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DOWNTOWN EASTSIDE WOMEN DO DROP IN

The Newsletter for the Downtown Eastside Women's Centre

February 2001

FREE



INSIDE:

What is Syphilis? Meshell, the outreach worker, takes a look...

February 14th Memorial March- a brief history.

Multiculturalism Awareness Week- A Speaker's Series, Feb 12-16th.

Thursday Outings: Beyond Brackendale! Join Us Women!

Monthly General Meeting: February 8th, 2:30pm: A chance to offer your voice, with volunteers and staff, about the day to day stuff of the Centre!

Black History Month- Honouring our Sisters and Grandmothers.

Important information from the outreach worker, Meshell

There has been an alarming increase in reported cases of Syphilis in the community.

What causes Syphilis? Syphilis is a sexually transmitted disease caused by bacteria called *Treponema pallidum*.

How do you get it? Syphilis is transmitted by:

- It is passed from person to person directly touching syphilis sore. Sores mainly occur on the external genitals, vagina, and anus. They also occur on the lips and in the mouth.
- Sexual intercourse
- By kissing
- Anal sex
- Through sharing needles with an infected intravenous drug user

What happens to me if I get this?

There are 3 stages that the infection goes through:

1. Primary stage (which occurs 10 days-6 weeks after exposure)

- One painless sore usually appears at the area of the original infection (usually the groin).
- Later, other similar sores may appear on cervix, penis, rectum, tongue, mouth, lips, fingers, and eyelids.
- This stage is highly contagious and often goes unnoticed.

2. Secondary stage (1 week-6 months after the primary stage)

- Skin rash on any area of the body, especially on the hands and soles of the feet.
- Mouth sores
- Fever and headache
- Soreness and aching of the bones and joints

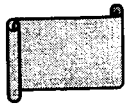
3. Tertiary Stage (3-25 years after the infection)

Some of the long-term effects are:

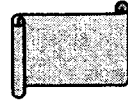
- Infection has spread through the entire body and is often very serious.
- Huge eruptions cover the entire body from face to feet
- Hair loss
- Gradual blindness
- And eventually death

If you notice any of these symptoms or think you might be at risk, ask the street Nurses, clinics or your doctor for a syphilis test.

Although serious, if detected early syphilis can be completely cured.



Community Announcements



The National Network for Mental Health is now offering a "Self-Employ Project" for consumers wishing to create self-employment. Phone 707-9005 for more information.

Drop-In Meeting Tuesday and Wednesday: 1:30-2:30pm and Thursday 10-11am

Where: #201-532 E. Broadway (side entrance)

NEW GROUP AT DAMS

Donna the outreach worker at DAMS (167 W. Pender) is beginning a new group entitled "Anger and Art", beginning Monday, February 5th. This group will run for 8 weeks, each workshop lasting three hours (12:30-3:30). For more information, please contact Donna at DAMS, or speak with one of the advocates at the Downtown Eastside Women's Centre.

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STAT NEWS

LUCY: Lucy joined the Women's Centre team as a Relief Worker in late December! She is of the Stol:0/Thompson Nation. She has worked 15 years as a short-order cook and 14 years as a house supervisor in a men's half-way house. She has four daughters, seven grandsons and a granddaughter who was born on International Women's Day! Her hobbies include beading, making dreamcatchers and going to Bingo!

CORI: Cori has been working as a Relief Staff for a couple of months, but she is now covering Marg's advocacy position until Marg returns. You can talk to Cori about almost anything, from housing, disability benefits, and welfare. You can find her in Office C Mondays-Thursdays!

Meshell: Meshell, the outreach worker is on vacation from January 24th to February 26th. Unfortunately Meshell is leaving the Women's Centre in early March to pursue other opportunities. She will be at the Women's Centre for one week upon her return to tie things up. We will miss her tremendously and wish her the best of luck in her new adventures!

February 14th Memorial March

**TO HONOUR THE WOMEN WHO HAVE BEEN MURDERED AND
MISSING IN THE DOWNTOWN EASTSIDE**

**Wednesday, February 14th, at 12:00pm
Carnegie Community Centre**

Join the Downtown Eastside Community for the 10th Annual Women's Memorial March. This event is organized by women and led by women because women, especially Aboriginal women, face physical, mental, emotional and spiritual violence on a daily basis. We ask that the community join us in the spirit of the march. We also ask that men share their grief and show their solidarity by helping out at the event and walking at the back of the march.

**ASSEMBLE AT CARNEGIE COMMUNITY CENTRE
OPENING AND SPEAKERS AT 12 NOON**

CIRCLE AT MAIN AND HASTINGS AT 1:00PM

**FEAST AT THE JAPANESE LANGUAGE SCHOOL, at 475
Alexander Street at 3:00pm. Drumming, Dancing, and Singing.**

History of the February 14th Memorial March

For the past ten years we have been gathering on this day to remember our sisters, mothers, partners, daughters, nieces, aunties, granddaughters, cousins, grandmothers and friends who have been taken from us through acts of violence. Over ten years ago Cheryl Anne Joe's body was found severed and left in different locations in the Downtown Eastside. Her family organized a cleansing ceremony to celebrate her life and to prepare her journey to her ancestors. Ten years later violence is still a reality for all women in the Downtown Eastside.

Please join individuals from the community who are interested in making arrangements for the March. We are committed to continue the tradition that was started by the Joe family. Since 1991 there have been changes to the march but the fundamental value of remembering the women who have gone before us remain close to our hearts.

The principles of the march were agreed to be (by those who met on Wednesday, January 17, 2001:

Focus on the Downtown Eastside
Cleansing and Memorial
Women to take roles of leadership
4 directions, lead by First Nations Elder
Men are our allies and we work in collaboration
Transforming grief to action- supporting all forms of action

**** NEW GROUP ****

STILL MOVEMENT:

For Women Survivors of Violence

Thursdays, 2-4:30pm: closed 10 week session

**Bodyhistories/Bodystories: Connecting
Individual and Community Resistance and
Healing**

Introduction:

Denise Nadeau and Alannah Earl Young have developed a course that combines Somatic Expressive Arts Therapies with indigenous and ecofeminist spiritualities. In the course participants recover the Sacred in their individual and collective stories of resistance and resilience. In building up a sense of a sacred self connected to community and to the earth this course reframes the trauma of violence redefining in not as the individualized experience of a "patient" or "victim" but as a form of social suffering.

Objectives of Body Histories/Body Stories:

- Accept and develop compassion for the body and its sacredness
- Foster the integration of body/spirit
- Learn tools to expand sensory awareness
- Recover sacred moments of grace, resistance, and resilience in individual and community body stories.
- Explore individual and collective strengths

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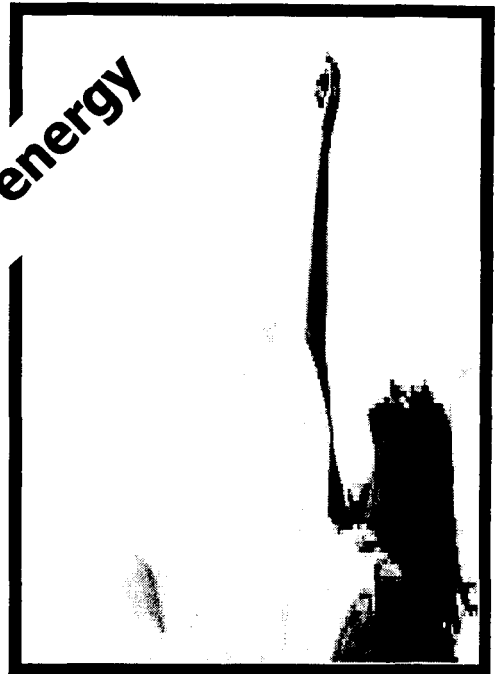
Program Content and Themes:

We use movement dance, voice, drawing, breath work, ritual and ceremony, and group sharing. Possible themes we may cover are:

Safety and Boundaries, Remembering Our Foremothers, Breath, Compassion, Body Image, Giftedness, Body History/Community History/Earth History

Interested participants can speak to either Carol or Reta. Potential participants will be interviewed before the start of the group to ensure that they will benefit from the group.

Reach inward for your energy



DOWNTOWN EASTSIDE WOMEN'S CENTRE

44 East Cordova Street, Vancouver, B.C. V6A 1K2

Front Desk: 681 - 8480 Women's Line: 681-7458

**LUNCH SERVED
DAILY AT 12:30**

REGULAR PROGRAMMING

FEBRUARY 2001

Learning Group - Every Monday, doors close at 5:15. Exploring different ways of Learning with elder, Bernice Hammersmith.

Battered Women Support Services will resume on Tuesday nights from 5 - 8:30 in March. This group offers support for women affected by violence in their lives.

The **Street Nurse** is here every Wednesday from 10:30 - 12:00 to give you information on all kinds of health issues.

Popular Education Group - Wednesday from 5:00 - 8:00, Share the skills that you have to make changes in your life. Meet with like-minded women to organize events.

Women's Voice - Every Thursday, 1:30. Let us know what you think about the Centre. Your opinions and ideas are needed.

Women Surviving Together - Every Thursday, 5 pm. Healing Circle and support group for women. Facilitated by elder Reta Blind and Stopping the Violence Counselor, Carol Martin.

Creative Writing Group - Every Tuesday, 6 pm. Metis performer & playwright, Marie Clements, offers her talents to women interested in creative writing. She will meet women at the Centre at 5:50 pm and walk over to Firehall Arts Centre (280 East Cordova) for the group.

Support Gathering for Women who are HIV+/AIDS - This group is now officially cancelled. Please see information in the newsletter with regards to Donna's upcoming Monday workshops (12:30-3:30pm) on Anger and Art which will take place at DAMS (167 W. Pender), beginning February 5th.

ARTS & CRAFTS WORKSHOPS: Materials provided.

Beading with Leona - Every Monday, 1:30 pm. Learn how to bead, expand your skills or just share ideas.

Fabric Arts with Freeda - Every Friday morning, 10:30. Learn to do your own sewing and alterations and also to knit and crochet.

Dreamcatchers with Beverly and her friend, every Thursday at 1:30. Expand your skills and share stories with other women.

SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
CENTRE HOURS Sun. 12-5 Mon. 10-5 Tues. 11-5				1 1:30 Women's Voice 2:00 Dreamcatchers 5:00 Healing Circle	2 10:30 Sewing etc.	3 2:00 Video
4	5 1:30 Beading 5:00 Learning Group	6 5:50 Creative Writing Group (Firehall Arts Centre, 280 E. Cordova)	7 10:30 Street Nurse 5:00 Popular Education	8 1:30 Women's Voice 2:30 Monthly General Meeting 5:00 Healing Circle	9 10:30 Sewing etc.	10 2:00 Video
11 Multicultural Week (11-17)	12 1:30 Beading 3:00 Speaker Series 5:00 Learning Group	13 3:00 Speaker Series 5:50 Creative Writing Group	14 10:30 Street Nurse 12:00 Memorial March 5:00 Pop. Ed.	15 1:30 Women's Voice 2:00 Dreamcatchers 3:00 Speaker Series 5:00 Healing Circle	16 10:30 Sewing etc 3:00 Speaker Series	17 2:00 Video
18	19 1:30 Beading 5:00 Learning Group	20 5:50 Creative Writing Group	21 Cheque Day 10:30 Street Nurse 5:00 Popular Education	22 Centre Closed for All-Day Staff Meeting	23 10:30 Sewing, etc.	24 2:00 Video
25	26 1:30 Beading 5:00 Learning Group	27 5:50 Creative Writing Group	28 10:30 Street Nurse 5:00 Popular Education	Outings now take place on Thursday afternoons. Look for sign up sheets on the Outing Board near the Chalkboard!		



NEWS From the Centre!

BUS TICKET POLICY

There have been many women asking for bus tickets. Women must understand that the Women's Centre has a limited budget and therefore we cannot provide everyone with a bus ticket for every situation. We give out tickets for **MEDICAL EMERGENCIES ONLY**. In this case, please see Marcella, the administrator. The Centre does not include medical appointments, job interviews, or MHR office visits. If you need transportation coverage, contact your financial aid worker and then it is up to the Ministry to provide your transportation. Thanks!

BOARD OF DIRECTORS NEWS

There is a call to all Women's Voice members: The Board of Directors is looking for a woman to represent Women's Voice at the monthly Board meetings. If you are interested please see Lauren in Office G. The next Board Meetings are: February 28th, March 14th, April 18th, May 16th.

Dinner starts at 5:30pm,
meeting begins at 6pm.

FEBRUARY- a quote to ponder

Excerpt from "Simple Abundance":

February arrives cold, wet and gray, her gifts disguised for only the most discerning spirits to see. Gentle is our path. Gratitude is the thread we weave into the fabric of our daily lives this month, giving thanks for our simply abundant lives and asking for the gift of one thing more: grateful hearts.

-Sara Ban Breathnach

What am I grateful for?

Outings rock our world!



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FEBRUARY OUTINGS

THURSDAYS....

February 1st: Swimming- bring your swimsuit!

February 8th: Tobogganing at Cypress Bowl

February 15th: Richmond Buddhist Temple

February 23d (note a Friday!): Bowen Island Picnic!

**SIGN UP FOR AN OUTING...IT WILL
MAKE A WILD WOMAN OUT OF YOU!**

See the outing board for sign up sheets, or drop by
Office E and offer Jennifer your ideas!



POLITICAL EVENTS AT THE CENTRE

Multicultural Awareness Week

February 11-17th

Check out the Multiculturalism Speaker's Series at the Women's Centre. Everyday at 3pm, Monday-Friday (except Wednesday, Feb. 14th).

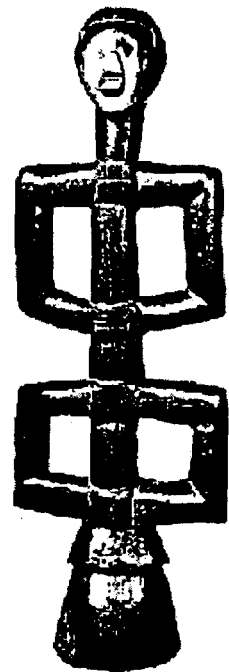
Refreshments provided! Come and chat with women about their cultural experiences. Invited speakers will talk about their experiences with Islam, the Philipina domestic workers and more!

It's not just

Black History Month

Celebrate Black History Month. Learn about African-Canadian heritage with a special talk later in the month. Also join the Centre for a documentary film about a special part of Halifax, an African-Canadian community that was Destroyed by the city in 1975. Dates and details to be announced!

for history majors.



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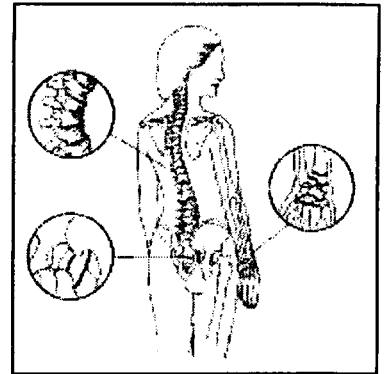
Nutrition Notes

A new monthly column

Osteoporosis: Porous bone.

What is it? Osteoporosis is a disease in which bones become weak and are more likely to break or fracture. The most common places for such breaks are in the hip, spine, and wrist. See picture below!

Osteoporosis is often known as the "silent disease" because bone loss occurs without symptoms.



Why should we women be concerned? Women are four times more likely than men to develop the disease. It is often thought that only older people develop it, but the disease can develop at any age! However, with menopause, and therefore a reduction in our levels of the hormone estrogen, bone loss is a natural process.

How do I prevent it? A combination of efforts is best. Eating a balanced diet rich in Calcium and vitamin D. Exercising regularly is also very important. Avoiding smoking and excessive alcohol, in addition to bone density testing helps reduce the likelihood of acquiring the disease. It is important to know that bone is not a lifeless structure. It is a complex living tissue, giving vital support to our muscles and organs.

Speaking with your doctor about osteoporosis will help you better understand your risk for developing the disease, as well as preventative steps, and treatment options. **Thanks to the National Osteoporosis Foundation for the information. www.nof.org/osteoporosis. Note this article is not a definitive guide for diagnosis or treatment. Please see your doctor.



Where's the eagles?

NA, NA, NA, NA, NA!!

Joanne, look up, look up!!

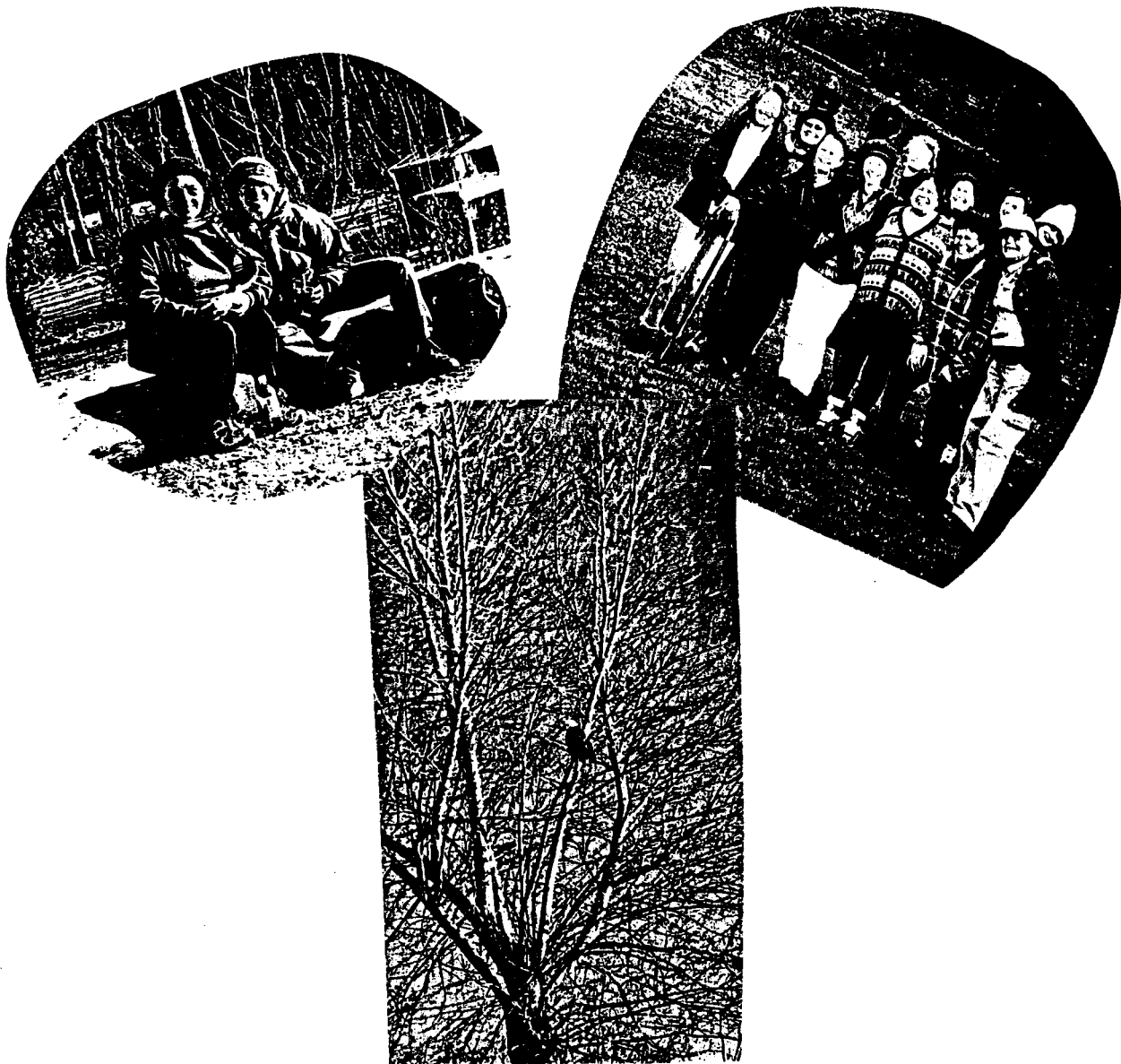
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**BRACKENDALE, '01
OH YES WE SAW THE EAGLES!!**

Monthly General Meeting

Join us for the first *Monthly General Meeting*, where members, volunteers, and staff have a chance to discuss the day-to-day details of the Women's Centre. The goal is to collectively make positive changes for everybody at the Women's Centre by addressing the concerns of all women. In order to enable staff to join, the Centre will stop all services on February 8th, at 2:30 pm. We hope all can make it! Come and let your voice be heard!

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