



TALITHA KOUM SOCIETY

FROM THE HEART

“LOVING OUR CLIENTS BACK TO LIVING”

Giving back with helping hands



Making a difference: Clients sew products for Days for Girls.

With pandemic restrictions being eased this year, volunteers Chris and Val McKinnon of Port Moody are once again working with our clients in support of the international **Days for Girls** project, which provides reusable menstrual products for girls in developing countries.

On most Monday evenings now, the McKinnons work with our clients as they not only hone their sewing skills and learn valuable lessons about teamwork, but also experience the special joy that comes with giving back to the community. The Talitha Koum seamstresses are on track to send 1,000 menstrual kits to World Vision by the end of May.

"The ladies have sewn and folded fabric, added ribbon, packed components of the kits, and so much more," the McKinnons say, adding that the photo shows TK clients holding patterned material that has special significance to them.

We are most appreciative of volunteers like Chris and Val, who are members of All Saints Parish in Coquitlam. A hearty TK "thank you" to them and all the women and men who volunteer their time and talent to help us "love our clients back to living."

On-line auction opens May 28

Mark your calendar for May 28 to June 11 and get ready to take part in some on-line action, as we are holding our first virtual silent auction! We're offering many wonderful items for sale including: floral water-colour paintings by renowned artists; a gift certificate for two nights at Whistler; an MRI at MedRay Imaging; goodies at Doughnut Love; delectable edibles from Sweet Carolina; and simulator-golf time at Westwood Plateau Golf & Country Club.

Other items include: wolf-fur art by a Cree artisan; deluxe picture frames by Michael Aram; an amazing Rosenthal/Versace platter; gift baskets from Spraggs Law and Shoppers Drug Mart; and a rare Nikon 35Ti camera.

Proceeds will support our ongoing operations, including trauma counselling, program supplies (including arts & crafts and gardening), upkeep of our two homes, and more. Watch our website tkrecovery.ca, and our Facebook and Instagram pages for details on how to participate. (Addresses can be found on page four.) Thank you for your support!



MARIAH'S MESSAGE

'It may be stormy now, but it can't rain forever'



Mariah and Acting ED Mary O'Neill: 'Being vulnerable takes courage.'

We are very happy to have already celebrated several graduations this year, as a number of remarkable women have successfully completed our spiritually rich 12-step recovery program. Among the most memorable graduations was that of Mariah, who graduated just before Valentine's Day. Staff, volunteers, family members, and her TK 'sisters' spoke warmly of her courage and integrity. We thank her for agreeing to share with our broader TK family the text of a speech she made to her fellow students at a trades-training program. Congratulations, Mariah! Here is the speech:

I'm here to share my message of experience, strength, and hope. Six months ago, I was in the grips of heavy addiction. I was at my bottom... or so I thought. I soon discovered my bottom had a basement. The night of July 26, my dad (biological) attacked me. I was lucky to walk away with my life and a serious concussion. The following night, I got into a fight with my partner and ended up with another serious concussion. Later that evening, my partner committed suicide while I was home, and I was the one who found him. I ended up in the psych

ward for a week and then was presented the opportunity to go to a place of healing called Talitha Koum.

And so, my journey of recovery began. The first month and a half were the hardest. Being in a new city, surrounded with people I didn't know, with a serious brain injury, grieving and new to sobriety—it all felt like it was actually going to break me.

Here's the thing though... it didn't. As I slowly thawed out, worked the 12-step program I was in, and learned to trust the women of Talitha Koum, I started healing. I learned letting people in wasn't a weakness, it's a strength.

My addiction isn't who I am. It was a symptom of the mental prison I lived in.

Being vulnerable takes courage and my past traumas do not define who I am.

Today, recovery has given me the gifts of life-long friendship, a relationship with my family, the ability to feel joy in my day-to-day life, getting to know who I really am and the BIGGEST gift of all is I have a bright future in front of me. So, if you're ever feeling like life is just too much and can't see the light in the darkness, just remember you are not alone. It may be stormy now, but it can't rain forever. I am proof of that.

Volunteer drivers needed for clients

If you are a good driver, have a car, are female, and have time to volunteer as a driver on Wednesdays (and sometimes other days) to take our clients to appointments, we'd love to hear from you. Please message us at admin@talithakoumsociety.org.

Recycle at Return-It, and TK will benefit!

There are many ways to partner with us as we “love our clients back to living.” One important and well-known way is to donate through our website, www.tkrecovery.ca/donate. And you can also recycle your bottles, cans, and milk containers and have the proceeds go to TK at Return-It Recycling Depots throughout Metro Vancouver, and you don't even need to count your own cans and bottles. Simply pack them in clear plastic bags and take them to the Express kiosk at Return-It. (The depot we use is at 104-2560 Barnet Highway, just east of Trail Appliances.) Enter the TK code, which is our phone number – 604-492-3393 – and the machine will print out however many coded peel-and-stick labels you need. Affix the label to your bags and then place them in the nearby bin, and you're done! It's as easy as that, and TK will be credited for the value of the cans and bottles when staff count them later. Thank you!



What generosity! TK's Acting Executive Director Mary O'Neill poses with members of the 13th Burnaby Scouts—Insiyah Dharsee, Nadia Simmons, and Mattin Alizada—who visited Starr House in early March to donate several bundles of self-care supplies for our clients, including lip balm, tissues, body wash, and brushes. We are most appreciative of their support—and of the support of so many other donors. Thank you!

Rich variety of programs for clients

One of the keys to success in helping our clients is our commitment to providing a rich variety of supportive programs. Last year, for example, we were able to retain the services of a **trauma counsellor** to work with our clients' deep-rooted issues. Our clients really appreciate Kitty's warmth, support, and insight.

More recently, our clients have been benefitting from “**music therapy**” being offered by a student working towards her degree. Another recent development that is especially appreciated by our First Nations clients is that we now have a **First Nations Elder** visiting twice monthly to teach about indigenous culture, and another elder visiting monthly to conduct a **Drum Circle**. As explained by Indigenous Tourism B.C., “For Indigenous people in present-day British Columbia, drums are more than communication tools and musical instruments; they are tools for a lifelong connection to and relationship with all living things and the Creator.” Our First Nations clients are also able to attend a new recovery-based meeting in Vancouver called “**Wellbriety.**”



TALITHA KOUM
SOCIETY

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Talitha Koum Society is a

Registered Charity
#89054 8910 RR0001
Mail: Como Lake Post Office
Box 64596 Coquitlam, BC V3J 7V7
Office: (604) 492-3393
admin@talithakoumsociety.org
www.talithakoumsociety.org

Our Mission Statement

Talitha Koum Society is a non-profit organization empowering women with addictions to lead healthy and fulfilling lives by providing a home, a nurturing community, 12-step programming, and life-skills training.

Butterflies will take flight again on June 25



The butterflies are returning! Yes, after a long hiatus caused by the COVID pandemic, we are planning our second **Set Her Free—Butterfly Release** for June 25 at Blue Mountain Park, Coquitlam. Our first Butterfly Release in 2019 was a great success, bringing together members of the public, community leaders, and our widespread TK family for a community-building afternoon that was rich

in uplifting symbolism. Watch your e-mail inbox, our website, talithakoumsociety.org, and Facebook and Instagram pages -- facebook.com/talithakoum, instagram.com/talitha_Koum_society -- for registration details. See you there!

Most grateful for support from financial partners

You know who you are. You're the people, the foundations, the businesses, the churches, and the agencies that have partnered with us month after month, and year after year to help us "love our clients back to living." Thank you!

And we are also most grateful for one-time donations and grants, an amazing number of which we have recently received. Some of our recent benefactors include **100 Women Who Care**, **Second Harvest Foods**, **Esther's Dream Fund**, **ReMax Realty** (to support work experience for a client), the **Rotary Club** (to buy a new dishwasher), the **Catholic Women's League**, **St. Vincent de Paul Society** at Our Lady of Fatima parish, the **Knights of Columbus**, and the **Roman Catholic Archdiocese of Vancouver**, whose **Project Advance** grant enabled us to obtain a greenhouse which



Installing greenhouse at Starr House.

we are installing in the backyard at Starr House this spring.

"It's so uplifting to receive such generous support from so many people and organizations," says **TK President Sharon Ciebin**. "We couldn't do this vital work without all of you at our side. We are most grateful for all you do. Thank you very much!"

Yes! I would like to support the work of Talitha Koum

We are grateful for your continued partnership! Please support us today by donating to help us continue our essential work. A Charitable tax receipt will be sent for donations of \$20 or more. For more information, email admin@talithakoumsociety.org. Registered Charity #89054 8910 RR0001. We will keep all personal information in strictest confidence. You can donate online at www.talithakoumsociety.org/donate, or mail cheques to:

*Talitha Koum Society
Como Lake Post Office PO Box 64596
Coquitlam, B.C., V3J 7V7*

Name _____ Donation amount _____

Address _____ City _____ Province _____

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Phone _____ email _____

By providing your email address, you are agreeing to receive emails from Talitha Koum Society. These may include e-newsletters, event invitations, and requests for support. Donate securely online at www.talithakoumsociety.org/donate