

connections

Volume 5, Issue 2

February 2021

MESSAGE FROM THE CEO



Eric Stutzman



Family skating on the Assiniboine River in Winnipeg

The new year has begun. 2020 was hard in so many ways, and 2021 will certainly have its challenges, but I want to begin the year by listing what I am grateful for. It helps me feel grounded and prepare to meet each day. As you read, consider what you are grateful for.

I'm grateful for the love of family and friends, for my home which is warm and safe, for my work which is meaningful, and for the animal and plant life that surrounds us and makes life possible.

I'm grateful for you, the trainers and staff at CTRI and ACHIEVE. I'm grateful for your dedication and perseverance through a very thin time this past year. Although we are still in a changing environment, the training work is picking up again and so is our work at the office.

I'm grateful for your understanding and words of encouragement. Early in the pandemic, we cancelled events, moved our work online, had our directors train more, and reduced the hours of some of our staff. Even though it was hard, you understood and encouraged us. That meant we were able to conserve resources and keep our core staff engaged and working. Now our core staff are back to working at full capacity, and we have just hired a graphic designer to join our marketing team.

I'm grateful for creativity and innovation in the face of pressures and a quickly changing training landscape. Many of us never imagined training from home or working at a table in some nook in our home day after day. Yet we have done so, and our clients have been so appreciative that they can still access high quality training and consulting while staying safe.

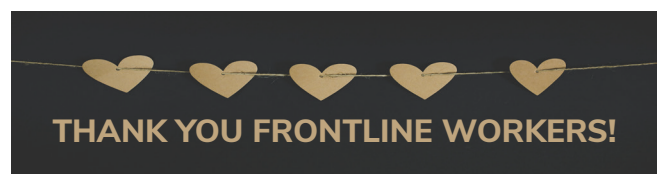
As I consider the year ahead, I see a lot of promise. We cannot know for sure how the pandemic will unfold as vaccines start rolling out, but we are on solid footing as an organization. You, our staff and our trainers, are committed and engaged, our finances are solid, and our loyal clients continue to support us. In December, John Koop Harder taught our largest public virtual workshop ever with over 220 participants. I believe that online training will be here to stay in some form because people like it and because it makes learning accessible for people outside of large urban centres. But organizations are also hungry for a return to on-location and in-person training for their teams. The future holds both.

What are you grateful for?

At CTRI we envision a world where everyone is trauma-informed; and at ACHIEVE a world where everyone can like where they work. These visions continue to hold power and promise. Together we make a difference. Thank you for being a part of this incredible team.

Please reach out and connect as you have time.

All the best,
Eric



NEW WORKSHOPS

Leading Teams Remotely - Wendy Loewen

One rewarding aspect of my work is when a client comes to me and says, "I know you don't offer training in this area, but could you help us out?" These requests are typically a result of a relationship of trust that has been built over time. This fall, one of our clients approached me and asked if we could provide support to their managers. They were trying to figure out how to lead their teams remotely. We worked collaboratively with them to create a custom webinar. Their request sparked the creation of an entirely new workshop called **Leading Teams Remotely**. The content was well received by the original client who requested our help and by the many participants who have taken the workshop. It is affirming and exciting to see that our resources are making a difference and helping to create workplaces where people like to work.



Trauma-Informed Leadership - Nathan Gerbrandt

Within CTRI and ACHIEVE, there are several workshops that uniquely span the content focus of our two divisions. We call these "shared" topics and our newest half-day workshop, Trauma-Informed Leadership, does precisely this. It explores both the troubling reality that trauma is prevalent in our world and the important role leadership has to use compassion to create healthy workplace cultures. This workshop outlines how to lead with a trauma-informed approach and provides key insights for increasing psychological safety and creating greater resilience for all parts of an organization. Our goal with this workshop is to inspire participants to lead with compassion and provide compelling rationale for why all leaders should be trauma-informed. It's exciting for us that it's received a tremendously positive response as it directly promotes our vision of a "world where everyone is Trauma-Informed." Nearly 200 people registered for the first live virtual delivery in November!



NEW CONTENT COMING SOON

There are always projects on the go in the area of content development. I'm particularly excited about several new creations that are coming soon in 2021:

Body-Oriented Trauma Counselling Strategies

Galya Chatterton (CTRI Trainer, BC) is almost finished development of a new two-day workshop that will serve as an advanced training to our foundational **Trauma – Strategies for Resolving the Impact of Post-Traumatic**



Stress workshop. This is a first for us to develop an advanced training that will allow more in-depth exploration of this important topic.

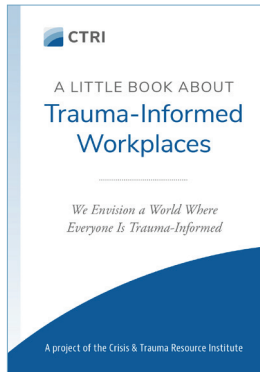
Spirit-Guide Teachers

Louise McKay (Elder, MB) has been working very hard for several months on this heart project. It's been so exciting to work with Louise as she found her way to put some oral teachings into a video format using her own voice, carefully chosen images, and collaborating with others to include an Honour song and videography. It is such a gift for her to generously share these essential life teachings, and I'm excited to see what she'll do next! [Look for this project in the Free Resources section of the CTRI website.](#)



ACHIEVE Publishing Update - Randy Grieser

Our previous newsletter highlighted the release of *Counselling in Relationships* (January 11, 2021) and *Once a Wizard* (February 22, 2021); Close behind these two releases will be *A Little Book About Trauma-Informed Workplaces* in March 2021.



This book is about twice the size of our ACHIEVE “Little Book” and is original content written by Nathan, Vicki, and me. The material of this book serves as the foundation of our new **Trauma-Informed Leadership** workshop and our updated **Trauma-Informed Care** workshop. The goal of this book is to make it widely available – when possible, for free. So once we get back to in-person training, this will be a very common giveaway to workshop participants.

Two additional books in the works are:

Counselling Workbook (We don't have a firm title yet). This is a book being edited by Wilma Schroder (CTRI Trainer, MB) and is a compilation of all our various resources, exercises, tools, and handouts from CTRI manuals. This is being designed as a resource for counsellors to use with clients. The anticipated release date of this book is September 2021.

Leadership Development (We don't have a firm title yet). This is a book Eric, Wendy, and I are working on that is made up of 52 unique insights related to leadership. Yes, 52 is an intentional number as it makes for a nice yearly study guide for leadership teams. The anticipated release date for this book is January 2022.

We do have a few more books in the “idea factory,” but they will be revealed in our next newsletter once the ideas and plans for them become more crystalized.



Public Health Lessons for a Trauma-Informed Future

Nathan Gerbrandt,
Managing Director of CTRI

Our CTRI vision of “a future where everyone is trauma-informed” may seem pie in the sky to some, but I believe there are public health lessons in this past year for us. Living under a pandemic has caused us all to recalibrate and adopt a public health approach to our thinking and interactions. This has not meant that we need to become infectious disease specialists, but through basic awareness of viral spread, we have learned the simple steps of respecting collective health and how our small individual actions have wide-scale consequences. We wash our hands, we wear masks, and we physically distance so as not to cause harm to those most vulnerable. I believe it's this same kind of a public health approach that we need as we respond to the ripple effects trauma can have on individuals and communities. We do not need to become trauma specialists or assume that everyone has a debilitating history of trauma. It is about being aware and acting on the possibility of its impacts on another. This means we bring an approach of compassion to behaviours we don't understand. We respect and prioritize safety, another's freedom of choice, and look first to each other's strengths. Through small individual and collective actions based on these principles, we will bring about a trauma-informed future!



Reflections on 2020

Wendy Loewen,
Managing Director of ACHIEVE

We have used many adjectives to describe this past year: unprecedented, challenging, and strange to name a few. Whatever word we choose, however, doesn't fully describe 2020. When I reflect back on the past year, I realize how many aspects of my life look radically different. Last year my husband and I were empty nesters (the happy kind), and now our 19-year-old son studies at home and eats every meal together with us. We celebrated the holidays as a family via Zoom. I can hardly wait for the pandemic to be over, but as I look back over 2020, I am still grateful for many things, especially the good people that surround me, even if many are physically further away. Even with the strangeness and challenges that this year has brought, I hope you too find something to be thankful for as you reflect on 2020.



A mouse reflecting on 2020

FOUNDER'S CORNER



Since our formal leadership transition in June 2020, I have been intentionally less active in many of the day-to-day operational matters of running CTRI and ACHIEVE. This has allowed me to really put focused energy to two areas: speaking and ACHIEVE Publishing. Both areas have really benefited from my ability to put more focused attention towards them. I now have six different keynote/workshop topics that are distinct and very well prepared. As a result, I'm also doing more speaking than I had been, which included several virtual keynote addresses this fall. ACHIEVE Publishing continues to be a fun "hobby/project" that has actually turned into a more significant division of our organization. Our goal for 2021 is to reach 10 titles. This will turn us (in many eyes) into a "real" publisher, and because of our size it will indeed open up additional opportunities for book distribution. One of my core mottos has always been "What's Next?" Stay tuned! I'm sure there is something new coming in 2021.

MEET TWO OF OUR TRAINERS



Alana Abramson

British Columbia

In addition to working with CTRI and teaching, Alana is also a restorative justice consultant. A vegan who loves to cook, she dreams of communicating with her cats so that they might all live in peace. Alana is embarking on a sabbatical this year and plans to get some writing done.

What do you do beyond training with CTRI/ACHIEVE?

I am a criminology instructor and researcher with Kwantlen Polytechnic University in Surrey, BC. I am also a restorative justice consultant and trainer. My most recent project involves working with a team at the Department of National Defense to develop and implement training for restorative justice practitioners who will be working with survivors of sexualized violence.

What is your favorite CTRI/ACHIEVE workshop to deliver and why?

I love to deliver the three-day Restorative Justice workshop as we are able to build relationships and learn together in a deep way due to the multiple days.

How many years have you trained with CTRI/ACHIEVE?

Seven years

What is one of your hobbies/what do you do for fun?

I love exploring different recipes and cooking for either myself or others. I have been vegan for 20 years, and I love to surprise people with delicious plant-based meals.

If you could have coffee, chocolate, or alcohol, which would it be and why?

I adore red wine and love exploring new wines on wine tours in BC and beyond. Although I plan to give up drinks for all of January, that first glass of merlot in February will be divine.



If you could wake up tomorrow having gained one quality or ability, what would it be?

I would like to be able to communicate with my four cats. There have been some recent disagreements among them, and I would like to facilitate healing and relationship building so we can all live in peace.

Is there something you still hope to accomplish?

During my year of sabbatical in 2021, I hope to publish at least one article in a peer-reviewed journal that will include some of what was captured by my doctoral research on the topic of restorative justice and tertiary education. I hope this will assist others who are interested in advancing trauma-informed, culturally responsive restorative justice initiatives in colleges and universities.



Marnie Stickley

British Columbia

While Marnie works as a trainer with CTRI, she is also an outreach counsellor in Vancouver, working in partnership with the police department. She loves the great outdoors, and has many hobbies. One day she dreams of a cycling trip in Japan.

What do you do beyond training with CTRI/ACHIEVE?

I work as an outreach counsellor for Family Services of Greater Vancouver, in partnership with the Vancouver Police Department. I have a detective partner and we follow up on high-risk cases of intimate partner violence in older adults and violence perpetrated by adult children toward their parent/parents. I provide counselling to the person who has been victimized as well as some supports/resources to the alleged offender.

What is your favorite CTRI/ACHIEVE workshop to deliver and why?

I love many of the workshops, but trauma-based material is my favorite to work with. It's more that I love the on-location trainings tailored to a certain audience with the opportunity to really work collaboratively with the group.

How many years have you trained with CTRI/ACHIEVE?

Geez, I'm not sure! Maybe five or six years?

What is one of your hobbies/what do you do for fun?

I don't have any hobbies that I'm REALLY good at! I have a lot of hobbies that I dabble in. I love being outdoors – playing soccer, kayaking, hiking, gardening (really dabbling here...not living off the fruits of my backyard or anything!). I also try my hand at making all sorts of things – knitting, sewing, and embroidery.

What is your favourite book?

Given that I can barely remember what I've read if it's more than 1 month ago, I can only give you my favorite book this year: A Prayer for Owen Meany by John Irving. It was the first book I've read of his, and to be honest I wasn't sure I would enjoy it. I loved it! Fantastic.

What does your dream vacation look like?

It's definitely a toss-up between a long kayaking trip on the West Coast or a cycling trip. At the moment, I am fantasizing about taking a month-long cycling trip in Japan.



MEET TWO OF OUR STAFF



Louise McKay

Traditional Elder

Louise is a valued addition to the CTRI/ACHIEVE team, and is always willing to listen. When not working, she is also busy providing support to families, friends and communities. One day, though, when she catches her breath, you may find her sharing a basket of oranges, and making everyone around her laugh.

What do you do beyond training with CTRI/ACHIEVE?

In a professional capacity, I also work as an Elder for the Women's Health Clinic which is a feminist, non-profit community health clinic that offers client-centred support through services and education. In a personal capacity, I'm kept quite busy providing mental, emotional, physical, and spiritual support and Elder services such as teachings and Ceremonies to many family members, friends, and communities. Throughout each year, I attend and participate in local and national Indigenous Spiritual Ceremonies.

What is your favorite CTRI/ACHIEVE workshop to deliver and why?

I haven't delivered one workshop yet! I have a few scheduled for February and March.

How many years have you trained with CTRI/ACHIEVE?

I joined CTRI/ACHIEVE less than a year ago, however I met Randy and Heidi when they first started their business many years ago and just got reconnected with them once I joined the company.

If you could have coffee, chocolate, or alcohol, which would it be and why?

My choice would be chocolate because it tastes wonderful while, at the same time, it releases feel-good chemicals in our brains no matter how it's used. That's what we call a win-win situation!

Given the choice of anyone in the world, who would you want as a dinner guest and why?

My choice would be a popular youth actor/entertainer that spreads positive messages to young people about drugs and alcohol as this would also give me the opportunity to invite many other young people to come and join us for dinner and hear a positive message in a relaxed, nonthreatening, low pressure atmosphere.

If you could wake up tomorrow having gained one quality or ability, what would it be?

To be funny and make people laugh more.

Is there something you still hope to accomplish?

Just to make sure I accomplished many of my dreams in life, I created my own bucket list many years ago. As of today, there are only two things on that list I have left to achieve:

- To pick a fresh orange from a tree, peel, and eat it immediately – in my imagination that would be like eating pure sunshine.
- To visit with the Aborigines and Maori people of Australia and New Zealand – make friends with them, enjoy their company, live among them for a while, participate in their Ceremonies, and learn their cultures.



Cindy Rublee

Director of Internal Operations

Cindy has worked in many different areas at CTRI/ACHIEVE over the past years, and loves working on projects with her colleagues. One day, she would like to find herself on a train to anywhere, with a watercolour brush in one hand and a glass of wine in the other.

How long have you worked at CTRI/ACHIEVE?

Eleven years.

What is your favorite part of working at CTRI/ACHIEVE?

I'd have to say the people I work with!

What is one of your hobbies/what do you do for fun?

My first profession was working as a props builder in theatre, and I am happiest when I'm being creative. Arthritis in my hands has made it difficult to do many of the things I used to do, but a few years ago I starting to do watercolour and it's the perfect creative outlet for me. Here's a watercolour of Willie Nelson I did recently for my brother.



If you could have coffee, chocolate, or alcohol, which would it be and why?

That seems cruel to have to choose. I'd likely choose wine unless you asked me in the morning. Coffee and chocolate go so well I can't separate them.

Given the choice of anyone in the world, who would you want as a dinner guest and why?

Oliver Sacks. I love his books, in particular *The Man Who Mistook His Wife for a Hat*. Based on his writings, I can't imagine a more interesting person to have dinner with!

What does your dream vacation look like?

Anything involving trains, good food, and wine.

