



Four Tides
Hospice
Society

Hello Four Tides Hospice Community!

I'm writing this month about three things that are important to me and that I want to share with you. Three concepts – if you will – that can strengthen our work: inclusion, asset-based community development, and effective non-profit governance.

Inclusion is a word that has infiltrated our lexicon; it is one we are all familiar with and a concept we all value. And rightly so! Inclusion is “the action or state of including or of being included within a group or structure”. Inclusiveness reflects a mature and caring society. However, in my involvement with FTHS, I'm struck by how little ‘inclusiveness’ extends to those with a life limiting illness and their loved ones within our community. I realize this is a bold statement; but please accept that this has been my experience ... it may not be others’. I think this is the result of a cultural flaw; and I know many of you will agree. Some refer to the dying and death experiences as “the last cultural taboo”.

One of the real challenges of our organization is to create a shift in the general public's thinking ... a shift that acknowledges that death is an important part of the human experience. Some would argue perhaps the most important part. From my perspective, ahead of ensuring the society can pay its bills, should be our goal of shifting the culture around dying and death from one of aversion to one of inclusion. Maybe it is my advancing age that makes this seem so important. And maybe it is my working history in the disability/inclusion sector that makes me so hopeful. Because I certainly am. Hopeful. But I know **it will take many individuals, working together, to get there.**

This takes me to the next topic: ***asset-based community development (ABCD)***. One can dive deeply into asset-based community development, but in simple terms, it is about recognizing that there is an abundance of assets in our community. Everyone, yes – everyone! has assets that a

vibrant community needs. ABCD is about finding assets and mobilizing these assets for the benefit of all. The connection to our society's and our community's vision of providing a stand-alone hospice facility will take the gifts of many individuals, working together, to achieve.

A few years ago, qathet had the good fortune to have the mastermind and co-creator of ABCD, John McKnight, work for four years here on a project to include individuals into the social fabric of our community, as institutions for people with developmental disabilities closed in BC and people were repatriated to their home communities. (Check out johnmcknight.org and be inspired!). In the new FTTHS video "[Transforming End-of-Life Care in qathet](#)", I speak about FTTHS needing the gifts of all our citizens – whether gifts of the head, hands, or heart – to achieve our goals. Back in my working years, I had first-hand experience in watching how focusing on and using assets – the 'gifts' of our community and its citizens – can actualize change. At its essence, it is about recognizing that everyone has a gift, and about asking the question 'Will you share your gift with us?'

And finally, on to *effective non-profit society governance*, or how a board of directors guide and monitor their non-profit society to achieve its goals and mandate. FTTHS is a non-profit society; and, members need to be confident that their organization is being governed well and is ready to manage the challenges that may lie ahead. Some ways of gauging good governance are: 1) do we have a solid structure and plan to implement our goals? 2) are we actualizing our mandate and achieving our goals? 3) are we adhering to the laws that regulate non-profits? These are all critically important measurements!

For our organization, I would also add: 1) are we meeting or exceeding our clients and the community's expectations? 2) are we shifting perspectives about the culture of dying and death? 3) are we inclusive? 4) are we recognizing the assets of the people and the organizations of our community and mobilizing those assets to help meet our goals? As a small society with a big mandate, I can confidently say 'yes', or 'we are on track and getting there' to all seven of those questions; and I'm proud of all of us for these accomplishments. However, we have a lot more work to do! And to get to where we need to be **will take the gifts of many individuals, working together.**

Which leads me to the point ... finally! 😊 If you are a

member or ally who joined FTTHS because you are interested in shifting our culture to recognize death as an integral aspect of life; if you are concerned that the cultural taboo around dying and death results in exclusion rather than inclusion; if ensuring FTTHS shows up as an organization critical to the health of our community is important to you; if you want to see a strong and resilient service system and an independent hospice facility in qathet – we are asking you to step up, to share your gifts. We need you. If you have any of the following abilities, please consider sharing them with FTTHS via the board of directors: ‘high level’ financial expertise, legal expertise, project oversight/monitoring, and/or community development. Contact me if you are interested; you won’t regret jumping in at this time in the society’s development ... I guarantee it!

Thank you! Wishing you all well,

Malerie Meeker, President
president@fourtideshospice.org



Update from our Executive Director

The many kindnesses of community ...

Several months ago we began renovating our office



space with the generous financial support of the Hospital Auxiliary. We wanted to create workspaces for the three of us (possibly soon to be 4) as well as a small area for meeting privately with clients and volunteers.

We also had a need for proper storage and a new conference table. We reached out to Ben Drosdovech at Powell River Forest Products to commission the table which we envisioned as a beautifully crafted live edge table that we could carry

forward to the new hospice once built. Thus began a wonderful experience of community kindness. Ben immediately offered to cover the cost of labour to build the table as he explained that he and his colleagues believed in the importance of hospice in our community.

A short time later he delivered a truly stunning live-edge table made with local douglas fir, maple and alder. When we asked him for an invoice he replied "We would like to donate the entire table if that is OK." A heart felt thank you to Ben as well as to Rhys Drosdovech who cut and trimmed the table slabs to perfection, Val Geoffray at Along the Grain Cabinetry who did an amazing job of the finishing and joinery and to Jesse Dunseith at Pinnacle Craftsmanship Inc who, along with his crew, did the final finishing and brace and leg installation. What a beautiful final product and an even more stunning expression of kindness.

Thank you to all of you as well as to all the kind folks at Hospital Auxiliary, without whom the project could not have even gotten off the ground.

Another wonderful initiative, undertaken by Sheila Peters with hospice support, is the installation of a **Telephone of the Wind**, an unconnected telephone where visitors can hold one-way conversations with deceased loved ones.

Final permission has been given to place the Telephone of the Wind in the Cranberry cemetery and the design is coalescing in collaboration with local artists. We're on track for a Memento Mori (November) installation and should soon be able to share some images.

Here is the story that goes with the image above:



"My husband passed away in June at ECU. The hospice volunteers were amazing, as was the staff. Shortly after he passed, I read the article in the Peak about the desire to have a phone installed in the cemetery. I will admit at the time I didn't understand the concept. A couple of weeks later I was camping with my family in Ontario. We took a hike to Onaping Falls, near Sudbury. During the hike on a unmarked, dead end trail we found a Telephone of the Wind. My two youngest granddaughters took the opportunity to say goodbye to their grandpa, and wish him a happy afterlife. It was an amazing and beautiful moment that I will cherish forever". -- Cynthia Demeester

Lastly, The Reformed Church of Powell River is sponsoring a **garage sale** in which **all proceeds will be donated to Four Tides Hospice Society!** Check it out for some great deals and to support our work in community. See details below:

Garage Sale

8:00 a.m. to noon

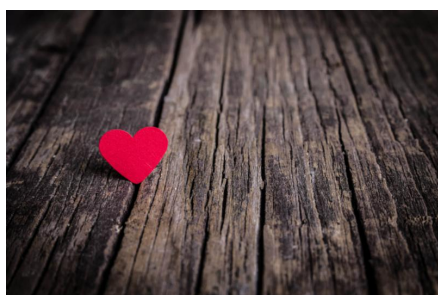
Saturday, September 7, 2024

4575 Redonda Avenue, Powell River

(Donated items from several households)

All these initiatives have arisen out of the kindness of community members. **Our organization is stronger, and our community is a more welcoming and compassionate place because of the many kindnesses of countless individuals. We are very grateful.**

Leslie Emory, Interim Executive Director
executivedirector@fourtideshospice.org



Building A Community Casket: A Family-Friendly Event

Rotary Pavilion at Willingdon Beach
Free!

Friday, Sept 20, 10–4 pm &
Saturday, Sept 21st, 10–4 pm.

Come learn about and lend a hand in oiling, sanding, and finishing a wooden casket. A finished casket will also be on display. As we work, we'll have the opportunity to chat about community deathcare, local natural burial options, and local end-of-life resources. This is a gentle way for folks of all ages to learn about the end of life. Drop by this informative and interesting event.

For more information, email csdqathet@gmail.com.

Sponsored by Community-Supported Dying qathet and qathet ART Council

Did you know that August 31st is International Overdose Awareness Day?

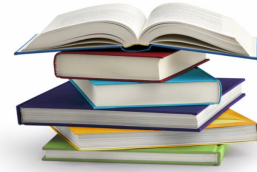
This important day is the world's largest annual campaign to end overdose, remember without stigma those who have died and acknowledge the grief of family and friends left behind.



Click [here for more information.](#)

Interested in other Community
Learning Opportunities related to death
and dying?

Check out this [info page!](#)



Connect With Us!
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