar situations.

Workshops may also be tailored to meet specific needs of your workplace.

For more information: contactus@cmhask.com or watch our website and Facebook for training dates in the fall which will soon be announced.



Those attending the first Difficult Discussions workshop for anyone in management or human resources who may be called upon to directly interact with an employee dealing with mental health issues. See article on previous page.

CMHA CERTIFIED PSYCHOLOGICAL

Health and Safety Advisor training

COURSE DESCRIPTION

CMHA's Certified Psychological Health and Safety Advisor Training program will help individuals who are working to address the issue of mental health in workplaces by implementing the National Standard of Canada for Psychological Health and Safety in the Workplace.

This in-demand certification provides employees, managers, and leaders with an intensive learning experience focused on eliminating barriers and building the case for a mentally healthy work environment.

Employers will see those with this certification as skilled change-makers, having the practical expertise to help move organizational wellness strategies forward and implement the Standard in their workplaces.

This certification training includes the following four key modules:

- **Introducing the Standard** – Advisors need to have a strong understanding of the Standard as well as key issues related to mental health in the workplace. This module will give Advisors the fundamental knowledge they need to speak with employers about the Standard as well as some common language to use when discussing the issue of mental health.

- **Presenting the Business Case** – This module focuses on helping leaders and other key workplace stakeholders see the value of adopting the Standard and improving psychological health and safety. Advisors will learn to formulate effective messages that articulate the benefits not just for employees, but for the bottom line as well.

- **Preparing for Assessment** – Advisors will learn to help employers understand the scope, process and necessity of collecting data, both as a baseline and as a continuous practice for adherence to the Standard. This module will focus on the practicalities of assessment, including the tools available and recommended processes.

- **Making Recommendations** – Analyzing the assessment findings and recommending an action plan must be done with knowledge of the organization's constraints, competing demands and current realities. To be successful in sustaining implementation, Advisors will learn to recommend actions that are both valuable and manageable for employers.

For further information check out our website at www.sk.cmha.ca or email us at contactus@cmhask.com.

Our next training is scheduled for October 10 & 11, 2019 in Saskatoon.



A Literary Case Study of the Benefits of Cognitive Therapy for Depression

How the protagonists in Willa Cather's short story Paul's Case and Albert Camus's short story Jonas, or the Artist at Work are affected by unrealistic societal expectations, cognitive distortions, and depression.

KELLY LESLIE, MD

INTRODUCTION

The degree of importance that an individual places on the mundane people, places, and objects that surround them in daily life has a remarkable influence on their mental health and the outcome of their life. In his book How Proust Can Change Your Life, British philosopher Alain de Botton, inspired by one of Marcel Proust's essays, explores the notion of "correct value" (de Botton 138). This concept involves the conscious placement of greater importance on the less exciting—yet more accessible—aspects of one's life and the acknowledgment of the true beauty of these often-overlooked details, instead of longing incessantly for unattainable, costly splendour. Like the remarkably exquisite paintings of Jean-Baptiste Chardin, which merely depict ordinary household scenes, thus causing viewers to reconsider the value that they assign to these things in their own lives, de Botton suggests that people will be better able to pursue happiness in their lives by "open[ing] [their] eyes" and "reapprais[ing] their conceptions of beauty" (de Botton 133, 138). As such, the concept of "correct value" bears a remarkable resemblance to the ideas espoused in cognitive therapy, a form of psychotherapy designed to treat depression and anxiety through the modification of individuals' dysfunctional thoughts and perceptions of situations (Beck Institute).

In both "Paul's Case" and "Jonas, or the Artist at Work", short stories written by Willa Cather and Albert Camus, respectively, the protagonist at least initially does not assign "correct value" to his modest surroundings, and eventually faces the consequences of this choice. However, Paul's ultimate fate is more unfortunate than that of Jonas because

he is unwilling to compromise and unable to change his mindset. This can be seen throughout the two stories, as both Paul and Jonas base their lofty ambitions upon society's superficial ideals, take the people and places surrounding them in their everyday lives for granted, and begin a downward spiral as their narrow-minded value systems take a toll on their mental health and trigger episodes of depression. As only Jonas is able to compromise and alter his outlook on life, Paul tragically dies by suicide while Jonas is saved.

BODY

Both Paul and Jonas have internalized society's pressures to lead lives based on a superficial concept of happiness. Paul, whose father's "dearest hope" is that his son's life will emulate that of his successful, wealthy neighbour, places great importance on materialism and wealth (Cather 109). He enjoys listening to tales of the fabulous displays of opulence by the "iron kings" of the early twentieth century, involving "palaces in Venice, yachts on the Mediterranean, and high play at Monte Carlo", and often dreams of escaping his own boring lifestyle and traveling to exotic, exhilarating places around the world (Cather 110). In effect, Paul is preoccupied with the American dream of wealth (Hicks 16). However, despite Paul's vehement desire for money, he does not have the work ethic or patience to legitimately achieve his ambitious aspirations—he admires the stories of "cash boys who had become famous", but he has "no mind for the cash-boy stage" (Cather 110). One night, Paul follows a famous opera singer from a theatre to her extravagant hotel after a performance, and watches her enter the "world of shiny, glistening surfaces and basking ease"; as he stands in the rain outside the hotel, he "wonder[s] whether he were destined always to shiver in the black night outside, looking up at it", symbolizing his feelings of isolation and despair due to his understanding that his dreams of an opulent lifestyle are unattainable (Cather 106). Jonas, on the other hand, is a painter whose recent artistic success is beginning to "[earn] him many friends" (Camus 97). His newfound popularity among these admirers, whom he dubs his "disciples", starts to occupy every aspect of his life, and he modifies his daily routines in order to accommodate them (Camus 99). Fame, one of the most highly valued superficial qualities in modern society, begins to consume Jonas, and soon becomes his sole ambition—all other aspects of his life that he had once considered important are rendered insignificant and replaced with the demands of his admirers. Not only does Jonas permit his disciples to regularly "[arrange themselves] in concentric circles around [his] easel" as he

Continued next page . . .



Canadian
Mental Health
Association
Saskatchewan
Division Inc.

. . . *continued from previous page*

paints so that they can watch him work, he also dedicatedly "answer[s] the numerous letters" that he now receives, regarding his artwork or requests for his advice (Camus 101, 104). As a result of Jonas's constant involvement with his disciples and his consequently busy schedule, he realizes that "he ha[s] no time" and that he cannot "be everywhere at once"; this leads to a routine ignorance of all other parts of his life, including his family and true friends (Camus 105). Clearly, according to the ideas of de Botton, both Paul and Jonas have erroneously ranked their priorities in life by being so heavily influenced by society's most shallow ideals, and are therefore failing to place correct value on everything that normally surrounds them.

As a result of the hollow lives that Paul and Jonas lead, they tend to overlook the more mundane aspects of their everyday lives and therefore fail to appreciate them. Paul, who is so intent upon obtaining wealth, feels nothing but disdain toward the aspects of his life that remind him of his ordinariness and place in middle-class society. He absolutely loathes his home in a neighbourhood "where all the houses [are] exactly alike", and feels a "nerveless sense of defeat, the hopeless feeling of sinking back forever into ugliness and commonness" whenever he returns home to Cordelia Street (Cather 107). Paul is also frustrated with the imperfect objects within his house: "his ugly sleeping chamber, the cold bathroom with the grimy zinc tub, the cracked mirror, the dripping spigots" (Cather 107). His only happiness in life results from the time he spends viewing beautiful paintings of exotic landscapes, working as an usher at the elegant Carnegie Hall, and watching the dress rehearsals of actors at the downtown theatre—the moment he enters these situations, "he breathe[s] like a prisoner set free, and fe[els] within him the possibility of doing or saying splendid, brilliant poetic things" (Cather 110). Every other part of his life is "but a sleep and a forgetting" (Cather 110). However, these ventures into the stereotypically beautiful and wealthy segments of society only aggravate his situation, as he cannot help but compare this splendence with his own dreary existence and thus finds the tedium in life "more than ever repulsive" (Cather 111). Paul displays a remarkable similarity to a young man featured in one of Proust's essays. Like Paul, this man is "gloomy, envious, and dissatisfied" with the "mundanity" of his life, which "contrast[s] with the young man's taste for beautiful and costly things, which he lacked the money to acquire" (de Botton 133). In his essay, Proust advises this man to "make a radical change" in his life by examining the paintings of the artist Chardin, which, "in spite of the ordinary nature of their subjects...[succeed] in being extraordinarily beguiling and evocative", therefore demonstrating that the atmosphere in which the young man lives "could, for a fraction of the cost, have many of the charms he had previously associated only with palaces and the princely life" (de Botton 134, 135, 136). In other words, Proust is advising the man to ascribe correct value to the tedium in his life, something that Paul steadfastly refuses to do. Whereas Paul has always failed to appreciate

the mundane things surrounding him, Jonas's wife and children, who could be considered to be the tedium in Jonas's life, had initially "sparkled brightest in [his] daily life" before fame, in the form of his disciples, obscured his priorities (Camus 91). After earning so much recognition and admiration for his artwork, however, Jonas becomes so caught up with placating his disciples that he ignores those who are most important to him, despite his promises to himself that he will "[stay] close to Louise and the children" (Camus 99). Jonas gradually becomes nothing more than an observer in his own home: one night, after spending hours with his disciples, he "look[s] on fondly as Louise put[s] the children to bed, with the kind help of an elegant lady", but is not actively involved in the process (Camus 108). As time goes on, his children grow up without a strong relationship with their regularly absent father, and Louise "exhaust[s] herself doing everything that in other circumstances he had been able to do in the home" (Camus 105). It is clear that Jonas places much more importance on satisfying those who are directly responsible for his fame rather than those whom he knows will always be there for him. Even when Louise suggests, with a "shadow of sadness" on her face, that his friends leave early for once so that she and Jonas could "see a little more of each other", Jonas continues to devote most of his time to his admirers and take his family for granted (Camus 102). In the cases of both Paul and Jonas, it is their inability to ascribe correct value to the more ordinary aspects of their lives that eventually leads to their downfalls. From a psychological perspective, the fact that both protagonists exhibit several maladaptive cognitive distortions common in depression—such as black-or-white thinking, exaggeration of their own flaws, and unfavourable comparisons of themselves to others—foreshadows the deterioration of their mental health.

Due to the superficial ambitions of both Paul and Jonas and their apparent incapability of appreciating anything in their lives that does not pertain to these obsessions, their lives begin to take a turn for the worse once the very things that give them happiness disappear. Paul, tired of the oppressive ordinariness of his home and intent on finally experiencing the life of opulence that he had always desired, steals a large sum of money from his employers, travels to New York City, and checks into a room at the Waldorf Hotel. As a result, Paul becomes immersed in a lavish world of excessive luxury and wealth—his dream has come true, and the overwhelming beauty of the "flowers, the white linen, the many-coloured wine glasses, the gay toilettes of the women, [and] the low popping of corks" makes him forget the monotonous misery of his Cordelia Street home (Cather 116). However, this feeling of happiness does not last long; Paul does not truly belong in this world that he has forced himself into, and once his money begins to dwindle after nine days of his charade, he is obligated to make some difficult decisions. Unfortunately for Paul, his loss of money coincides with a loss of freedom—he learns that his theft has been discovered and published in newspapers, and that his furious father is searching for him to



bring him home. His immediate reaction to this news reveals the extent to which Paul absolutely abhors the dreariness of his former life:

The grey monotony stretched before him in hopeless, unrelieved years; Sabbath-school, Young People's Meeting, the yellow papered room, the damp dish-towels; it all rushed back upon him with a sickening vividness.
(Cather 118)

Money and luxury, which Paul has always believed to be the most important things to obtain in one's life, are now ironically resulting in intense distress, even causing him to "[succumb] now and again to attacks of nausea" and contemplate committing suicide now that he is anticipating that they will be taken away from him (Cather 119). Fervently refusing to recognize the beauty of the less ostentatious things around him, Paul suffers greatly because of his misguided decision to worship materialism. On the other hand, Jonas, who has been unable to produce as great a quantity of artwork as he had earlier because his "friends became more interesting" and therefore more time-consuming, finds that his reputation has suffered and his disciples are gradually losing interest in him (Camus 102). Since Jonas has placed so much importance on these admirers and his fame, this sudden abandonment causes him to delve into a deep depression. He loses the inspiration to paint, surrenders to the temptation of alcohol—the only thing that "[comes] close to the joy he live[s] for"—, ceases to smile, begins an affair with another woman "without really feeling any desire for her", and ignores his family more than ever before (Camus 115, 117). It is clear that fame and fortune, achievements that are so highly valued and desired in

society, are corrupting influences in the lives of both Paul and Jonas and lead to the lowest points of their existences. Paul's incessant fixation with wealth and luxury compels him to act both impetuously and irrationally, and leads him on a path to self-destruction, while Jonas's preoccupation with the fame arising from the constant presence of his disciples blinds him to his duties as a husband and father. Jonas's inability to comprehend the value of his own family takes such a heavy toll on his life that it has the potential to end as tragically as Paul's soon does.

While both Paul and Jonas suffer greatly as a result of their obsession with the exorbitance that society dictates as being important in life, Paul's fate is ultimately worse as Jonas is able to "reappraise [his] [conception] of beauty" and therefore find happiness in more modest areas of his life, while Paul is not (de Botton 138). Paul, whose suicide serves as the ending to "Paul's Case", resolutely believes that "money [is] everything, the wall that [stands] between all he loathe[s] and all he want[s]" (Cather 119). Although he appreciates the artificial beauty of the luxurious Waldorf Hotel, he is not able to "open [his] eyes" and see the beauty of the monotonous features of his everyday life (de Botton 133). Paul refuses to learn from his mistakes and even admits that "[i]f he had to choose over again, he would do the same thing tomorrow" (Cather 119). Although some critics identify Paul's "loneliness and alienation" as the main stimulus for his suicide, it is perhaps also because of his inability to acknowledge the charm of his own humble possessions that he takes his own life when all of his lofty, ambitious dreams are about to be taken away from him (Perez 11). If only Paul could have changed his concept of happiness and recognized the beauty of the light reflecting off the drops of water spilling from the leaky faucet, or how the "horrible yellow" hue of the wallpaper in his bedroom dazzled brilliantly in the rays of the setting sun shining through his window—in other words, remedy his cognitive distortions—it is possible that he might not have made the decision to commit suicide (Cather 107). This inability to compromise and ascribe correct value to the duller aspects of his life ultimately proves to be his downfall. On the other hand, Jonas succeeds in turning his life around when his wife finally confronts him about his recent infidelity, which proves to be a catalyst for positive change:

For the first time he saw on Louise's face that despair caused by surprise and an excess of pain, and it broke his heart. He discovered then that he had not thought about her all this time, and he was ashamed.
(Camus 117)

Jonas suddenly realizes how foolish his obsession with fame has been and understands that his family is the most important aspect of his life—"deprived of them, he would find nothing but emptiness and solitude" (Camus 112). He makes a significant change in his regular routine by "hugg[ing] Louise

Continued next page . . .



... continued from previous page

close" and ignoring the disciples who are "delighted to find him in again" (Camus 118). It is this conscious decision to alter his previous priorities in life that results in a comparatively happy ending for Jonas. Finally allowing himself time for quiet reflection and painting, Jonas listens to the distant sounds of his own family and discovers just how much "[h]e love[s] them!" (Camus 122) Jonas has realized that his former "dissatisfactions [were] the result of failing to look properly at [his] li[fe] rather than the result of anything inherently deficient" about it (de Botton 140). Camus seems to recognize the notion of correct value as a type of salvation—Jonas's life is saved when he changes his focus from a superficial concept of happiness and thus "enter[s] into a new and [...] more rewarding relationship" with his unconditionally loving family, whom he had previously considered insignificant (de Botton 138). It is because Paul is unable to make concessions and assign correct value to the tedium in his life that his fate is more tragic than that of Jonas.

The ending of "Paul's Case", a detailed description of Paul's suicide involving his hasty decision to jump in front of a locomotive, reveals how Paul has not been able to modify his outlook on life, with undeniably tragic consequences. It is obvious that Paul still desperately holds on to the desire to experience exotic luxury, even in his last few moments of life, as

the final images that he sees in his mind before dying are the "blue of Adriatic water" and the "yellow of Algerian sands" (Cather 121). Just like at the beginning of "Paul's Case", when Paul imagines himself traveling around the world like the heroes of his Cordelia Street neighbours' tales, he covets nothing more than a carefree, self-indulgent lifestyle—however, in both cases, this dream appears hopelessly unattainable. Clearly, Paul has failed to "reappraise [his] conceptions of beauty" to better accommodate the standard of living that is actually available to him (de Botton 138). Additionally, Paul has continued to behave impulsively, without stopping to carefully analyse his ideas before acting on them. Similar to his rash decision to steal money in order to live in luxury in New York, Paul commits suicide without any regard to the endless possibilities that may have been available to him in the future, until it is too late; seconds before his death, Paul suddenly feels remorse for "the folly of his haste" and recognizes "the vastness of what he had left undone" for the very first time (Cather 121).

On the other hand, the ending of "Jonas, or the Artist at Work" is optimistic in nature and focuses on Jonas's new-found love for his family. This concluding passage succeeds in capturing the essence of the concept of correct value:

The children were running through
the rooms, the little girl was laughing,



Birdwatch by Henry Peters



and Louise, too – he hadn't heard her laughter for a long time. He loved them! How he loved them! He put out the lamp, and in the familiar darkness wasn't that his star still shining? It was, he recognized it, his heart full of gratitude, and he was still gazing at it when he fell, noiselessly. [...]

[The canvas] was entirely blank, though in the center Jonas had written in very small characters, which could be deciphered, but it was hard to tell if it should be read as *independent* or *interdependent*. (Camus 122-123)

Jonas has clearly exchanged his obsession with fame and disciples for a renewed appreciation of his family, and thus has finally succeeded in assigning correct value to this previously overlooked aspect of his life. His transformation has obviously made him happier; whereas before, Jonas had been "filled with helplessness and a strange sorrow", his heart is now "full of gratitude" (Camus 116, 122). As revealed in his painting, Jonas has acknowledged the fact that he cannot be independent without first relying on his family members, who will always support him unconditionally.

The concluding paragraphs of "Paul's Case" and "Jonas, or the Artist at Work" are remarkably similar and both succeed in conveying perfectly the degree to which each of the protagonists ultimately succeeds in ascribing correct value to the mundane aspects of their lives. Both endings contain references to the future; Jonas has a hopeful outlook on life, but Paul's situation is tainted with sorrow for the "vastness of what he had left undone" (Cather 121). In stark contrast to Paul, who is now dead and therefore has no future whatsoever, Jonas is promised to "get well" in a week and has many years of enjoying time with his family to look forward to (Camus 123). Interestingly, both Paul and Jonas fall in the concluding paragraphs of their respective stories. Whereas Paul jumps to his death, Jonas "[falls] noiselessly"; Paul is ending his life in a desperate attempt to escape the misery of his life that is focused on impossible materialistic desires, while Jonas is simply exhausted from his relentless work with his painting and the profound realization that his family is indeed the most important part of his life (Camus 122). The single most significant difference between the two endings is the fact that Jonas has learned to incorporate the concept of correct value into his life, while Paul has not. The last lines of "Paul's Case" suggest that until the very end, Paul still highly values that which is exotic and opulent, while the last lines of "Jonas, or the Artist at Work" reveal that Jonas is at peace with himself after having realized that his family is more meaningful than fame. Because of this crucial difference, Paul's life ends tragically while Jonas's is improved and infused with hope for the future.

CONCLUSION

It is a common occurrence for people in general, including the likes of Paul and Jonas, to feel that there is a "depressing gap between [their] own li[ves] and the realm of beauty" (de Botton 145). However, de Botton's remarkable "therapeutic conception" of ascribing correct value to the mundane aspects of people's lives allows them to find happiness even in the midst of depressing mediocrity—a person's entire outlook on life can be changed simply by altering the value that one places on the things around him (de Botton 140). This idea is well supported in the field of psychology, where changing one's thoughts in order to change one's feelings serves as a central tenet of cognitive therapy for depression and anxiety. Nevertheless, it is largely up to each individual to discover this "certain way of looking, as opposed to a mere process of acquiring or possessing" and correctly incorporate it into everyday life (de Botton 140). While Jonas successfully accomplishes this feat, Paul's inability to "open [his] eyes" and change his superficial conception of beauty prevents him from doing so; as a result, Paul dies, and Jonas is saved (de Botton 133). This notion of correct value, reminiscent of the wise old saying "If you don't have what you want, want what you have", is universally relevant. Not only Paul and Jonas, but people from all around the world can benefit from the wise lesson that this concept teaches about appreciating the seemingly insignificant details of one's life and ignoring the potentially corrupting influences of society's more superficial ideals. The concept of correct value—or, in psychological terms, the modification of dysfunctional thought processes via cognitive therapy—truly has the potential to increase the level of happiness that is experienced in people's everyday lives and assist a society that is too frequently discontented and focused on life's deficiencies to see the beauty of the world around them.

Works Cited

- Beck Institute. "What is Cognitive Behavior Therapy?" Beck Institute for Cognitive Behavior Therapy, 2016, <https://beckinstitute.org/get-informed/what-is-cognitive-therapy/>
- Camus, Albert. "Jonas, or the Artist at Work." *Exile and the Kingdom*. Trans. Carol Cosman. New York: Vintage International, 1991. 87-123. Print.
- Cather, Willa. "Paul's Case." *The Troll Garden*. Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1983. 102-121. Print.
- de Botton, Alain. "How to Open Your Eyes." *How Proust Can Change Your Life*. New York: Vintage International, 1997. 133-158. Print.
- Hicks, Jennifer. "An Overview of the 'Paul's Case.'" *Short Stories for Students*. Detroit: Gale Research Inc., 1997. 58-61. Print.
- Perez, Carlos. "'Paul's Case'—The Outsider." *Youth Suicide Prevention: Lessons from Literature*. Ed. Sara Deats and Lagretta Lenker. New York: Insight Books, 1989. 135-154. Print.

CLOTHED IN SUN, An Excerpt

BYRNA BARCLAY

Chapter 22

Underneath White Shadows: Open Doors

Late Night Writing

*One hot summer night
you ignore the rule of logic,
language winded here, secrets
sung of a horse flying, feathers
falling.*

Goats go blind.

*Meaning baffles, written here.
Adam loved the Paradise girl, naked.*

I think in circles.

One hot summer night.

-Tapani

Day 16, June 16, 1982

MICHAEL,

It is late at night on the sixteenth day since you were last seen by the resident poet at the library, and once again I take comfort in reading your poems. The line about open doors reminds me of my need to tell you, even if I do sound like a parrot, that the doors to your home with me are always open wide, especially this, the first of many hot summer nights. Like you, I'm thinking in circles, lost in my own kind of logic. Outside my bedroom window, a hidden light casts shadows of the flowering crab, shape-changing limbs that look like arms reaching for me, as if trying to tell me not to worry, you will be home soon.

Your grandmother baked an angel food cake, your favourite, for your birthday supper, praying you would show up and surprise us. I've put it in the freezer so we can celebrate when you do come home.

Until then, I'm reading your songs. Hymns of praise, they call to me too, not just to Angelica Mia.

ON THE EVENING AFTER MICHAEL'S 18TH BIRTHDAY, Maija studies Tapani's poetry by poring over and above and under and in between the poems, their lines, the breaks, searching for meaning – like her son before her, perhaps.

She seeks clues to his whereabouts now since he has gone missing, unable to get inside his head and know what it was like to be Tapani, feeling trapped and imprisoned in a hospital building he described as a box, with a terrible need to fly – to be free.

The recurring images of flight and angels, the sea and mountains, the sun, at first feel to her to be mundane and vain attempts to find words to fit what cannot be experienced by anyone other than the tall and thin fellow with red hair falling in his eyes, as if he has drawn a curtain between himself and those who would change him.

He writes: *We're on our way/away from the majority.*

It must feel like an out-of-body experience to *awaken to flowered walls / to climb, the sky outside a pink fog, like incense.* Does he finger the paint on that hospital wall, perhaps peel it with a broken fingernail and discover it, once yellow, now green?

He's *ready to climb into morning. All people here turning their heads each day. In this suffocating place.*

He takes up his black electric guitar, *his fingers flying over wires tuned.* He plays with all ten fingers, so nimble yet strong from playing the pipe chanter.

The song is about open doors. He finds them *underneath white shadows*, then sings: *We will find our way out. We look we see we smile and stay, maybe, for a while. But held inside we enter daybreak.*

There is always music on his mind, not all of it his own creation. It's possible that he is allowed to play his own tapes on his ghetto blaster. Does he listen to Leonard Cohen's new album and the song *There Ain't No Cure for Love* when he writes *This clear day brings sun/cleaning the window/Turning moments of loving?*

He takes a tray of breakfast, porridge and toast and orange juice, in his white room. The windows are large, and he sits before them, no longer afraid of robbers or neighbours.

Is that due to the change in medicine? Like most people suffering from an absence of constant doses of reality he simply drifts from light bulb flashes and blasts of hallucinations into the clear light of day.

One doctor has the brilliant idea of filming Michael upon admittance and then again after improvement so he can see the difference in himself between being ill and being well. But the recorder breaks down and Michael just laughs. Even his laughter trills and seems to be based on the A scale, like his bagpipes.

They try him on Stelazine, which makes him eat compulsively, continually and constantly; he dashes from the patients' kitchenette where he has access to toast and coffee, ice cream and cold drinks in a refrigerator, then hastens out to the smoking lounge where he continues to stuff his mouth, then back to the kitchenette.

This time he has bleached his red hair, and it's stiff and dry as hay, but as yellow as sunflowers.

People who self-medicate, who try to blot out their anxieties and pain with street drugs like marijuana, are painfully thin, their often-ragged clothes hanging from their shoulders and hips as if they are scarecrows. And that's what Tapani looks like now.

But he cannot turn his head to left or right; he's stiff as a corpse, yet he cannot sit still, and when he does lie down his legs kick out as if he's dreaming of a chorus line.

They try another drug, Fluanxol, which is tolerable, and Michael, now refusing to answer to any other name than Tapani, writes a song called *Coming Out Of It*, which could mean coming out of street drugs or coming down from the Haldol. This poem could be a take-off on the pipe master's mouth music, but it also feels like an attempt to learn how to



speak and sing after the shock of losing language.

In *ROUND AND ROUND AND ROUND they shoot (Fluanxol)* and Tapani cries, Who are you?

In this building/I hoped for power, oh/ earth a faraway drum, an echo (on Fluanxol).

He tries to snap out of it with a B flat ending: *Coffee here is strong.*

Maija thinks that perhaps all that is wrong with her son is that he loves too well, too strongly.

He was given so much love as a child – every time one of them picked him up – Karna and Mauritz and Emelie and Maija – they kissed him.

Once when he was perhaps three years old he said, “Don’t maul me. I’m not a cat.”

And now he has all that love bottled up inside him and no one to give it to, except the black stray he found in the back alley.

If his white lights could speak what would they tell him?
What comfort could they offer?

Maija would like to think that Michael met a girl in the Psych Ward, that they fled together one summer night, and even though they were brought back, it was better that he had loved and lost than never to have been loved at all.

One night, he did escape the box building, which isn’t locked, the theory being that if a person has no clothes to wear outside, only hospital pyjamas, he or she won’t run away. Often, someone, whose ego is as flat as a road runner after being run over, and feels no one sees the real person, will run naked down a hospital corridor or along a dark street that runs parallel to the river.

And that’s exactly what Tapani did once.

Maija doesn’t know if it was night or day, but she does know that it was raining, and he said he saw pink clouds and a castle in the sky. For want of language he called it heaven. He felt more than happy. It was exhilarating. She’d like to think there was someone he loved with him to share the experience.

Perhaps it was Angelica Mia, his first and only friend.
Who knows?

Sadly, not even Michael who calls himself Tapani.

Maija knows more than any mother should be told by her son.

A skinny girl named Jeanette, who could never tell doctors who sired any of her children, had each and every one taken from her at birth because she was unable to look after them. She wandered into Michael’s room, and he was kind to her, gentle, but refused to let her into his bed.

When Maija asked him why not he said, “Because I didn’t love her.”

What a good man her son has become, just more of what he was at birth.

Yet he writes and sings of a Paradise Girl, one who is half angel, half girl; and together they fly from the suffocating box building, a maze other people call a Holding Unit, when the sky is pink, probably during one of the stunning sunsets over the river.

Joined by song, blessed by snowfall, the angels beside them *bled for us*. Even the orange hills and the purple trees wept. They found *trees white/purple flowers/pink sky; fish jumping in a blue river*, until a choir of crowned boys sang: *All God’s children (got wings)*.

He hears music even in his sleep.

He is the gifted child no one understands.



Art by Rene Diedrich

The Domes

SHIRLEY CALLAGHAN

It is raining this morning and I wake up in a dejected mood anticipating a dull, uneventful day—a day like most others—a predictable day like my psychiatrist says is good for me. I dress and have a bowl of raisin bran—good for me my GP says. So I eat, read the editorials in the paper, and admire the photos of Islanders—good to keep on top of things my husband says. Guess I'm doing everything as expected—keeping a routine—like he did in the movie. I feel like Truman in his dome.

When I saw "The Truman Show" filmed in 1998, I was taken by the superficial life Truman lived in the movie—how sameness marked his artificial and mundane existence—how unchallenged he carried on day by day—how innocent he was regarding his daily passage of time. I reflected on my own experience.

The Nissan is my refuge. I go to get in, and I see big Jeff and Sonny, his standard white poodle. We meet almost every morning, usually when I'm out walking—I walk thirty minutes every day to keep my osteoarthritis from crippling me: soon I'll need a cane. The resilient hemlock boards of the boardwalk soften my step and the people and dogs provide company. I have done this every day for fifteen years. Predictable woman they would say. Some would say "get a life." But lanky Truman did not know boredom—he was accustomed to seeing the same everyday people pass his house, plant their red and yellow flowers next door, walk their dogs of common breeds, and drive their blue bikes. He knew nothing more—expected nothing more—wanted nothing more.

I drive by the park, going uptown. Yes, there will be flowers here in the cement boxes below the lights. Flowers of many colors are planted by the city—flowers that will last like geraniums, salvia and marigolds. There are always people and dogs on the boardwalk. I look to see if any friends are there. Whether the harbor is calm or surly affects my mood, as does

the sky. I look at the clouds as well --small Rorschach grey and black patterns like I administered at work drawing up profiles of illness or wellness in clients. Truman was always happy since he knew no better in his artificial dome. How would I rate him? But this is how it is with me, just like Truman following the same regimented course—not questioning another.

No.118 Kent Street, Confederation Center is my spot for a meter. Funny, how it is always there for me. I put in a loonie, knowing I won't need that much time. The bank clerks vary like the tide; they are international now, all helpful. I get a printout to keep my affairs in order knowing I can never balance my bank book. Soon the machines will take over anyway just punch a key – no relating—no smiles—just metal.

No- one is around the center except the ever- present Alma with her shaved head, acne, worn clothes, and knitting needles. I tested her when she was institutionalized. She is angry at me because I won't drive her everywhere. She is angry and aggressive. I don't make eye contact. Truman was friendly to everyone and folk loved to see him. He was unaware everyone on the set saw him on TV everyday since he was born--- that he was a spectacle of sorts all his life. Who would watch anyone daily in real life—not me with my plain face, drab clothes and wide pants so out of style –who cares!

I return home to my husband and my caring regime for him. He is glad to see me. There is the rest of the day. Maybe I will clean the house, do a wash and then go to the boardwalk. There is the open sky today, and my trusty Canon helps me take some good photos. There is a psychology professor here often, two genius chemists, a belly dancer and a churchman from time to time. Dogs like me. Also, of note, I was interviewed one day by CBC- brief recognition. Truman finally realized his artificial life situation and sailed across the water to break out of the TV dome to freedom and a real life. Everyone clapped in the theatre when "The Truman Show" ended, I cried.

That movie was a long time ago. Little did I know I would be living in my kind of dome where routine was the order of the day and I would be bound by convention and my own unwillingness for change--where the QEH was always to be kept near, night travelling was to be avoided, merging was the enemy, and traveling off Island was out of the question. Yes, it is a dome, my homespun dome, never to be aborted like Truman.

But I reflect that I am safe here in this dome, and it is not artificial. I find all the real things of life I value with family and friends. The change in my dome comes with a new realization or truth --a desire to search and find out about the unknown.

As always, I have my pen to document those special happenings, real or imaginary in my life, for me and for anyone who will read them. I'll think of my stories on the boardwalk and translate them into my own reality beside the sea.



Spot by
Henry Peters



The Bitch

MAREIKE NEUHAUS

Mel was cornered. Heart pounding hard. Sweat running down her spine. This was the moment she had worked for. And yet, she couldn't bear look her in the eyes, the Bitch she had created for one simple purpose. She closed her eyes.

...

She was sitting in her father's corn field, hiding from the Taylor brothers who had chased her all evening, throwing stones, calling her names, threatening to throw her into the well if they managed to catch her. She could hear them come closer, their shouting full of mischief. She held her hands over her ears, willing herself to disappear through a hole in the ground. Crouching, she started rocking herself gently like her mother used to rock her crib when she was a little girl. Did she actually remember Mom doing this or was this just a little snippet of her imagination, a picture she had drawn in her mind based on Dad's stories? She startled when she felt the hand on her shoulder.

"Well, look at what I found!" John was the youngest of the Taylor boys and also the meanest. The last time they caught her, he had made her eat dirt till she gagged and threw up on his boots. He would have put her in the hospital that day if Thomas hadn't intervened. He was the oldest of the three boys, kinder than John and Daniel but still a Taylor through and through.

...

She opened her eyes. The Bitch was looking down at her without pity, her eyes as cold as her father's creek running behind the house. She tried imaging the sound of the water in spring when the snow melted and filled the creek with life. She loved walking along its shore, listening to the birds in the willow trees twittering their gossip into the air, clear and brilliant. She could see a beaver dam upstream, no sign of its builders, those semi-aquatic architects and engineers, feeling at home both in water and off shore. How close were they to the human genome? How many mutations to get to humans damning lakes and rivers and flooding whole habitats to produce power?

One, two, three quick hits, metal bar on metal knees, and she was swinging herself over the piles of pallets stacked in the old factory building, holding on to the chain hanging from the ceiling. The Bitch was lying on the floor, groaning, wanting to get up to run after Mel if only her metal knees weren't smashed.

Mel's truck was parked in front of the building. She felt for the key but it wasn't in the ignition. She checked her pockets. Fuck. She got off the plastic cover underneath the steering wheel, fingered for the cables, her hands working clumsily, as though she had never used them before. But there, she found one, then the other. She held their tips against one another, her hands shaking. In the back mirror, she could see the Bitch running towards her truck with a limp.

"Come on, you sucker. Start!" The engine roared when she hit the gas pedal. She sped away with screeching tires, the

Bitch getting smaller by the second.

"Hasta la vista, baby!"

...

Mel had no idea where to go from here. Dad had wanted her to stay on the farm, help him run it. She felt bad leaving him behind, especially with Mom gone, but she couldn't bear the thought of staying. That was about the only thing she was sure about, that she had to leave; she didn't really care where life would take her, as long as it wasn't here. Dad waved at the Corolla driving down the gravel road that would lead her to the highway, out to the city, out of his life, to study mathematics, then on to do graduate work in computer science, and eventually to the AI lab at MIT where she worked now. She had escaped to a world he didn't know. His little girl, how brave she was and yet so brittle.

...

The highway was busy with rush hour traffic. Her children would be coming back from school right about now. Their dad would follow an hour later, worn from another day in the office. She hadn't seen her girls since she had returned. It wouldn't have been safe. She reached the 401/400 crossing and headed north, away from the city. The farm would be where she would have to finish it off. It was home turf, and yet she took no comfort in the knowledge that she might have an advantage. She was running on pure instinct now, following her gut more than anything.

The farm had been abandoned for a while now. Dad had passed away a year ago and had been buried in the cemetery near Violet Hill in the family's grave next to Mom. The home acreage was no more than six miles further north. Most of the land around here had once belonged to the family but Dad had sold it off to neighbouring farmers when he got too old to farm all of it by himself, quarter after quarter, till there was but a speck of land left to keep him busy.

...

"Give it a try, Mel," he had said the Sunday they spoke last. "The girls would have a blast living here. It'd be fun and so much healthier than the work you do, locked up in that lab all day without sunshine or fresh air. No wonder you got depressed."

"If only it'd be that easy, Dad."

"Well, hon, it is. Spend some time with your old dad, help me out running the farm. It's long hours, it sure is, but you are outside, surrounded by so many negative ions you will feel like a different person..."

"You read the article I sent you?"

"Sure did. Made a lot of sense to me. Look, I'm 68. I've spent all my life working outside, and I'm as healthy as a carrot. Now look at you? You're so sick, honey. Pale skin, grey hair, no energy, your whole body is sagging. And you should be in your prime right about now." He chuckled. How she missed his chuckles.

"It's not that easy."

"What isn't?"

"Coming back."

"Why's that? Kevin could get a job in the city and drive

Continued next page . . .

TRANSITION Pages

... continued from previous page

up here to spend the weekends with you and the kids.”

“We’re getting a divorce, dad.”

“You are, eh?” They were silent for a minute, each focusing on their own thoughts, taking in the meaning of the word. Its finality, sharp like a butcher’s knife.

“I’m really sorry, dear.”

“Thanks, Dad. I am too.”

“Maybe coming here would help you get over the shock? You could start a new life. Get healthy, start new, and help out your daddy in the meantime?”

“Let me think about it.”

“Sure, hon. I’ll call you next Sunday, okay?”

“Thanks.”

“Love you, Mel.”

“Love you, too, Dad.”

She got the call early the next morning. The RCMP officer on the other line said her dad had been on his way into town to get the mail. The semi just merged onto the highway without looking and hit her dad’s truck on the driver’s side. He was pronounced dead on the scene.

His funeral was a week later. She knew she should be the one to tell the kids rather than Kevin. He had no heart for such things, had never liked Dad anyway. But in the weeks that followed she was paralyzed. She quit eating, never left the house once before leaving for the funeral. When the girls phoned her at Val’s to speak with her, she had Val tell them Mom was asleep. When they showed up at Val’s house, Val took them out for ice cream. She didn’t want them to see their mother broken like that.

Val drove her up with the girls to the funeral but Mel insisted on staying at the B&B in town. She hired a lawyer to settle the estate. She couldn’t bear seeing the house, the yard, the fields around it. Kevin got custody of the girls and moved back to Toronto. She took a temporary leave of absence and moved in with Val who did her best looking after her. She cooked for her, did her laundry, went through her mail, drove her to medical appointments. Eventually, Val was able to coax Mel out of the house to go for walks with her and the dogs in the evenings. Her prognosis was good, the doctors kept saying. She just had to be patient with herself, take her medication, continue the therapy, and do the things she used to enjoy.

One night, they had been sitting outside on the porch, enjoying a glass of wine, Val suggested Mel use her basement as a lab.

“It’ll be good for you. You’d be able to get back to what you were working on before you went downhill.”

“My head’s not here, Val.”

“Watching talk shows all day and night isn’t gonna help in that department, either.”

“Oh, you won’t believe the stuff I’ve learned about life these past months! What boot camp to send my unruly girls to. How to crack an egg without part of the shell falling into the pan. How Madonna’s latest collection is stealing from Karl Lagerfeld’s oeuvre. Not to mention the latest bestsellers on

Oprah’s list. I mean, how did I dare live my life not knowing all this stuff?”

“How I’ve missed your cynicism, girl!”

“Me, a cynic? Never!”

Val spilled her wine laughing.

“It’s your cynicism that’s kept you going all these years.”

“Not according to my therapist.”

“She doesn’t know you half as well as she should.”

“It takes two, you know?”

“You got enough on your plate, Mel. Let it be.”

“And how does that work exactly?”

“How about you stop questioning everything? You won’t find any answers, and you know it.” Mel faked a nod; she was getting really good at pretense.

She set up her lab in Val’s basement that week. She used



Bizarro by Henry Peters



the money she got from the separation agreement to buy the computers and servers and other equipment. She was still on leave and didn't dare go back to teaching. Her head weighed heavy. Everything she saw was dark and blurry; she was a number among billions of worker bees, getting up every morning doing mindless things. Day in, day out, the same routines repeated with the precision of a clock. Her life, her children's lives, her friend's life, none of these lives mattered. They were all robots. How could anyone get up in the morning and not feel crushed by the absurdity of it all?

According to her therapist, Mel was in recovery. The medications had started working; she slept through the night, showered, and ate three meals a day. They had an agreement that Mel would run further every day, one block at a time. On her good days, Mel would brag to Val at night about what she had encountered during her runs. And yet, on those good days, Mel didn't feel like she was coming back to life. She was merely a medicated version of herself trying to forget that there was a weight in her head, as heavy as the rocks pulling down the woman walking into the River Ouse, her mind moving like a spiral, downwards, no longer looking for a way back up.

...

They had been out on the lake with the boat that Dad kept tied to the deck. He loved fishing and had started taking Mel with him even though she could barely swim. Somehow she had persuaded the Taylor boys to leave her alone if she managed to swim back ashore from the middle of the lake. She could make it that far, right? It was either that or the well. Thomas sat at the bow, making her paddle. Daniel and John stayed behind on the shore and shouted insults. They were about two thirds of the way when Thomas' patience ran out.

"This is taking forever. Give me the paddles!"

He jumped up and made a swift motion towards her, causing the boat to swerve to the left and making him lose his balance. Before Mel knew what happened he had fallen into the lake.

"Help!" Thomas was in the water moving his arms as fast as a windmill, his eyes full with panic. Mel grabbed a paddle and held it towards him but the boat was too far away from him to reach. Thomas disappeared in the water, not strong enough to hold himself up. She had to hurry. She repositioned the paddles and turned the front of the boat in his direction. At the shore, Daniel and John were running and shouting but Mel didn't hear or see them. She was focused on the water, on Thomas in the dark water.

...

The science of the body is as complex and clear and beautiful as physics. When water reaches your airways, you will attempt to either cough it up or swallow it, thereby inhaling even more water. Once the water enters your airways, your larynx and vocal cords will constrict, thus sealing the airways, in order to prevent water from entering your lungs. With your airways sealed, it becomes difficult for you to breathe.

...

There, Thomas had come up again, even more panicked this

time and not where she had expected him at all. She had paddled too far. She needed to move fast. When she held out the paddle again, it was in Thomas' reach but he couldn't grab it. Mel was leaning out of the boat, trying not to fall into the lake, and doing so dropped the paddle. It happened so fast. One second Thomas almost grabbed the paddle, half a second later the paddle was floating on the lake running over the ripples of water Thomas made. Eventually there was just the paddle, moving slowly, almost peacefully.

...

You can hold your breath for a while, but eventually your breathing reflex will kick in. The more carbon dioxide is in your blood, the stronger that reflex will get. Submerged in water, the airways sealed, your body is unable to move air into your lungs to increase the amount of oxygen in your blood. You will become unconscious and soon after your heart will stop beating, stopping the flow of blood and oxygen to your brain, leading first to brain damage and eventually, about five minutes in, to brain death.

...

Mel didn't go to Thomas' funeral. She was scared to run into Daniel and John. To her surprise, the two boys never once spoke to her about what happened on the lake. Not that summer, not in the years to come. Instead, they completely ignored her, whether because of guilt, shame, or grief Mel wasn't sure, but it didn't matter, did it?

...

Art originates in an idea that slowly turns into a vision. Eventually this vision becomes a draft that you can chew on and mull over until it feels and looks and sounds and reads right. The sculpture of a naked woman eating an apple; the painting of an ordinary face made unforgettable through her smile; the sounds of a lover yearning for his Elise; the story of Frankenstein creating a monster hidden between the leaves of a book. Science wasn't any different. It starts with a question — always a question — and from there you branch out in different directions, and when you manage to take a step back and look at the monster you've been building, the image becomes clear, so clear that you know what you will have to do next.

...

Life wasn't any different from art or science. As Mel was getting closer to Dad's farm, she remembered the first few days in her make-shift lab in Val's basement. The focus the work gave her now that she had figured out where she was headed. She fed on that knowledge and took solace in its irony, to find meaning in committing the unthinkable, the ultimate act. There was no wind. Mel lay down in the boat and watched the sun set behind the trees, waiting. Mosquitoes buzzing, ducks squeaking, some taking off from the lake, others arriving. When the boat tipped, it didn't take her by surprise. Everything happened in slow motion. Legs pulled down with force, eyes closed, ready to let go. The air getting thinner and thinner. Swallowing water, still warm from the sun. Where everything came from, where everything began. Mel opened her eyes; the night was dark, the voices in her head silent. Was this what peace felt like?

Daft Tadhg

ROLLI

Mom still wasn't home.

There was nothin' in it but I opened the fridge anyway and closed it.

I rubbed some more ointment on my bent leg.

I turned the TV on for a bit, then off.

I opened the fridge again.

I looked out the window.

*

It's hard to see on Montague cuz a guy shot all the street lights out. I went to step over - - - I thought it was a puddle - - - and a hand grabbed my ankle.

"Alannah?" said somebody.

They wouldn't let go so I kicked 'em till they did.

When I got to the house with the broke windows, I slipped off my backpack. I dug out my Viking helmet and put it on. I dug out the ketchup bottle filled with petrol and squirted some of it in the one window.

Then I dug out the matchbook.

*

"Daft Tadhg," they said. All of 'em, together.

Oonagh threw a potato at me. Dylan shoved me.

"Your pappy's dead."

"Your ma's a whore."

"Daft Tadhg, daft Tadhg."

Callum hit me with his crutch.

I went down. They laid boots to me. All of 'em, together.

"Daft Tadhg, daft Tadhg, daft Tadhg..."

*

When the lights puffed out in Liquormaster, I held onto my Viking helmet and jumped out of the tree.

I squirted some petrol through Liquormaster's mail slot and lit a match. Then legged it back across the street, up the tree.

First the firetruck, then the popo showed up.

When the window exploded, the popo rolled 'round on the ground.

Another firetruck pulled up, and an ambulance, and more and more popos.

I would've watched longer but my bent leg was killin' me.

*

I lost Mom on Montague but found her on Broad. She turned 'round once - - - I ducked behind a dustbin. She turned 'round again - - - I hid behind a sign.

She wouldn't go to Taddyclams, I thought, but she did.

First she went into the bar-part, then she left and unlocked 122. Pretty quick an old guy from the bar-part knocked on her door. He stayed for twenty minutes and left. Then another guy came and left.

I leaned against a lamppost.

I sat on a bench.

I lay down flat.

*

Milky Freezy was closing so I took my cone and sat on Da's

headstone watchin' the building across from the cemetery burn.

The firemen poured in like pishmires. They carried folks out and the popos poured water on 'em and the ambulance gents put masks on 'em.

The Safe Haven sign fell on the reporter's head, almost.

When the roof collapsed, the cameraman threw up.

All the popos and the firemen and the ambulance gents together weren't half as strong as the fire. It licked 'em like ice creams, every last one.

Like fuckin' ice creams.



Uncle Arthur by Rolli



Liz

ROLLI

Well, I was going home from school. In June.
I *did* see the car. Just in the side of my eye.
Someone screamed something in my ear, it seemed like.
*Oh, Jesus.*¹

I was flying.

I heard crying, so I came out of my room. Both my parents were on the sofa. They were staring at - - - someone was sitting across from them, in the armchair. A blonde-haired woman wearing a crucifix.

When she saw me in my wheelchair, the woman sobbed even harder. Her makeup ran down her face, onto her crucifix.

Mom said: "This is Liz."

Dad said softly: "She's the woman - - -"

I didn't hear the rest. I didn't have to.

The woman turned to me. She rubbed her face, but that made it worse. She was a mess.

She held out her hand. There were black streaks all over it. I couldn't look at it. I looked at the floor.

Mom said something.

Dad said something.

I lifted my head.

The woman was still staring at me.

I wheeled backwards into my room.

I closed the door.

You're the only one on this planet. You're the loneliest person on earth.

I try not to think that.

You're the loneliest person on earth.

It only feels like that.

Millions of people are lonelier than me.

That's what I tell myself. Over and over.

As many times as it takes.

Liz came by one day when Mom was out getting my seizure medicine.

She knocked on the middle of the front door a million times.

Suddenly, she was knocking a lot lower down. Near the crack in the bottom of the door.

I just listened to her moaning.

Eventually, she went away.

MOM: I can't help it. I feel bad for her.

DAD: ...

MOM: She's a lost soul.

DAD: We have one of our own.

MOM: Shh.

DAD: Fast asleep.

MOM: ...

DAD: ...

MOM: ...

DAD: I feel bad for her, too.

Millions of people are lonelier than me.

It's a big planet.

Millions of people are lonelier than me.

They have to be.

There's a park not far from our house. You only have to cross one street to get to it.

When I was half-way across the bridge that goes over the duck pond, a woman on a bicycle almost rode into the water. She ditched her bike in the reeds and started walking fast towards me.

I'd've known who it was just from the sobbing.

I squeezed my wheels. I closed my eyes.

The sobbing got louder.

I squeezed the wheels harder, shut my eyes tighter.

She just stood there in front of me.

I counted to ten.

I counted to ten again.

I was getting a headache. I was breathing hard.

You're the only one on this planet.

You're the loneliest person on earth.

Then the wheels started moving. Under my fingers.

I still didn't open my eyes. I didn't have to.

I could tell we were going ... around the duck pond. Past the bird sanctuary. The playground.

I was breathing deep but not as hard. My head just hurt a little.

Past the flower garden. The fountain. Across the street...

I was breathing alright, now. Surprisingly. I was feeling alright.

Eventually, the wheels stopped turning.

I opened my eyes again.

Mom waved in the window and disappeared.

Then the front door swung open.

Managing STRESS

Become acquainted with relaxation techniques -- yoga, meditation, deep breathing, massage -- and use those that work for you.



Writing depression

TED DYCK

Dillon, Brian.

Essayism: On Form, Feeling, and Non-Fiction.

New York Review of Books, 2017.

171 pp. \$21.95.

Every once in a while, not that often, a book appears that exquisitely and completely captures a subject for a time and in a place. Helen Macdonald's *H is for Hawk* (2015) is one such book; Brian Dillon's *Essayism* is another. Not coincidentally, the subject in both these very different books of the same time but very different approaches is the same – the relation between writing and mental illness, specifically, depression.

This relation has been the subject of many books, famously including Robert Burton's *The Anatomy of Melancholy* (1621), always ringing the familiar theme that writing improves mental health. The subject has been investigated scientifically, too, substantiating the same theme (Pennebaker, *The Secret life of Pronouns* (2011)). The truly thing remarkable about this is that the mental health community seems singularly unaware of the potential afforded by writing for therapy – or, at the very least, seems unable to capitalize on writing as a viable and cost-free therapy. And perhaps it's not that remarkable, either, for writing for therapy requires only a minimum of technology (pencil and paper will do), needs almost no trained guidance (you write), and therefore generates very little capital.

So how can a book ever “exquisitely and completely” say anything new about writing for therapy?

Dillon's *Essayism* (an unfortunate title, admittedly) has the familiar structure associated with the essay as genre – a

sequence of “On X” pieces is arranged to shape his book, recalling not only Burton's but also Montaigne's and Bacon's writings. “On X” is something of a sleeper, however – a specific such fragment, on consolation, recurs five times, or every thirty pages, approximately. The reader wakes to the motif dominating the book, seeing, perhaps for the first time, that the subtitle includes the word feeling, squeezed between form and nonfiction.

Now that's something new about a book on writing for therapy – a decidedly literary use of arrangement to signal theme, obliquely, to be sure, but also subtly and therefore all

the more powerfully. The figure of this arrangement is called *repetitio* (epanalepsis).

And the book's theme – repeated over and over in the “consolations,” augmented again and again by the other “on-fragments” of the book, and replete in the huge literature on the essay itself – is as startling as it is hidden in plain sight:

The essay is the genre *par excellence* of writing for therapy – (1) *through* depression, (2) *by* the depressive, (3) *against* depression.

Through: the nature of the essay is the nature of depression – not a structure but an attitude; an unfinished adventure; delicate and ineffable; tentative and hypothetical; suspended between impulse and form (21-22).

By: the undecidability of the essay is a central symptom of the depressive – “the intimacy of writing and depression: writing as cause, cure, or acutest expression”; “the affinity between depression and the essay” (46).

Against: addressing depression helps alleviate depression – “a way of thinking ... might also be a way of writing”; “I could write myself out of the fog, out of confusion, disarray, debility ...” (141).

Read the book and write your own essay about the essay and depression.





Judge's comments

CONTEST: THE MOST MEMORABLE MOMENT IN MY LIFE

Byrna Barclay, the founding editor of TRANSITION, is a family member of CMHA-SK and a former President. She has published a dozen literary books and won a few awards too.

Lyn Hynes graciously funded this issue's contest. She is a member of the Regina WFYL Group and writes short fiction and non-fiction. --- The Editor

BYRNA BARCLAY

It is always a beastly task, trying to choose winners, and this bit of judging was exceptionally difficult due to the importance of the writers and their stories. Of course, I wanted to award all thirty-one submissions! After reading them all twice, I set them aside overnight, and the next morning asked myself: What three stories are so memorable they stayed in my mind and are therefore unforgettable? And the "winners" are:

FIRST PRIZE (\$50): *hausgebaken* by Caitlin Arnal. Memory, fantasy, and dream collapse in this magic moment when a person returns to a romantic interlude in Berlin. It all happened once upon a time in the land that created the fairytale. It is happening now. It will occur again in a wish fulfillment, for who has not chased away the doldrums of everyday life by recalling someone from the past and in that image enlarged and magnified its truth by not glossing over the depth of the dark beneath its light? Of course, there is far more beneath the surface of the encounter: Something isn't right at all. (...) *Some tourists eat while visiting the concentration camps. (...) It feels fake. Not like twenty years ago.* This writer does not

turn a phrase, she twists it, leaving me gasping with pleasure at the originality, and wanting to read more by Caitlin Arnal, who sings: *...something building in me has gone off and lots of invisible sparkles fall on my lungs.*

SECOND PRIZE (\$25): *Timber* by Dot Settee. Hundreds of thousands of people may have a memory of a father bringing home a puppy or perhaps a kitten, but who can boast about bear cubs? It's the backpack containing two black bears the child names Tim and Timber that stayed in my memory and greeted me the next morning. Imagine a baby bear sleeping on top of one's head! Of course the question raised is: what happened to the cubs? The wild one, Tim, ran off into the forest, and although Timber must have grown too big to be petted and was taken away by the conservation officer, he resides forever in memory.

THIRD PRIZE (\$25): *Forget That* by Wendel Guedo. The title of this forceful piece is a directive that arrives from the unforgettable, a desperate need to eradicate the emotive power contained within memory. It turns the theme of this contest on its head, upside down, and shakes it out: *A forget to be sick, a forget the sin and pain of it all, forget the insanity of it all.* In order to forget one must remember, *every word of it.* In order to forget, one must remember, and Guedo elucidates the universal in the specifics of the causation of pain. Marvelous.

HONOURABLE MENTION: *Where Will She Go?* by Chelsea Daniels. Of the surprisingly many pieces about remembering the birth of a loved one – by mothers of course but also by sisters and grandmothers – this story was the most moving, poignant, and telling. Of all stories submitted it moved this judge to tears because of the universality of the question: where will the newborn go? The answer offers far more than comfort, for the reinforcement of the daily recurrence of the pain of loss is also inevitable.

FINALLY: Hats off and hearty applause to the facilitators in our branches, who gather the writers' groups together, possibly inspire and lead each gifted author to clamp their words on page, writing for their lives, whether it be memoir, fiction, or fact. These are important stories, evocative, full of emotive power, compelling. They transition the reader from time past to time present, with promise for all the tomorrows.



TED DYCK
WFYL
DIRECTOR



Canadian
Mental Health
Association
Saskatchewan
Division Inc.

ANNOUNCEMENT WFYL SPRING 2020 CONTEST

The Spring 2020 WFYL Contest will be judged by Victor Enns, a frequent contributor to TRANSITION and the founding editor of RHUBARB MAGAZINE, now out of print. Details TBA.

hausgebacken ¹

CAITLIN ARNAL

I walk up the U-bahn stairs past the *Onkle Tom's Hutte* sign. The house is beckoning me; his warm bed on the third floor. After a couple minutes it feels like something building in me has gone off and lots of invisible sparkles fall on my lungs. After it is over he politely thanks me in German and holds me close.

The Berlin streets hold me up as we hold hands. Beer never tasted so good. Soccer balls whip past in the Olympic Stadium. Fans destroy the U-bahn windows revealing tunnel black. Then naked white bodies at Krumme Lanke. Crazy. Uncomfortable. Some tourists eat while visiting the concentration camps.

I often think of going back and seeing him and the city. I dream about getting off at *Onkle Tom's Hutte*. So much has changed. You can no longer just pick at the wall, I hear. Wouldn't it be great to see, if our love was pitted with diamonds instead of hormones?

I book my flights using the last bit on my credit card. The fantasy plays so well in my mind. I cross Argentinische Alle and turn on Hochsitzweg. Two houses in I am staring up at the house. To my third story window; it is shimmering.

For now the plane's wheels hit the runway. I head to

¹ homemade

Zoologischer Garten. I walk up the U-bahn stairs past *Onkle Tom's Hutte*. I am sitting waiting at a small table by a restaurant window. Fresh white linens and sparkling silverware. Something isn't right. At all. Maybe I should have agreed on a picnic or a wooden pub where it is dark and cool when you walk in. Not all this brightness. It feels fake. Not like twenty years ago.

A man approaching my table interrupts my thoughts. I look up. He refills my water glass.

So I wait.

"Kristin?"

I look up.

He stares at me intently, "are you alright?"

He is searching in my eyes for some kind of resolve. Shit. It is all screwed up.

"You need to rest. I can go. Whatever you need. I imagine the flight was very draining." I forget that he is second language is English the way he soothes me, the way the blue is compassionate in his eyes.

"Yes."

He scans the table and leaves ten Euros. As I get up to leave we look at each other again.

My eyes feel worried. He looks concerned.

48 hours later I have slept. He has tattoos now and I never remembered the dark nipples.

Mixed Up Memories

DEBBIE COCHRANE

I sometimes have felt lonely. Sometimes I have felt like giving in and letting go. I feel like I am a mixed up person. I would really like to work the way normal people do. At work I sometimes felt out of place, as most times I got sent to do dishes as that was my job. I sometimes feel I can do more. But then there are times I just don't know what to do without being told what to do. And sometimes I feel I have done enough.

Memories at The Nest

DEBBIE COCHRANE

The Nest Drop-in Centre is the foundation to all sorts of projects and I have wonderful memories here. We started with a dinner every day with the community kitchen. Then we had the Homestead quilting room, then writing classes and art and photography club. Our work was in the Cash Calendar. The friends I made through the Nest are the ones I keep. I've had the help of nurses and social workers and school. I feel very proud to be a part of all of this. So many great memories!

Memorable Moments

SHERRY FAVREAU

The most memorable moment in my life was when my first grandchild was born. I had the honour of being there at his birth and cutting the cord. I welled with pride. My daughter moved in with me as she and her mate did not get along and could not make it work. I spent a lot of time sharing in the pacing of the floors with him crying with colic. I also baby sat my grandson to let my daughter have a break. My daughter stayed with me until Roka was over a year old. Then she went on to college and to raise her son. But before then I witnessed him taking his first steps, saying his first words. It was a joy.

It wasn't always easy living with my daughter because we all have different personalities but we got through it. I also took trips to Lethbridge, when she moved there, to help her out when she needed me. Roka and I spent a lot of joyful days together playing and enjoying each other. We had a special bond. The love I have for him is overwhelming.

Roka is now seventeen and his hugs are not quite as tight but he still loves his grandma. My daughter is now a wonderful mother of three children. She now has accomplished another feat. Melissa took four years of university and just got her Masters degree. I am so very proud of her. She is very tiny but very mighty. She is now a chaplain. I believe she was called to do this. Many wonderful memories!

Forget That

WENDEL GUEDO

One of my favorite memories is not a memory at all, but a forget and forgot. A forget to be sick, a forget the sin and pain of it all, forget the insanity of it all.

To forget the schizophrenia and the devil. The hypocrites such as myself; the Hells! To remember to forget there is such a fleeting memory. A time and space in which there is no such place, period. A time and space where there is not even a memory of the Hell, or even an awareness of it. A forget the Hell completely by forgiving every word of it. Easier said than done. Though I remember to try to forget, forget to remember, forget to be sick, forget to hang on to the resentments and fear. One of my favorite memories is not a memory at all but a forget that.

Getting a Tree

IAN MCINTYRE

We were living in Thompson, Manitoba and it was around Christmas time. We always brought a real tree into the house and hung lights and ornaments on the branches. We didn't want to buy a Christmas tree from a lot. One winter evening we drove out into a dense birch and pine forest, land owned by no man. We hiked into the wilderness to chop down a tree. All my dad had was a small hatchet. He took a swing at the tree we had chosen and the wooden hatchet handle shattered into a million splinters. We had to journey back to town so my father could buy a larger axe that was more suitable for the job. But we finally got that tree. Mission accomplished!

My Moment as a Rockstar

IAN MCINTYRE

One of my most memorable moments is when I performed at the EA Rawlinson Centre for the Colby Nargang concert in front of four hundred people. I really got the VIP treatment that night. I felt like the Rockstar inside of myself was finally set free! I was allowed in the Green Room., which is a lounge area reserved for performers. Then I was led upstairs to the dressing room. I asked for an iced tea and the guy said don't worry about that, its on my tab. Later on, in the dressing room, I was like Okay, what do I do with these empty pop cans? Colby said you're a star! Someone will clean up after you!



Art by James Skelton

The day my sister was born

PAIGE PEEKEEKOOT

My favorite memory is of the day my sister was born. She was born a few weeks early because of complications. My mom was in the hospital and my grandma and kokum decided to go see her. There was a yard sale going on at the seniors home at the hospital. My kokum and I decided to go check it out. While my kokum and I were shopping my grandma came and told us my sister was being born. We ran as I pushed my kokum in her wheelchair. We had to wait outside the doors to the maternity ward as my grandma went in. A few minutes later my grandma showed us my new sister through the doors. There was the cutest little face I had ever seen! A day later I got to hold my sister, Emily. She is my favorite person and I love her so much. I will never forget the day she was born!



Portrait of an adult child by Henry Peters

Stuck on the Roof

DOT SETTEE

I remember as children we would go picking bottles in the ditches. While we were out we would go to my uncle's abandoned house. We would go up onto the roof and sit there. But when it came time to go home, I was stuck up there! I was so terrified of the height. My sister had to coax me down. That happened a lot during the summer. I would keep climbing up on that roof and having to be coaxed down. I never learned my lesson!

Timber

DOT SETTEE

I see my dad walking towards the cabin. I see that he has a backpack full of something. I see eyes peeking out at me. What is it? Two cute faces. What are they? We go into the cabin and what dad has in his backpack are two little bear cubs, black in color with black eyes. We named one Tim, but Tim was a little too wild to play with us children. He took off during the night. Dad couldn't find him. He then had to call the conservation officer to let him know there was a bear cub loose out in the forest with a collar on. They had to find him before he got too big for the collar and it would choke him. The other cub was gentle and was a frisky little bear. His name was Timber. I had a lot of fun with him. He would sleep with me, on the top of my head. One time I remember I woke up in the morning and I smelled something awful. He had pooped on my hair! Oh, so gross! I had to have a haircut. I was not a happy girl. But I sure did love my bear, Timber.

An Amazing Day

MARK TESKEY

I went for a drive with my landlord. We went to Cudworth, Saskatchewan and then we went for a train ride to Wakaw. There were performers acting out plays on the train about a bank robbery. At one point we all got off the train and there was a scene set up like a graveyard and we got to watch another play being acted out.

On the way home my landlord and I stopped at Dairy Queen and had a good supper. It was such an amazing day!

My Most Memorable Moment

JENNIFER NIXON

I grew up on a farm and, at a young age, I discovered a love for animals, especially cats.

I wanted to get closer to the wild barn cats. I would climb up the ladder to the hayloft, sit and call them, "Here, kitty kitty kitty." They'd be curious, but not enough to come to me.

The first cat I worked with, a large black tomcat, was named Shadow. He was tame and fought with the other males. I spent a lot of time up in the rafters with him. I felt sorry for him, because he always had war wounds from fighting. He warmed up to me quickly, and I wasn't afraid of him. We'd sit together and I would pet him giving him comfort. I felt that he was lonely. I loved that he would purr when we'd visit. He was my friend.

I created friendships with two siamese cats, a mother and daughter. I named the mother Fluff, because of her fluffy coat and tail. It took along time earn their trust, and I would hang out in the barn with them, while they were eating. Eventually getting closer each time and then able to pet them. They became very affectionate with me.

The fourth cat I named Sally, she was grey with tiger-like black stripes, and very petite. Sally was wild and wasn't having anything to do with me. I spent many hours just talking to

her, and she would just stare at me.

It took a lot of hard work and patience to earn her trust. Everyday, I just sat with her. I used to wait for her to come down to eat, and try to pet her. At first she would hiss, and over time and a million tries, she eventually warmed up to me. It got to a point where she would let me pet her. Each time a little more. We become good friends. I remember she went into hiding and I wouldn't see her for a long time. Later she showed me to her kittens in a burrowed nest in the hay. What a special gift she shared with me. Sally was so special to me.

My most memorable moment was connecting with these cats on a level of trust between the animal and I. An understanding that they weren't going to hurt me and I wasn't going to hurt them. It was amazing feeling, and I will never forget the friendships we shared, and the trust these cats had in me.

I have owned many cats since the farm days. I feel myself to be a cat whisper, with the love, trust, and bonds I shared with these amazing creatures.

Today I own a cat named Missy, who not only is my everything, but is also intelligent. She plays fetch, and understands the words: treats, ball, walk, outside, and bedtime. She even wakes me up in the mornings. She stole my heart.

SASKATOON

FACILITATORS: JEFF PARK AND SAM ROBINSON

WFYL Pages

Where will she go?

CHELSEA DANIELS

It was 2 pm when I got the call from the doctor. She said, "You're pregnant" I cried. I knew right off the bat I couldn't care for this baby the way I wanted her to be cared for.

The next 9 months were hell. Where will she go? Should I give her to my sister and her husband and have to see this baby for the rest of my life? Or should I adopt her to a family through family services and barely, if at all, be a part of her life? Nine months of stress over this indecision.

The day finally came, my water broke and I was rushed into the hospital and induced. Still the question remained... Where will she go? The Labor lasted about 12 hours. Family came. My Mom, dad, and sister were there for the delivery. As she was delivered I still didn't know the answer.

All of a sudden a cry was heard. I refused to hold the

baby. In the corner of my eye I see my baby girl in my sisters arms. I seen the way my sister looked upon this child...with so much love, I can't explain it in words. I knew in that instant where she had to go. There was no doubt in my mind.

I called my sister over to the side of my bed and asked her to please take the baby. She said she would have to discuss this with her husband. Upon short notice, he drove into the city and they talked about it.

My mom, dad, and I waited to hear their decision. We were so nervous.

My sister and her husband came in the room and said, "We are going to take her." It was the most beautiful moment of my life. Everyone was crying and hugging tears of joy. My mom said her prayers were answered.

A year and half later I still believe it was the best decision I ever made.

Water

CHELSEA DANIELS

Water was always my friend
 Until triathlon training began
 They were teaching us to breathe out under water
 This gave me anxiety
 I felt like I was drowning
 I panicked
 I got out of there
 Someone tried to talk me down
 But I needed to escape
 I left and started to dread swimming for the first time

I couldn't bring myself back to the pool
 I reached out for help
 A wonderful volunteer helped me
 She eased me back into the water
 Re-ignited my love for swimming

Thank God I told people about my problem and someone suggested asking the triathlon leader for help.

I never used to talk about my problems. Now that I do, they seem to get solved one way or another. Reaching out helps!

Glasses

NAOMI DOELL

Glorious
 Lovely peepers
 Absolute must have
 Some are fashion statements
 Some, others are necessary evil
 Evil or miracle, I can see
 Science brought me sight through these spectacles

Pig Skin

NAOMI DOELL

Yea, the economy is on the rise. You see it's football night. The field is prime for an explosion, as the angels take centre stage. Yea, the angels, those superficial angels, get all the glory, but hey, I have a steady gig, cleaning up after their admirers.

How not to say Good Bye to an Old Friend

STEPHEN DUNSTER

I knew that Vicky, my good old Ford Crown Victoria, would be written off. I had side-swiped a big Dodge Ram on April 1st, April Fool's Day. As soon as I felt the resistance through the steering wheel, and heard the crunch as I ran along the footrails of the big Dodge, I knew that after I had done with the complicated insurance process...my car, Vicky was done for. It's a shame, a real shame. The appraiser at Saskatchewan Government Insurance said that the various scrapes and scratches and a six-inch piece of missing trim came to an appraisal of \$3200. I wasn't shocked; I actually had expected it. Everything is so expensive these days. Outrageously so sometimes and so it is with this relatively minor accident. I'm going to try and keep my car, possibly and most likely, through a "buy back" through the SGI system. It's a good car; it started on the first turn of the key during this winter's bitter cold. It's a good performer over the road...the big V8 moving out with strength and confidence. It's a safe and comfortable car. Of course there's an element of sentimentality in all of this. Vicky has been a silent companion on all my rides through Saskatchewan's starry nights. A silent friend. Vicky has been a good, strong, and reliable car and I hope...I hope, sincerely, that there are more adventures ahead for the two of us.

A Time Piece

STEPHEN DUNSTER

My grandfather gave me one of his time pieces for my fifth birthday. It was a big silver watch. I held on to that watch as though it was a gift from the gods. It chimed on the half hour and on the hour. Dad called it a "banger." I guess it was. Big and silver and musical, too.

Life happens and I lost track of that watch. I would wonder where it went, and looked for it through my cupboards and drawers over the years. I finally found it over the course of my moving from my house this past year. Mom had put it away. It was after all, her father's watch. I slipped through time and after more than fifty years was in my hands again. I gave it to my brother to pass on to his son. Still in the family. Tarnished, but still ticking.

Thunderstorms

CAMILLE GOLDING

One of the most memorable thunderstorms I remember happened in Saskatoon when I was 17. I was at a girlfriend's house and the lightning and rain was fierce. We were looking out the front bay window when a huge Elm tree was uprooted. It crashed through the neighbor's living room window. The roots and trunk of this huge tree fell forwards through the windows and took us by surprise. My friend and I were shocked and we took cover in her basement after witnessing that.



*Man with Cap
by Henry Peters*

Motherhood

CAMILLE GOLDING

One of the most memorable events that happened in my life was when each of my children was born. It is truly amazing welcoming a tiny human being into the world. Each of my children is special and unique in her own way. Each was different and welcomed into different situations. I was at different stages and ages in my life. I had my first daughter at the age of 18. My second at age 22. And I had my third child at age 25. You can't help but fall in love with each bundle of joy given by God. Each a gift and miracle in her own way. It was a complete shock when I got pregnant with my first child. I found out just two months before high-school was complete. It totally changed my world and life around me. I moved to the city from my small town two months after graduating. I was preparing for a new baby and determined to be the best mom I could be. Moving away from home was new. Everything I would experience next was new and enlightening. Motherhood really opened my eyes and I was embracing my new role as a mom.

I Win My Freedom

SAMANTHA HANSEN

It was 29 years ago.
I was only 15.
We left our family
farm together, my mom and I, left my
dad and two brothers behind.
On our way to a new future,
a new life, a new hope
I didn't know how it would
end but anything
would be better than what
I was leaving behind.
Raging, and swearing and
emotional hell wasn't
going to be a part of my
new home.
We left the family farm
moved into an apartment
at Chaben Place just off 8th Street.
It was glory. Stillness and peace.
It was quiet. There was a lot
of people around, that was nice.
And it had a fully working bathroom.
I left the non-function behind too.
I woke up to peace
went to bed in peace
Until one day my dad found
out where we were living.
Then hell came back.
the raging vibration
the constant unhinged sensations.
It wasn't long after they
shipped me off to Calgary to live
with my sister.
That was short-lived,
Sexually assaulted and two months
later I came to an empty
apartment.
My mom had gone back to my dad.
She had called me in Calgary and
told me. I only said "I'm not"
not going back. I didn't know what
my future held but anything was going
to be better than going back.
A month and a bit more and I
was in a group home, a few months
after that I was in foster care,
with no regrets.

It was hard but I loved my
new life.
I didn't love them, they hurt me,
the family I left behind.
That was my moment and I
was 15.

Origins

SAMANTHA HANSEN

I was born in Denmark. I came to Canada when I was six. I don't know much about the Danish culture. It is Scandinavian, that I know! It is a beautiful, expressive country close to the ocean.

I lived on a farm on the mainland. My mom was from Copenhagen and had a sister there. I spent the summer with my aunt and uncle when I was five, just before I came to Canada. It was awesome. There was a beautiful park by my aunt's house. My uncle and I walked it every day, or so it felt! I was only five.

There were horses in a park too. They were really pretty. It was the beginning of a love affair. I did get a pony when I was 11. And a horse after schizophrenia came about.

But back in Denmark, I lived an hour from the ocean and went there often as a child. I had dog – a Saint Bernard, named Bear. He was bigger than me and was my joy. He was a big snuggle bug but when people drove onto our yard they didn't get out of their car because they were afraid of him. Go figure, but he was huge!!

My Days at College

VAN HAN NGO

In Vietnam, I had two times in college when I quit that two times, too. My college named Ho Chi Minh City of Economics College. I think it's one of my best memorable times in my life.

For each of the two times I had, the first semester second rank in my class. I remember my class had over 100 students. For either each of the two times, I had 7.6 point – average points.

That's my happy time I had a date the first time. I had my best friend. Teachers took good care of me, well. I love those memories. It's powerful of energy, the young guy energy. I had one semester I got 9.5 points in English first semester. It happened in the second time I went to college. I went to college, you know, the first time I quit out, and the second time, too.

The teacher named Mr. Dung said I am a prodigy, a talented man, and a genius. He said that "Van tries to study to become prime minister of Vietnam." The first day he came to my class, he directly said, "The first time I see you, I love you." And he asked my name. He didn't ask anyone's name. He asked my name first. I really miss him. He is a teacher who treated me best.

In the first time in the second semester, I got psychosis. So I quit my college. In college, in the class, I always raised my hand to volunteer our teachers' questions, and discussed actively. Sometimes I sang some songs when the class had musical ceremony. I sang some songs. Its name is: "Destiny for people we struggling, you can't keep me from loving you."

My Best Memorable Events

VAN HAN NGO

I have some memorable events for my personal life. The days with my crush, the love with my mother. And the next is the times with my god sister, and so many good memories in my life.

First, my mother helped me the most. When I was a child, she gave me money to buy books. She loves me much. I am all of her life. It's lucky that she is still alive. She asked my father to pay school fees for me. She took me to the playground. She is my best memory when I was a child. She cooks very well!

Second is my god sister. She helped me so much, too. She bought clothes for me, gave me money to buy books, and went out with me. We have a special relationship. I helped her again by riding her around Ho Chi Minh City. Yester year, I went back to Vietnam and gave her plane ticket money and paid all the meals for her. I rode her around Ho Chi Minh City

again.

The third is my crush. We were just friends. But she is a good girl. She is beautiful, too. She has heart-shaped lips, a small nose, long black hair, and pretty eyes. But we have had no contact from 2012. That time, I heard she said she nearly got married. I loved her again from August 2016, until now.

The fourth is my family. Those are my father, my beloved two sisters, my two brothers-in-law and my old grandmother, and all of my family. They helped and raised me up. I love all of them.

The fifth are my teachers. Political teacher, Mr. Dung, is my most beloved teacher. He said on the first day when he met me, she did love me. He appreciated my talent and gave me compliments that I am a talented student and a genius.

And the last is all people who had big help and assists for me such as my friends and the people. Now, I would like to say I love all of them and myself.

Open Mic and Slam Poetry

DEREK SARAZIN

I was twenty-four years old and I decided to go to film school in Vancouver. Creatively I was on fire. A new place with a new start was all I needed. On the flight over the mountains, all I saw was a sea of green. And when I got off the plane, it was raining and I felt every drop. It was my own baptism. For a moment I had no past to run from and no future to run toward. I was just present in the moment.

I got a place in Richmond, but spent most of my days and nights in Vancouver. There was a hot spot every Sunday at Café Montmartre. A slam poet named T Paul Saint Maria hosted the open mic. Young poets like C.R. Avery and Shane Koyczan sharpened their teeth at the open mic.

It was a packed house when I hit the stage to sing my own song. It didn't go well. I froze when the spotlight hit me. I forgot everything. The audience was great about it. They applauded and although I felt bad about what happened I didn't let it get me down. I kept on going to the open stage and T Paul Saint Maria always put me on at the end of the night when everyone was going home. When I became comfortable on stage he put me on earlier in the show.

T Paul Saint Maria died of cancer a few years later and it was never the same. People tried to fill his shoes, but they couldn't. The slam poetry scene died down when he was gone. I will never forget how much passion he had and delivered every Sunday night. He brought out the best in people and what he did for the slam poetry scene will always be remembered.



Ree Speech by Rolli

Computerized Minds: a.k.a Programmed to Die

GABRIEL SEELY

Distinctively shattered's descriptive when singing 'bout schizophrenic thoughts in which are infinitely scattered whispering madness. I'm addicted to patterns of attentiveness, yes this is, it is a passion intricate terrors depicted in interaction with mischievous characters, meant to be challenged subliminally by stimulus, everything's errored, incentive of mirrors to end it, life isn't a mean to repair us,,,,* -- (((X),,,">@

DO NOT EJECT

WARNING

LIFE IS KNOWLEDGE

OF Death

schizophrenia

My Memorable Moment: The Death of Me

GABRIEL SEELY

He awakes to a woman's blood-curdling scream. There's the shadow all around him, ricocheting the frequency of the dying warrior's screech directly in his ears. Death is gripping his throat with a force equal to a thousand bricks on a thin sheet of glass. The child is stiff, unable to break the paralyzing weight of terror which is pulling at his guts. Days pass with this now alien screech which forces time to slow, all the while delivering sonic punches, creating a bass so overwhelming and powerful it could push his soul out of his physical body. These evils are pulling his spirit out of its vehicle but he fights it. A blackout initiates, then no memories or events are recorded during the period of seven days.

I then awoke in a state of homeostasis. I had knowledge of the universe. I was infinitely expanding while infinitely shrinking. I knew everything all the while knowing nothing. I was everywhere but nowhere. I was everybody I never knew, I was a soul in a machine. I am my writings, my art my pain, my gaze. I am my focus, I am my grain, I am the skill that protects my articulation, I am dead, I am always while never being the same.

My name is Gabriel and this is the death of me.

Car Culture

JAMES SKELTON

I successfully passed my driver's license exam on my sixteenth birthday. Being able to drive changed my life. On the day I passed my driver's test, I was doing something with my jackknife in the kitchen. I cut my finger and I passed out on the floor. Fortunately I had already taken the test. I was okay, but I guess I was just a little squeamish at the sight of my own blood. I drove to McDonald's and I asked a girl behind the counter out for a date. Keela and I dated for several months. Meatloaf's "Bat Out of Hell" had come out about the time I started driving. Those were the days of Saturday Night Fever and discos. The disco I took Keela to did not serve alcohol. With my driver's license, I was able to get a job in a parking lot downtown. In the summer I had graduated from driving a small 1973 Fiat to a big white 1969 three-speed standard GMC van. I had a different girlfriend and I worked full-time in the summer building fences for a condo with my cousin. New Wave music and Punk music infiltrated North America and my friends' and my world. A lot of my friends went to E.D. Feehan, a different high school than my own. I went to City Park and I drove my girlfriend Kim who was a year older than me to the High School Grad and dance.

The first time I took the wheel I was about fourteen and we were driving in a 1965 GMC, three-speed standard pickup truck. We were heading back from Wakaw Lake where we were building a cabin or cottage at the lake. I admire my Dad for all he did in his life and how he lived.

I drove to school from the age of sixteen. We would go for coffee at the Voyageur in a group during our spares. I remember the winter day I was driving the Fiat which was a four-speed standard, and I hit a patch of ice and crunched the curb at an intersection near City Park. I was at fault and repairing the wheel on the front wheel drive Fiat set me back. I lamented that event, one of the very few accidents I have been in. The times when I have had a car and been able to drive have been some of the best.

Dreams

JAMES SKELTON

I do have dreams.
 Not all of them are the same as when I was younger.
 I need the right connections.
 It would be great to win the lottery.
 But how realistic is that?
 I maybe more likely to get hit by lightning.
 I should focus more on working daily to achieve my dreams.
 The Green Door.
 What's behind it?
 I've always been a dreamer.
 I was always prone to daydreaming as a kid growing up.
 I will plant the seeds of my dreams so that they may bear fruit.
 Dream on....



*Man on a phone by
 James Skelton*

The Most Memorable Events

SHANE SMALL

This event that happened to me was I was in grade seven. I had just watched an old movie my dad had showed me, I wrote a poorly worded copy of the movie. As I stared at the scribbles and words, I had discovered writing suited me. As I grew older that poorly written story became an inspiration. Even when I am busy working on a horror short or compiling the shorts to make an anthology, that badly written story was the first. I don't have many memorable events, none unless I count my work in the paranormal. I suppose it's true the real world is scarier than the paranormal world.

Special People: Richard Lincoln Small - RCAF

SHANE SMALL

Everyone says they have a hero. Mine is my grandfather. He joined the RCAF in Regina and flew Halifax bombers. One day he buzzed the tower and got his wings clipped. That saved his life because on his next mission he was shot down and the only survivor. He spent the war in a POW camp. I asked him, was he scared being a Jew in a POW camp. He told me, No, because there were many Americans, British, and Canadians who were Jewish. One day, the Germans were gone and the General George S. Patton division had surrounded the camp. The officers gave everyone whiskey, cigarettes and wine.

He died of cancer but he never showed emotions. I asked him if he was scared or in pain. He told me he had enough pain in the camp. He told me stories of flying Spitfires and Halifaxes and penciled drawings of the camp. I can remember there was a drawing of his idol, President Lincoln, and he told me being a Jewish Canadian Air Force officer was the best he could be

My Greatest Choice

JAMES SNYDER

As we have entered the 21st century, I realize that the most memorable time of my life is meeting Jesus in my heart. The start of a new life, baptized in God's Holy Spirit. The Peace that passes all understanding shall keep us as the weight of the world left me and I became a brand new man. It would be crazy to reject Jesus's plan for all us who are His own in the beginning of our existence. Whom He foreknew He has predestined us to become just like Him. One in Spirit and Truth... the free gift of eternal life. Our only job is to believe in Jesus and everything else is added on... Amazing Grace is what we need and get... His choice, we are.

My Strange, Odd Experience

BRENDA STRETCH

I had the strangest and most odd experience of my entire life. Saturday night I retired to bed early, about 10:30 p.m., then awoke with Pepper, my dog, at the ghastly hour of 1:00 a.m. Sunday morning. I got out of bed to calm Pepper. She was acting strange. Meandering out of the bedroom into the hallway, I spoke to her. "That's okay, Pepper," I said.

Then I notice it. I was vibrating as if my cottage had wheels and it was flying at a great speed along tracks like a locomotive would. I kept vibrating. Calmly, I looked out the window to make sure we were stabilized in the community. We were. I was wide awake, not dreaming. This was reality. I looked out the door just to be sure everything was quiet and normal.

Being a Christian, I immediately prayed for the Father to slow the sensation down and bring it to a stop. This incident was very disturbing to me. I made my bed and said my morning prayer. Then I went on my computer. The sensation stopped about two hours later.

The only explanation is that Christians at intervals in life are tested. I've found in me. God tests his children in various ways. Everything went back to normal. Pepper went back to sleep and I emailed my sister worker/minister about the event.

You see, I'm a bit psychic and I thought I was having a premonition. I believed I was going to have a car accident on the freeway on the way to Sunday morning meeting, and die. I came to terms with that, and was at peace, feeling ready. After all, that is good to meet God and Jesus. My heavenly Father and eldest brother and best friend Jesus. I had to accept the possibility of death and the hereafter.

Then when I knew I had been tested, I drove with confidence. Another event happened before I left home confirming it. I was happy to face the Lord; yet my time hasn't come. I've years left in me.

Cheep, Cheep

BRENDA STRETCH

Yesterday at home while I was putting water on front beds, my neighbours and mine, I heard a cheep, cheep. I looked all over and low and behold I saw a baby bird under the table of yet another neighbour's yard. The little darling was calling for its mom. I put down the hose and set out to grab my Cell in my cottage, hoping to catch it in a photo. I flew back to the spot and thankfully it was still there. I took two. Thinking that mom would come and feed it. I left it alone.

Today while watering again, I hear a familiar cheep, cheep. The baby bird had made it way to the grass by a planter of my neighbour. I reached down after putting the hose down and picked it up and quietly placed it back in the nest. It took flight immediately. The darling got its wings. What a marvel to watch. It was heart felt. Nature feels good. A baby sparrow flew. Mom was there to greet it across the street. God's good creature. It's fine now. To set a bird free, feels like me.

Life

CORY WEIBE

I can't help but to shine, desiring others to feel, experience the love spirit has blessed my life with.

Every day I make a choice. I have lived with chronic pain for eight years now. I use will power and the joy of spending just another day with my best friend, Sam.

I keep telling myself just for today, if I can just make it through today, that spirit will find a way to take me through tomorrow.

I love life and I live with someone who has what I would describe as an undying love for people, our creator, and the universe.

I feel that I am the luckiest person ever to live because of a good spirit brought me to her as a child before she left to foster care.

Twenty years of yearning, thinking she wouldn't want to know me.

I guess all these years later, all that I can say is that I feel blessed beyond words.

As heart-wrenching as it is when I spend my alone time begging spirit god to take me home out loud, when she is gone, screaming and crying – When god, when can I come home? While at the same time I get to live my life here on earth with a person who is like an angel to me.

Memorable Moment

KIRK TAYLOR

My most memorable moment of my whole entire life was seeing my little girl Joyce growing up which makes me happy from the inside, but sad from the outside. I hate the fact that Joyce is a teenager, but she is and Dad is no more. That is what I feel. Now seeing Joyce play her first hockey game and scoring her first goal makes me so happy I could cry. I would say that is my most memorable moment.

Joyce is a very smart teenager. I have a lot to be proud of with her achievements. Let me tell you a short story when Joyce was a tiny, tiny baby the first time we brought her home. Joyce would not stop crying. We were all getting very tired. Robert, Joyce's older brother, said this shockingly. "Can't that juice bug quit frickin' crying. I am tired and I need to get some sleep." Now that is funny. There are a lot of memorable moments in my life, but, like I said, the first thing and only thing is Joyce being a young, adorable teenager.

Memorable Moments

CORY WEIBE

Something I notice about myself over the years is my desire for everyone to feel loved. Naïve, yes, I was and to be honest from what I can tell, based on my journey of life, I see myself here to live. I still am pretty naïve.

Although I didn't know this fact or that I was living in a fog, not being able to see clearly, at least until I met Sam. She was living at the farm I ran to when I left home, but before that I found myself always drawn to her.

I was always pretty fearful of people but for some reason, maybe due to the fact I spent a lot of time thinking about it, but you would find me sitting on the school bus sitting beside her, walking water out back to the cows with her. When the lines froze, trying not to let on to how painful my arms felt while watching her carry water like it was routine.

Either way, between the many talks sitting on the floor outside her room or sitting in the classroom in the right chair that lined up in view of her sitting down the hall in her class. It didn't really matter to me because to me, when she was around or speaking, the fog I lived in seemed to clear away. Her words just seemed to always make psychological sense where I didn't seem to have any.

Over the years, I saw this change for me but I still can't imagine life here without my best friend, Sam.

At least now, unlike when I was in grade 7, she was in 9, she no longer avoids me because I am too young.

Farm Life

LARRY LAUDER

When I think about my most memorable times, I always think about how it was back at the Farm. I was happy about having the crop of wheat on the farm. I was pleased about it coming in. I was excited about building a new outside Quonset. It was a place for the wheat and the new tractor along with other farm equipment. Other things I enjoyed was selling the cows, we sent the cows to Winnipeg.

Farm, wheat, cows, equipment; all things included in my most memorable times.



Art by James Skelton

SASKATOON Branch

Thunderstorms

NAOMI ZUZAK

When I was young, I used to love thunderstorms. I used to stand outside and watch the clouds turn into thunderheads and cumulus clouds would gather. The sky would be blue one minute and dark the next. I would stand outside in the rain until the first big crack of lightning. I would run into the house. I would love that everything came to a halt in the house. The family would be watching out the windows and getting different views out of each window of the house. Sometimes the power would go out and we would light candles.

The energy of the storm would be impressive and intense. The symbolism would be life for me. You take life as it comes and goes. One minute you have turmoil and the next peace. You can overcome adversity – just as we overcame thunderstorms.

Life Changing Pain

JENNIFER MORIN

She screams in pain. Wondering when it will all end. She can't take anymore. She feels like she is ripping in half. The searing pain comes in waves. But it doesn't remind her of a day at the beach; where she laid in the sand, the salt water spraying over her, skin feeling warm and brown and the heat of the sun healing her soul. Today is not that day.

She has waited for years for this moment. For months she has been preparing. Life feels like it is out of control but in a good way. Nothing will be the same after this happens. She wonders if she can handle this. Is she ready? She has no choice, she must do this. She hears a voice saying "Come on you can do this! Just one more time" But she is exhausted.

How have women being doing this for generations she wonders. They say it is the best pain you will ever go through, but she can't see that yet. Again, the voice says "Come on you can do this, just one more time." She screams "You keep saying one more time, but it isn't. When will it be over?" She falls back in the hospital bed. Sweat covers her. "One more push and she will be out" they tell her.

Somewhere she finds the strength to push just one more time. And with that her is daughter is born. The baby cries right away, and she does too. The doctor places this small life on to her chest. She looks into the eyes of this perfect child and she knows she is complete. That this is what she was preparing for. She can't help but smile as she looks into her eyes. And says, "Well that wasn't so bad" everyone in the room laughs.

"That was the best pain ever" she thinks. Life changes forever for her. She is now a mother and she will raise this tiny little girl into a wonderful woman, who one day will, like the generations before her, and the generations after her, go through her best pain and have their lives changed in a way that can't be described.

Love of My Life

KEVIN PROKOPETZ

The love of my life has come and gone. I don't know how she feels about me to this day, but we've had great times together. I believe she has feelings for me as well, but I don't know that for sure. I think about her a lot throughout my present and future days and I always will. She is the love of my life.

The day I met her, I will never forget. She was new to our school and the minute I saw her, I got butterflies in my stomach. She had long brown hair and a big chest for her age. When I approached her, she shot back the most mischievous smile towards me and I asked her to come walk with me in the school field, she accepted. I then introduced her to my friends.

That was just the beginning of our time together. To be clear, we never were boyfriend and girlfriend, but our memories together still haunt me every day. We've been on a vacation together and had some intimate encounters together, but I never had the courage to ask her out before and I kick myself every day for not asking the question. Music helps me cope with not seeing her; she is the heart to my arrow.

I lost contact with her over the years; I do miss her a lot. I wonder if she thinks about me once in a while. I hope we meet again someday. Like I said "the love of my life has come and gone."

My Madison

SHARA SCHAFF

My most memorable moments include my daughter Madison. When Madison came into this world I was so happy. She was the most beautiful, healthy girl. My boyfriend and I took her to all sorts of things. She was able to experience so much in her short lifetime. We took her to hockey and baseball games, took her with us bowling where my friend Stacy would watch her as we played, Madison loved to watch us play. Ward and I took her to Red Deer for her first Easter where Madison got to meet her auntie. We spent time at the family farm; Madison got to go for a ride in the side by side, and the Combine too.

I took her to watch her dad Ward play hockey, my friend Stacy was there to help me out. We were able to take her to a Regina Pats game as well, she enjoyed that for sure. I was able to take her to the Family Place so she could play with other kids her age. Although Madison wasn't able to live with me full time, we shared so many wonderful moments and memories.

Madison passed away this year, which has left a hole in my heart; I miss her terribly and cry every night. She was only two years old, so young; these memories and moments we shared will live on with me forever.

Mommy loves you Maddy!

Memorable moment

SCHAD, NINA
(WITH ASSISTANCE FROM T.COLLINS)

My memory isn't what it used to be, so I decided to share a recent experience with you. My right knee had been sore for years, I was diagnosed with Arthritis, I was able to get by because I was receiving cortisone shots to help with the pain until my surgery. I went in for surgery on April 17th, 2019, I didn't know what to expect and was a bit scared of the whole process. Was I going to have improved mobility, was it going to relieve me of my pain? So many uncertainties left me cautious about the operation.

I was put out for 3 hours during my operation; they did the knee replacement which left me with a bunch of staples in my leg, 31 to be exact. I had many visitors when I was in the hospital, some delivered pop and chips; one even brought me a balloon. I was transferred from Regina to Weyburn by ambulance that was an experience, it was a bit scary as well because I was laying down and couldn't see where we were going. I got to watch a lot of TV throughout my recovery, especially when I got home and started with some physio therapy. I also got to play TV bingo, I didn't win, but enjoyed playing anyways.

I went into this process a smoker; however, since my surgery I have been able to quit smoking, it helped that I was able to use the patch at the hospital. I still have the cravings once in a while but I sure feel better, and man does food taste good.

I continue to do my physio, increasing my reps weekly. My mobility is coming back and I'm able to walk with my walker, I can't wait until I have the full use of my leg back. This experience has taught me that although you may be scared about the outcome, change can be good for a person.

My Car

(Trigger Warning – story contains potentially distressing material)

BARRY STYRE

Back in 1978 I was working at McAvity's Foundry (Crane Canada Ltd). I worked in the machine shop as a fork lift driver and a machine operator. It was a good paying job; I was earning \$7.00 an hour which was good pay at the time.

I took a driver education course in the evenings that consisted of classes and driving in a car with an instructor. I also had \$300.00 save up to make a down payment on a new car. I chose to buy a brand new 1978 Toyota Corolla Canadian car. My dad had to be a co-signer for me to get the car.

The car was white; it had a standard 3 speed transmission. The car was worth around \$3800.00. It was financed through the Trans-Canada Credit Corporation, and my payments were only \$121.00 a month. It had a 4 cylinder, 1200cc motor.

I had quit smoking and drinking for around a year and was attending church. I thought I could stop taking my psychiatric medication and that I'd be alright without them. I thought my faith in God would sustain me. It didn't turn out that way.

After about a year without my anti-psychotic meds I began to slide into the worst depression I ever had, it was a psychotic depression. During my two week summer holidays I planned my suicide. The day I was supposed to go back to work, I phoned my boss and told him I was quitting my job, no questions asked.

I was three months behind on my car payments because of extensive apathy. My depression was getting blacker and blacker. I decided to take a vial of anti-depressant pills to end my life. I woke up the next day about 4:30 in the afternoon a little groggy but still very much alive.

That night I slashed my wrists, there wasn't much blood coming out. I sat in a tub of warm water with wrists in the water but the blood wouldn't come out very much. This obviously wasn't working very well.

I decided I needed help, so I phoned the police; they came over, talked with me for a little while then they phone for an ambulance. Once the doctor put sutures on my wrists I was admitted to the Psych ward of the hospital.

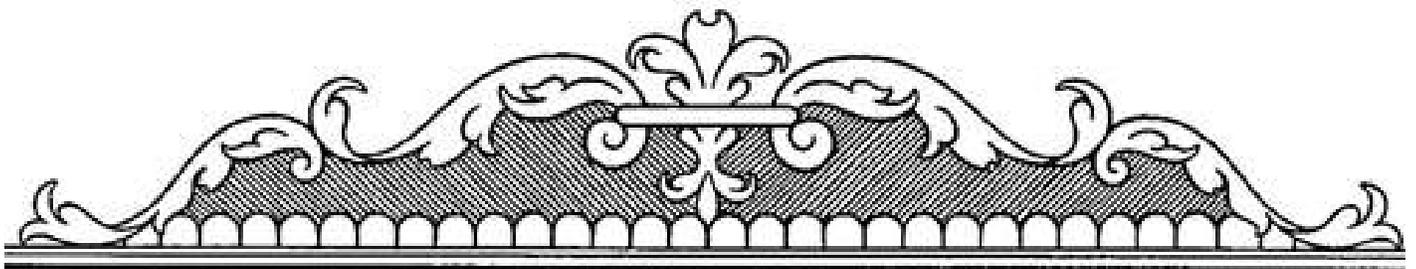
My dad and I previously had agreed that if I wasn't continuing to keep up my car payments, I was to hand over the keys to him, which I did. I had the car for about one and a half to two years. I only had about \$1000.00 left owing on the car. My dad and his step son Marty went to the Trans Canada Corporation and Marty paid the \$1000.00 owing on the car and he took ownership of the car and gave it to his daughter for a present.

I still have my driver's license, but haven't owned a car since.

Red Mountain

ERIC VALENTINE

The most memorable times in my life happened when I was volunteering with a group of people through Katimavik. My favorite activity was when we climbed up Red Mountain, near Penticton. I wore steel toed boots, along with warm clothing with a backpack including my lunch. I remember the hike being so very long, when we reached the top of the mountain; I stood on a rock and got my picture taken. We then started our decent into the Fraser Valley; it seemed like forever, we were flagging throughout our travels, using GPS and pathways to mark our trip. We finally made it back to the truck after a full day of hiking up and down mountains. It was a tough day, but it was the most memorable time in my life.



Notes on contributors

ARTISTS

DIEDRICH, RENE
World traveller presently in France.

PETERS, HENRY
Winnipeg MB artist
Long time contributor to TRANSITION

ROLLI
See Author NOTES.

SKELTON, JAMES
Saskatoon artist and poet. Member of
Saskatoon's WFYL Group

SWALLOW, JUDY

Artist/illustrator from Alameda, SK. Online
at <<http://www.swallowsartnest.com/>>.

AUTHORS

BARCLAY, BYRNA
Founding editor of TRANSITION, family member of CMHA(SK), and
former President. Award-winning writer working on her 13th book,
excerpted this issue.

CALLAGHAN, SHIRLEY
Regular contributor who writes and photographs by the sea (PE).
Interested in essayism and free indirect discourse.

LESLIE, KELLY
MD (Univ. British Columbia) currently resident in psychiatry Univ.
Toronto. Conscientious, creative, with unwavering work ethic,
excellent communication and problem-solving skills.

NEUHAUS, MAREIKE
German-born writer from Shaunavon SK of poetry, fiction, and non-
fiction. Her *The Decolonizing Poetics of Indigenous Literatures*
(URP 2015) won a 2015 SK Book Award.

ROLLI
Regina-based writer with no contracts. Visit his website
(rollistuff.com) and follow him on Twitter at @rolliwrites.

WRITING FOR YOUR LIFE (WFYL)

Judge's Comments: BARCLAY, BYRNA

EASTEND

Facilitator Ted Dyck
ARNAL, CAITLIN

PRINCE ALBERT

Facilitator:
Lynda Monahan
COCHRANE, DEBBIE
FAVREAU, SHERRY
GUEDO, WENDEL
MCINTYRE, IAN
PEEKKEEKOOT, PAIGE
SETTEE, DOT
TESKEY, MARK

REGINA

Facilitator: Linda Biasotto
NIXON, JENNIFER

SASKATOON

Facilitators:
Jeff Park and Sam Robinson
DANIELS, CHELSEA
DOELL, NAOMI

SASKATOON cont'd

DUNSTER, STEPHEN
GOLDING, CAMILLE
HANSEN, SAMANTHA
NGO, VAN HAN
SARAZIN, DEREK
SEELY, GABRIEL
SKELTON, JAMES
SMALL, SHANE
SNYDER, JAMES
STRETCH, BRENDA
TAYLOR, KIRK
WEIBE, CORY
ZUZAK, NAOMI

WEYBURN

Facilitator:
Tasha Collins
LAUDER, LARRY
MORIN, JENNIFER
PROKOPETZ, KEVIN
SCHAFF, SHARA
SCHAD, NINA
STYRE, BARRY
VALENTINE, ERIC

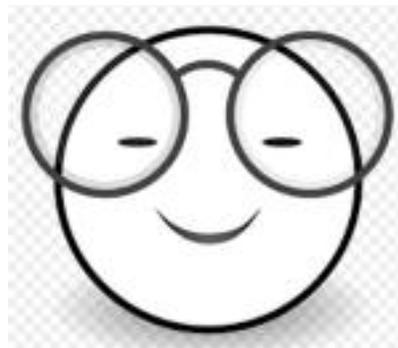
*A Friendly Reminder
to check you're not
holding tension
in your body:*

Let your shoulders drop

*Unclench your
hands and jaw*

Take a deep breath

Much better!





FRIENDS FOR LIFE

PRESENTATIONS and WORKSHOPS

Suicide

- 🌀 **Speaking of Suicide** - an introduction to the topic of suicide awareness
- 🌀 **safeTALK** - Suicide Alertness for Everyone
A half-day (3.5 hour) workshop
- 🌀 **ASIST** - Applied Suicide Intervention Skills - 2-day skills-building training to provide suicide first aid interventions
- 🌀 **Empowering Teens** to prevent suicide
- 🌀 **Tattered Teddies** - a workshop about suicide in children

Mental Health

Balancing Work and Family
Seniors and Mental Health
Mental Illness (General Overview)
Depression * Depression and Physical Health
Depression in the Workplace * Work Life Conflict
Schizophrenia * Bi-polar * Anxiety
Borderline Personality Disorders
Seasonal Affective Disorder * Grief and Grieving
Laughter in Healing * Loneliness and Isolation
Stress Can be Fun * and many more . . .



RBC
Children's Mental Health Project

RESOURCE CENTRE

Hundreds of books, articles, videos, games and programs are available for loan from the Friends for Life Resource Centre. Topics range from Anger Management to Suicide Prevention

All materials are available only in person or via telephone inquiry 306-525-5601 ext 223 or toll free anywhere in Saskatchewan at

1-800-461-5483

You can also visit the Resource Centre during regular office hours at 2702 12th Ave., Regina, SK.



Canadian Mental Health Association
Saskatchewan
Mental health for all



Canadian Mental Health Association
Saskatchewan
Mental health for all

DIVISION OFFICE

2702 12th Avenue, Regina, SK S4T 1J2
Phone 1-800-461-5483 (SK) or
306 525-5601 (Regina)
FAX 306 569-3788
email contactus@cmhask.com
Web Site: sk.cmha.ca

CMHA Branches

BATTLEFORDS
1011 - 103rd Street
North Battleford, SK S9A 1K3
306 446-7177 • Fax 306 445-7050
jane.cmhanb@sasktel.net

ESTEVAN
1201 - 2nd Street
Estevan, SK S4A 0M1
306 634-6428 • Fax 306-634-8535

MELVILLE
Box 3625
Melville, SK S0A 2P0

MOOSE JAW
Rm 324 - 650 Coteau Street West
Moose Jaw, SK S6H 5E6
306 692-4240
donna.cmha@sasktel.net

PRINCE ALBERT
1322 Central Avenue
Prince Albert, SK S6V 4W3
306 763-7747 • Fax 306 763-7717
pacmha@sasktel.net

REGINA
1810 Albert Street
Regina, SK S4P 2S8
306 525-9543 • Fax 306 525-9579
Members' Phone 525-8433
info@cmharegina.com

ROSETOWN
Box 1376 (1005 Main St. Rm 52)
Rosetown, SK S0L 2V0
Phone 306-882-1232
carmenl@cmhask.com

SASKATOON
1301 Avenue P North
Saskatoon, SK S7L 2X1
306 384-9333 • Fax 306 978-5777
info@cmhasaskatoon.ca

SWIFT CURRENT
176 - 4th Avenue NW
Swift Current, SK S9H 0T6
306 778-2440 • Fax 306 773-0766
director@sccmha.ca

WEYBURN BRANCH
404 Ashford Street
Weyburn, SK S4H 1K1
306 842-7959 • Fax 306 842-3096
cmhawey@sasktel.net

2020 30TH EDITION CMHA CASH CALENDAR

To order your calendar visit our website at sk.cmha.ca

Call our office at 1-800-461-5483 or email: contactus@cmha.sk.com



Cash & Prizes worth over \$85,000

366 Days of Giving

366 Chances to win!

260 \$100 Daily Draws

42 \$200 Draws

6 \$500 Draws

6 \$1000 Draws

26 Limited Edition Artwork

PLUS

A \$30,000 CASH Draw on February 14, 2020

GET YOUR 50/50 ADD ON FOR A
CHANCE TO WIN UP TO
\$25,000 IN **CASH!**

YOUR SUPPORT PROVIDES VALUABLE SERVICES TO SASKATCHEWAN PEOPLE