



Victoria Epilepsy & Parkinson's Centre

BRAIN WAVE

The Magazine Of The Epilepsy Program

Vol.35, December 2014

Making Language Work

By Sonya Dhudwal

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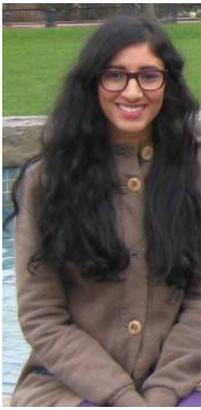


Let me ask you, what is your initial response when you hear the term “epileptic” used to describe a person who experiences seizures? Is it positive, negative, or neutral? If you speak an Asian language, for instance, the term could make a significant impact on your response, whereas the use in English can produce an ambiguous response if never confronted. Read below and you’ll see why.

There is no doubt that language is a powerful tool that we use. It seems common to speak a language without critically thinking too much about it and the meanings behind the words unless otherwise challenged. Don't feel bad if this is you, it is completely innocent and we are all on this journey together, learning and evolving. With this article, I aim to challenge the language you choose to apply, specifically exploring the use of the term “epileptic”. I propose that we all move in a direction and omit this term from all of our vocabularies when describing someone who has epilepsy.

“Epilepsy is something that I have, not something that I am.”

Did you know that removing this term could potentially curb the detrimental misconceptions and stigma with the use of a different language? “Public misconceptions of epilepsy may lead to significant stigma to the disease itself, thereby causing impaired quality of life in people with epilepsy”. This can be avoided and we have the power to do so immediately. The term used in Asian languages describes epilepsy as a person who is crazy or mad (continued on page11).



Coordinator Commentary

Whoa, it's already time for the next newsletter?! Time sure is speeding by! HeadWay is a busy place with lots going on all the time, it's no wonder I feel this way. The end of the summer kicked off Fall programming such as the return of Tools for Success; a tutoring program for children with epilepsy and support groups for adults and young adults.

We welcome new members to both programs. New tutors, Sarah May-Poole, Marissa Smith, and Patrick Lawless (new volunteer) join Tutor Coordinator Caitlin Heayn and volunteer Melissa Lyon as the Tools for Success team for the school year. With the higher number of students enrolled this year, three tutors instead of two were necessary.

We also welcome three new support group facilitators, namely, Ron Truswell is running the adult support group and Garrett Appleton and Megan Carrigan who are co-facilitating the young adult support group. These programs are essential and we are thrilled to have individuals step forward in order to allow us to continue to offer these beneficial services to our clients. (See the 'What's happening' section for more details).

Speaking of new additions, we recently welcomed Amanda Ng as the new Community Awareness Coordinator to our HeadWay family. Read on, she has provided an introduction and a re-cap on her duties and how she can help you.

Another exciting event that recently took place was the 35th annual GoodLife Fitness Victoria Charity Marathon on early Sunday morning, Thanksgiving Day long weekend. A whopping \$141, 024 was raised through the entire charity program (approximately \$3000 raised by Headway alone) to which my loved ones helped contribute by pledging the 8 kilometer Road Race run



I participated in. I would like to take this opportunity to thank all of them in helping me go over my fundraising goal and help me bring epilepsy awareness to the masses. It was especially awesome when I saw Terri Beaton (HeadWay volunteer extraordinaire) who was also participating, and we were able to exchange a high five! (Terri has written a feature in this edition of the Brainwave for Giving Day at the Bay that took place on September 11th and how you can become involved next year - see page 13).

I have met so many of your already, so thank you for getting in touch and letting me into your lives. I would love to have the opportunity to meet more of you, though, so don't be shy! You never know, I might be able to help in some way.

Until then,

Sonya Dhudwal MSW, RSW

Living with Epilepsy

By Ron Truswell (Headway Member since 1996)

I was diagnosed with Epilepsy in 1992. Up until that moment I was living a very perfectly normal life, married, two children, a very successful and rewarding job, owned a home and a cottage at the lake had two cars. I lost everything other than my wife and children after that day in 1992. Poverty was a reality for me and my family. The jobs I was able to get often resulted in legal matters for wrongful dismissal as a result of having epilepsy. Finding the right medicine to control my seizure activity was an ongoing process. Part of the family routine was “don’t forget to ask your dad if he’s taken his pills before you go anywhere”. My children still call me and they are adults with their own lives. I am thankful for one basic lesson I was taught as a child, always show compassion to the people around you. That has been hard, but I won’t let it go.

I accept who I am and what I live with, I will not allow my disability to take away my true love and respect for people.

I accept who I am and what I live with, I will not allow my disability to take away my true love and respect for people. Someone needs assistance, how can I help? I have taught children music who cannot afford the lessons. I have established a non profit Music for Youth Works Society. The reward I receive is the joy of seeing a child achieve

a skill. Almost everything I do is now reliant on the assistance of someone, if I did not have a strong caring family I don’t know where I would be. My seizure activity has a direct impact on my short term memory. When being trained in a new employment task or skill I was very nervous. If my seizure activity was present I would not retain the instructions and that meant to employers I could not do the job – there was seldom any accommodation for my disability although my employers were cognizant of my condition. To me it meant, more doctor’s appointments and depression and continuing to defend who I was. I am disabled and have been since 1992, I will never let go of my compassion and always try to assist the world I live in.



We are pleased to announce that Ron Truswell has agreed to be the new facilitator for our Adult Support Group.

This group covers topics from medications to lifestyle, relationships to sleep learning and sharing with others who can relate. Individuals experiencing seizures are invited to be part of a support group that provides you with the opportunity to connect with other adults, learn more about seizures and epilepsy, and share your feelings and concerns in a warm supportive environment. If interested, contact the Epilepsy Program Coordinator at 250-475-6677 or e-mail sdhudwal@vepc.bc.ca

Dogs on Buses - Agree or Disagree?

BC Transit posed the question “Do you believe dogs not in a hand-held carrier should be allowed on buses?” to Victoria’s ridership recently by way of survey which closed on November 9th, 2014. Eleven questions were asked in this survey to help the Commission make a determination out of the request. Ten years ago, the Pets on Board program agreed to allow pets in a secure, clean, and hand-held carrier to ride the bus system along as always with certified guide dogs.

If you were unable to participate in the survey, but would like to have your voice heard, you may write a letter to the Regional Transit Commission c/o Cara Weirmier at Cara_Weirmier@BCTransit.Com by January 17th. The Commission will be meeting on January 27th. Anyone who wants to become a delegation (provide a 5 minute presentation to the Commission) will need to contact Cara at least 7 working days prior to the meeting.

Tessa Hawkins, a HeadWay member for one and a half years shared her thoughts:

I’d like to take a moment to draw your attention to the existing service animals that ride the bus currently, and ask if you have thought about the implications of having these hard-working animals surrounded by an influx of other dogs on public transit. Each day I struggle, along with other caregivers I meet, to keep our dogs focused on their job while the public (including BC Transit drivers) distracts them with saying hi, petting, etc. Having a guide dog has allowed me to be independent, move across the country, complete a Master’s in Arts, but the whole time my poor dog has been faced with distractions, jeopardizing his ability to help me in a life-threatening emergency. This will only be increased when a lovely lady sits next to me with her Pomeranian who wants to say hi to my working dog while I bus to work. Working dogs help people walk, hear, and function day-to-day as we make our way beyond barriers the average person forgets to take into account. I know it would be nice for non-drivers to be able to bus around with their dogs, but no one knows how their dog will react in a new environment.

Worst case scenario, a person will lose their lifeline to independence in a surprise dog attack - they are animals at heart after all. Is the risk worth appeasing the few who will bus with their dogs? Please respond with your thoughts, as I have other inquiries pending.



Reminder on Guide Dog Etiquette

1. Do not pet a guide dog who is wearing a harness, it means the dog is working. As soon as the harness is removed, the dog learns that they are "off duty".
2. Do not talk to a guide dog that is working. Dogs need to concentrate to be able to do their best work and having other people talk to them or calling them is distracting.
3. Never give food or treats to a guide dog. They are fed very special dog food and anything else may make them sick.
4. Do feel free to say hello to the owner and tell them you think their dog is beautiful. They think so too.
5. Guide dogs give people independence and freedom. If the person needs your help, they will ask for it or the dog will bark to get your attention. Treat the dog's owner just like you do everyone else you meet.

Source: www.bcdogguide.com

Seizure Reponse Dogs



At present, the wait for a Seizure Response Dog Guide through the Lion's Foundation of Canada is approximately 12 – 18 months long. There is no cost associated with obtaining a dog guide through this non-profit agency, but there are parameters around eligibility as well as an application process that you must complete in addition to paperwork that is required by both your physician and neurologist.

Seizure Response Dog Guides assist individuals that experience frequent seizures. They are trained to recognize and react to the onset of a seizure. Handlers feel secure going out knowing that their Dog Guide is always by their side.

Seizure Response Dog Guides assist individuals that experience frequent seizures. They are trained to recognize and react to the onset of a seizure. Handlers feel secure going out knowing that their Dog Guide is always by their side.

What they can do for you:

- Bark for help
- Are able to activate an alert system
- Provide comfort after a seizure
- Are recognized by their identifying harness

Call **Liz Duncan** for more information: 1-800-768-3030, email: lduncan@dogguides.com, or visit www.dogguides.com

What's Happening at Headway

To register or learn more about any of the programs listed here, contact Sonya Dhudwal at (250) 475-6677 or e-mail sdhudwal@vepc.bc.ca

Workshops

Session: Living a Healthy Life with Chronic Conditions

Description: We are thrilled to be able to offer this six-week self-management program again in 2015. At present, we are taking names for registration. Call today! Self-management programs give people the knowledge, skills and confidence needed to successfully manage chronic health conditions. Participants will meet weekly with their peer leaders and other group members for 2 ½ hours in order to develop goal setting strategies and learn about how their epilepsy symptoms may be influencing their emotions, energy levels, or stress levels and gain invaluable tools toward learning new skills and living a healthy life. This program is FREE, however, you must be registered to attend. Family members are welcome to attend as well, but must commit to participate in the program for the full duration. If you would like to read more on the information before registering, please visit: www.selfmanagementbc.ca. There is also an on-line option available, check out: www.selfmanage.org/onlinebc.

Session: The Child with Epilepsy: A Practical Guide for Parents

Date: Saturday, January 17, 2015 **Cost:** \$10.00 (subsidies are available)

Description: There have been two workshops held so far with the third being offered on Saturday, January 17th, 2015. The Charro Foundation provided us with a generous donation to purchase books that will be distributed to each parent that attends. "Growing up with epilepsy: A practical guide for parents" by Lynn Bennett Blackburn, PhD is a handbook rich with helpful information that will assist parents during challenging times. The goal of this workshop is to provide parents of children with epilepsy some strategies and resources to feel prepared to meet any challenges and reduce anxiety about living with seizures. With help from Eisai Canada Incorporated, we are able to offer this informational workshop for parents. Lunch will be provided.

"I find that this information will be very useful and provide me with guidance in the future, I will be more at ease with my child's seizures".

- Participant Feedback

Headway Blog

As a person with epilepsy or a loved one of someone with epilepsy, you've seen it all and you've learned along the way. HeadWay would like you to have the opportunity to share with others in our online blog. Check out what others have shared at <http://www.vepc.bc.ca/epilepsy-blog/>. You can submit to the blog by contacting Amanda Ng, Community Awareness/Education Coordinator, at (250) 475-6677 or ang@vepc.bc.ca.

Groups

To register or learn more about any of the programs listed here, contact Sonya Dhudwal at (250) 475-6677 or e-mail sdhudwal@vepc.bc.ca

Supporting Adults with Epilepsy

Referral is necessary by the Epilepsy Program Coordinator in order to attend.

Date: 3rd Tuesday of every month **Time:** 12:00pm-1:30pm **Location:** Headway Boardroom

Description: This group is available to anyone with epilepsy who feels as though they would benefit from some peer support. Whether you have had epilepsy since you were a child or are newly diagnosed, sharing your story and hearing from others can have a significantly positive impact on your life and on the lives of those you touch. Even if you are presently seizure-free or if you are having active seizures, it does not matter. This group provides a safe space for individuals to discuss epilepsy-related issues, such as medications, relationships, sleep, and lifestyle. One to one support is also available and can be coordinated through the Centre, however, adults with epilepsy are invited to be a part of this specialized support group that provides the unique opportunity to connect with other adults living with epilepsy, learn more about epilepsy, and share your feelings and concerns in a warm and supportive environment.



Youth Adults with Epilepsy

Referral is necessary by the Epilepsy Program Coordinator in order to attend.

Date: 2nd and 4th Tuesday of every month **Time:** 6:00pm-7:30pm
Location: Check on the Facebook group

Description: Whether you've had epilepsy all your life or started having seizures in adolescence, issues rise up whenever your life changes- and changes are bountiful in young adulthood! Come out and meet other young adults who have epilepsy. Talk about anything from school and jobs to relationships and medication management. Contact the Epilepsy Program Coordinator to be added to the Facebook page that will keep you in the loop.

Epilepsy Advisory Committee

Date: December 9, 2014 **Time:** 12:00pm-1:30pm **Location:** Headway Boardroom

Description: The Epilepsy Advisory Committee meets four times per year to help plan the epilepsy services which best reflect the needs and interests of our members. We believe that it is people such as you, who understand the day-to-day experience of epilepsy, who can help us ensure that our services are on track. Meetings are informal— members bring a lunch, and we provide beverages.

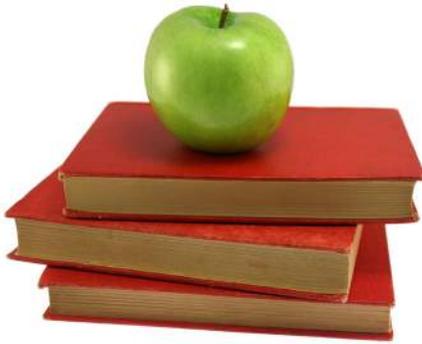
Peer Support

Description: Want to meet with others who are touched by epilepsy but prefer a one-on-one setting? Sign up to provide peer support and share your experience and knowledge.

To register or learn more about any of the programs listed here, contact Sonya Dhudwal at (250) 475-6677 or e-mail sdhudwal@vepc.bc.ca

Tutoring Services

Tools For Success



Date: Wednesdays **Time:** 4:30pm-6:00pm **Location:** University of Victoria, CORE Space

Description: The tutors in the **Tools For Success** program will help you:

- Identify learning challenges
- Build on strengths
- Develop learning strategies that are personal and effective

Tutors work with children in small groups and yet the program is highly individualized. Weekly tutoring sessions involve a variety of approaches, and interactions, so that learning is a fun experience. One space remains. Payment plans and subsidies available.

Chris Lamb, Thank You!



We would like to sincerely thank Chris Lamb for facilitating such a valuable Meditation and Relaxation class. Here is some positive feedback generated from the class:

Chris' gentle, understanding approach to meditation as well as the suggestions for different types, so that one might try them and choose the one that best works.

We are currently taking names for the waitlist for anyone interested in participating in a Meditation and Relaxation class. Contact the Epilepsy Program Coordinator at sdhudwal@vepc.bc.ca

We need you!



We are currently looking for members to join our Purple Day Committee meeting. The group will meet in January to gear up for Purple Day activities that will take place on or around March 26, 2014. Purple Day is an international grassroots effort dedicated to increasing awareness about epilepsy worldwide. If you're interested, contact the Epilepsy Program Coordinator at 250-475-6677 or email sdhudwal@vepc.bc.ca

Helping Canadians with Disabilities and Their Families Save for the Future



If you are a Canadian resident who qualifies for the Disability Tax Credit (Disability Amount), you may also be eligible to open a Registered Disability Savings Plan (RDSP) and receive money from the Government of Canada in the form of grants and bonds to help you save for the future.

The RDSP is a long-term savings plan that must be opened before the end of the calendar year in which you turn 59.

Earnings accumulate tax-free until money is taken out of the RDSP*. There is no limit to how much you may contribute each year, but there is a lifetime contribution limit of \$200,000. Parents or guardians may open an RDSP for a child under the age of majority. With written permission from the RDSP holder, anyone may contribute to the RDSP.

To help you or a loved one save, the Government of Canada will pay the following into your RDSP:

- Matching grants of up to \$3,500 per year, depending on the amount contributed and your family income. The maximum government grant contribution is \$70,000 over your lifetime. Matching grants are available until the end of the calendar year in which you turn 49.
- Bonds of up to \$1,000 per year for low-income and modest-income beneficiaries. No contributions are necessary to receive the bond. The maximum government bond contribution is \$20,000 over your lifetime. If you qualify, bonds will be paid into your RDSP until the end of the calendar year in which you turn 49.

Money paid out of an RDSP does not affect eligibility for other federal benefits such as the Canada Child Tax Benefit, the Goods and Services Tax credit, Old Age Security or Employment Insurance. Also, all provinces and territories have exempted RDSP income and assets—either in part or in full—for the purpose of assessing eligibility for provincial and territorial programs and services.

The RDSP, the grant and the bond are available to Canadians across the country through participating financial institutions.

For a list of financial institutions, and for more information on the RDSP, the grant and the bond:

Call: 1 800 O-CANADA (1-800-622-6232)

TTY: 1-800-926-9105

Visit: www.hrsdc.gc.ca/disabilitysavings

Email: rdsp-reei@hrdsc-rhdcc.gc.ca

*Investment income earned in an RDSP may be exempt from tax if it is withdrawn from a plan that was opened through a financial organization on reserve. However, grants and bonds remain taxable. Please contact the Canada Revenue Agency (CRA) at 1-800-959-8281 for more information.

Source: <http://www.esdc.gc.ca/eng/disability/savings//index.shtml>

The Challenges of Being a Teen with Epilepsy

By Jesse Young



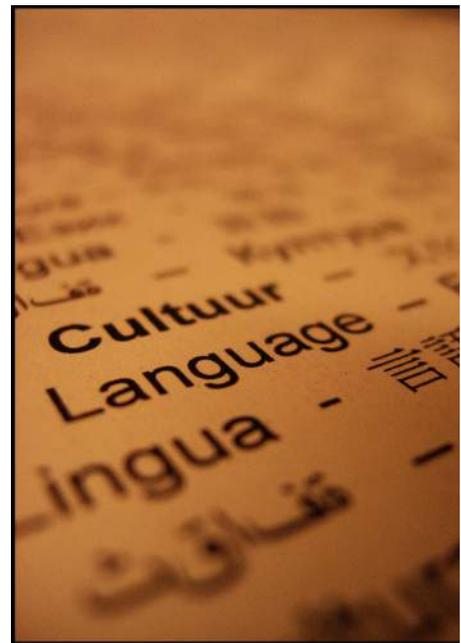
On Christmas Day 2011, I experienced my first seizure. It was a frightening experience for both my family and I. This unfortunately was a precursor of what was to come, as one month later I suffered two tonic-clonic seizures on the same day. After a trip to the hospital, I was officially diagnosed with epilepsy. Since then, my life has involved daily medication and trips to neurologists to help control my condition. Despite the challenges, I have learned to live with it and strive to see the positive side of this struggle. It has proven to be a difficult endeavor, although I believe that it has made me a stronger and more focused individual. Being an adolescent, I felt as though I was losing out on several activities. The biggest for me was driving, having the ability to have that independence, was something that I very much desired. I spent numerous doctors' appointments asking when and how I could finally get my licence. Yet at a certain point I figured out that above all else my health is the most important thing. A driver's licence really is not worth having, especially if there is a possibility that I could inadvertently cause damage to others or even myself. Since my diagnosis with epilepsy, my life has gone through numerous changes, but I like to think that the majority of them have been for the better. I have become more focused on the more important things in life, and I have really tried to live a more balanced life.



When I was diagnosed with Epilepsy I was concerned that it would somehow affect my performance as an athlete. I have since learned that this was definitely not the case. Sports have been a huge part of my life, I am a member of Semiahmoo Minor Lacrosse and I was even drafted by the Delta Islanders of the BC Junior Lacrosse League. I was honored to be one of 46 athletes, selected from a group of over 300 eligible draftees, for the BC Junior A Men's Lacrosse, which is the highest level of play for my age group. It was an awesome experience being drafted and I played my first season for Delta this past summer. It was a lot more intense, but it was definitely a learning experience. As the level of play went up, I noticed that it didn't matter whether or not I had epilepsy. When it came to playing lacrosse I was the same as everyone else. The hockey community has also played an important role in my personal development. Hockey taught me dedication. It can be demanding to learn how to manage practices, games and medication with a full day of school. I have truly enjoyed playing hockey over the last 7 years, and over time, I have formed a strong connection with my team and the Semiahmoo Minor Hockey Association. Throughout my life I have balanced playing lacrosse, hockey, baseball, tennis, and swimming among others. I have found that having an active lifestyle is a key factor for the treatment of epilepsy, as it leads to a healthy lifestyle, which is integral to long term health.



(continued from p.1) Recently, Korea has taken on a similar challenge as I am proposing to you here and changed the term they use to a more scientific one which reflects the essence of the disease and avoids misconceptions about epilepsy by the traditional culture. This has, subsequently, helped to reduce social stigmatization (Lau et al., 2011). Some research has been conducted on the topic of this terminology and the results speak for themselves. High school students believed that epileptics are rejected by society, but that people with epilepsy do not face social rejection (from Dr. Paula Fernandes' talk titled "Assessing Stigma" given in Montreal at ILAE 2013 Conference).



Personally, when it comes to the term 'epileptic', I have a negative reaction and I choose not to utter the phrase. I hear people who have epilepsy use it to describe themselves and I see it in news reports when a story arises on the topic of epilepsy and seizures. My view on this aligns with any other term that is used to describe a person and only highlights one characteristic about them. You may not have ever thought about this, but it is very unfair and hurtful to call anyone by a term that narrows their identity down to one defining characteristic about them. "For example, when London Ontario resident Stephen hears someone call him 'an epileptic' he feels like they're insulting him and saying he's stupid" (Huffington Post, 2014). Think about it, it's just ONE thing about them! No single term can fully encompass anyone without excluding many other components. Michelle captured this sentiment perfectly, "Epilepsy is something that I have, not something that I am" (Huffington Post, 2014).

Will you consider changing your language and stop using this term? At HeadWay, we think that making this small change will have big implications. Please share your thoughts - we would love to hear your feedback!

Sources:

BC Epilepsy Society Blog. (2014). Findings from the 2013 International Epilepsy Congress. Retrieved on October 22, 2014 from <http://www.bcepilepsy.com/blog/the-iec-epilepsy-conference.aspx>

Lau, K.K., Ng, P.W., Chok-wan, C., Lui, C., & Huang, C. Y. (2011). Announcement of a new Chinese name for epilepsy. *Epilepsia*, 52(2): 420-421.

Porter, N. (2014). Let's shift our language when talking about epilepsy. Retrieved on October 22, 2014 from http://www.huffingtonpost.ca/epilepsy-ontario/epilepsy_b_5591039.html



We offer our compassion to the families who have lost the following loved ones and extend our sincerest thanks to those who sent donations in their memory:
Jim Bates, Monica Roberts, and Denis Muloin.



Bicycle “Strobe” Headlights Can be a Hazard!

Written by Terri Fleming

Living in Victoria has many advantages, including being able to cycle most of the year. I cycle 19 km to work two or three times a week, making use of the fantastic Galloping Goose trail for about 12 km of my journey. With the days getting shorter, I upgraded my headlights to 305 lumens, and I’m very thankful for their brightness at 5:30 am. Good lighting is important, but using those headlights incorrectly can be a hazard, especially when used on a very fast “strobe” setting. As a cyclist, I completely understand the need to be seen by other road-users, both for our safety and for theirs. But, as a person with epilepsy, using the strobe or ‘flashing’ setting is disturbing to me because strobe lights can trigger seizures. It hasn’t happened to me (yet) on the Galloping Goose because I am aware of my sensitivity to strobe lights – but I learned this the hard way when I experienced a seizure at a David Bowie concert in France. The complications of having a seizure at a concert where my husband did not speak French were frightening enough, and I can’t help but think of the injuries that might happen if I were to collapse on the Galloping Goose in the dark – not only to me, but to anyone who rides the same path.

Here are some tips for making the best use of your headlights to keep yourself and others safe during your ride:

Daytime riding: Due to the amount of ambient light in broad daylight, you are more noticeable to other road-users if you keep your headlight on full. Think of it as ‘daytime running lights’ for your bike.

Riding in the dark: High-intensity bike headlights over 200 lumens should not be on flashing or strobe mode at night. These lights can disorient oncoming traffic (whether on 2 or 4 wheels), and make it difficult to estimate your position and speed. Avoid extreme strobe patterns.

Ensure that you do not use flashing headlights when on a dedicated bicycle path; you might be blinding fellow cyclists and putting people who live with epilepsy at risk of seizures. I thank you in advance for your consideration, and hope that see you on the Goose!

Source: <http://www.bikelightdatabase.com/faq/>

We are going green!



We’re going greener! You can now access the Brainwave online as soon as it is produced. This will reduce the amount of paper required and help our environment. By default, we will keep you on our paper mailing list but if you would like to access the Brainwave in electronic form, please e-mail your name and address to help@vepc.bc.ca with “Green Brainwave” in the subject line.

"Why Me"

By Megan Carrigan

There you are sitting having lunch with your friends, laughing, talking, having a great time, when all of a sudden you can't hear, you can't see, you can't speak.

You fall onto the ground and start to shake.

You say to yourself " Why me? Why now? What do I do? When will it stop? How do I make it stop ? I am so scared."

You stop shaking. You can hear again, you can see again, you can speak again.

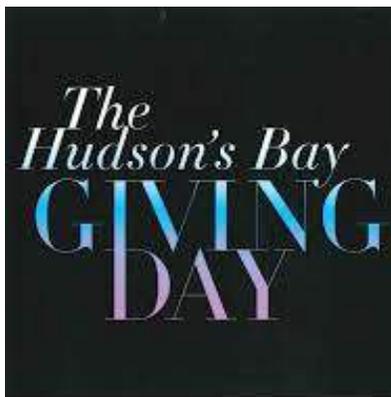
You then ask yourself, "What has just happened to me?"

You just had your first seizure.



Meet Megan and Garrett!

Our fantastic coordinators for the Young Adult Support Group. Whether you've had epilepsy all your life or started having seizures in adolescence, issues rise up whenever your life changes- and changes are bountiful in young adulthood! Come out and meet other young adults who have epilepsy. If this is of interest to you, contact the Epilepsy Program Coordinator at 250-475-6677 or at sdhudwal@vepc.bc.ca



Giving Day at the Bay

Written by Terri Beaton

This year on September 11, 2014 we participated in the Bay's Giving Day. Here is how it worked: The Bay let us sell tickets to their Giving Day at \$5 each. The tickets entitled the person to shop at the Bay on Giving Day and receive discounts on most items for up to 20% We were able to keep all the money from the tickets sales and give it to the programs at Headway. We raised a total of \$175. Thank you to the Bay (downtown)

for giving us this opportunity. We are hoping to be able to do this again next year. Our goal for next year is \$1000. To reach this goal, it would be great if twenty people sold a book of ten tickets to this special day. Watch for more information closer to the time.



From the Executive Director

It is the time of year to appreciate members, volunteers and clients that have included HeadWay, Victoria Epilepsy & Parkinson's Centre in their busy lives. Whether it has been through financial donations, volunteer time spent with our programs and activities, or support and advice that you have shared with us; it is very much noticed and appreciated. It is the membership voice that drives the Society's programs, so please communicate with us when you have something to say.

Your Annual Membership

This is the time of year to renew your membership with HeadWay, Victoria Epilepsy and Parkinson's Centre. Early in 2013, the Victoria Epilepsy & Parkinson's Society changed the membership fee structure to reflect full donation tax receipts. Although changing the structure of our membership nearly two years ago has caused some confusion, the silver lining has been that communication with us has really increased and we learned more about the role we play in our members' lives.

Memberships are free and run January 1st – December 31st. We do rely upon personal donations and planned giving to continue the programs and services.

What are the benefits of being a Member?

- A vote at our Annual General Meeting
- Reduced fee for outreach programs, educational services, conferences
- Receive our newsletters (electronic or hardcopy - upon your request)
- Involvement in our ongoing campaign to support Parkinson's and Epilepsy through the services the Centre provides

How do we benefit from your membership?

- Allows us to conduct business as a charitable organization
- You offer us advice about our services
- You offer us a volunteer base to assist and support us with our campaigns and fundraising events
- Allows us to apply for and receive grants and funding to support our services

If you are renewing your membership or if there are any changes to your contact information, please send us a quick email or phone call at 250-475-6677. Email addresses offer the most efficient way to send you our newsletter and event information.

New membership forms are available at our office, can be downloaded from our website, and will be included in our winter campaign letter. For an electronic copy, follow this link: http://www.vepc.bc.ca/about_us/membership.html.

From the Community Awareness & Education Coordinator



“The best and most beautiful things in the world cannot be seen or even touched. They must be felt with the heart.”

- Helen Keller

Oh Helen, what a wise woman. I remember coming across this Helen Keller quote decades ago and really loving the meaning behind it. Yet, it took a number of years for the significance of the quote to truly become apparent to me. Being Headway’s new Community Awareness and Education Coordinator, I feel fortunate to have the opportunity to try and transpose that quote from words to reality. Health education and community awareness are not concrete objects that can be seen or touched, but what they can do is empower individuals to gain the tools they need to support themselves; and this sense of taking control, is what is felt by the heart. Coming from a Public Health background, I truly believe that health education and promotion is crucial to ensure the best health of our society. Unfortunately, the importance of health promotion and education has been heavily underrated. This position allows me to educate and raise awareness for those with Epilepsy through in-service presentations for healthcare professionals, students, caregivers, among many others. The in-service presentations we offer provide a wide range of information spanning from an overview of seizure first aid, coping strategies, medication information, support tips for caregiver’s - and that is only to name a few. Every presentation is designed to cater to the specific audience in mind. I am also the social media coordinator for Headway so if you haven’t already, please “like” our Headway Facebook page. It provides regular updates on Headway events, articles that we think may be of interest to you, and photos of Headway in the community.

Lastly, being the editor of the newsletter that you currently have in your hands, if there is anything that you would like to see in the next issue - please let me know! If you have an article that you would like to submit for the next issue, send me an email (contact info listed below) and we would love to share your work.

I look forward to my work with the Headway community and am eager to see what the new year has to bring!

Amanda Ng, MPH
250-475-6677
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From all of us at Headway,
Happy Holidays!

Advertising Guidelines

Acceptance of advertising does not constitute an endorsement by the Victoria Epilepsy & Parkinson's Centre of the products or services listed.

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We respect your right to privacy, so please be assured that our agency does not share our membership list with outside individuals or organizations. Occasionally we may ask you to volunteer some information so that we can better understand our clients' needs and improve our services.

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Please Note:

Our website is now www.headwayvictoria.com but is being quickly redirected to www.vepc.bc.ca while we change over. We remain the **Victoria Epilepsy and Parkinson's Centre** (not VEPC and not Headway) for any cheque payments.

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