

SPRING 2014



**cascade**  
Christian Counselling Association

## A SEASON FOR CHANGE

by Penny Armstrong

**Today I woke up earlier than usual... the sun is shining! Already I feel motivated and energized. I feel the promise of this day inviting me to fully participate, to pay attention and grab hold of new opportunities. I am ready for this kind of change. I am ready for a new season.**

For me this kind of change is welcome and a “no brainer”. After all in my mind, winter is winter. I love its beginning: the drop in temperature, the warmth of the fireplace, the preparation and enjoyment of delicious comfort food and the wearing of cozy sweaters and slippers all heralding the approaching advent season. But after that, for me, winter begins to lose its charm. I get chilled and even my woolliest sweaters and scarves don’t serve me well. The dampness of the coast settles around me like a heavy grey blanket and I seriously wonder if the trees in my yard are actually dead. I feel tired, heavy and find myself yawning a lot. Motivation is hard to come by and I wonder if I would be more suited to a season of hibernation. All to say, when spring is in the air and the sun begins to shine, I am so ready to grab hold, lean in and welcome it wholeheartedly.

**So it gets me thinking about change in general. We can well desire changes in our lives but what is it about the making of those changes that can seem so difficult and beyond our reach?** Seriously, if you have ever needed to make some significant life changes such as losing weight, finding a new job, addressing a problematic relationship, dealing with a mental health issue (to name a few) you know what I’m saying. It sounds good in theory but stepping out and actually doing something different is not for the

faint of heart. As a matter of fact, many of us get stuck just thinking about what it will take to move forward, and when you already feel like your energy has been sapped by your current circumstances, it can seem downright impossible to move ahead in a new direction. And so sometimes we cling to our painful reality because at least it’s familiar. Sadly we can also begin to believe that this is it, this is all we can expect or hope for and sometimes all we deserve. This is a true winter of the soul. We can actually feel numb and emotionless and become frozen and immobilized, perhaps going through the motions of life but not really living. How we long for a change of season, but we don’t see one coming any time soon.

**The Bible has something to say about such times in our lives. “Hope deferred makes the heart grow sick”. Isn’t that the truth! When we are hoping so badly for something to happen, something to change and nothing changes, it’s no wonder our hearts grow sick. What’s the expression... ah yes, sick and tired of being sick and tired. Thankfully there is more to that verse than just the first half. “Hope deferred makes the heart grow sick BUT a longing fulfilled is a tree of life”.** In the winter season it is sometimes difficult to envision a tree with life. Trees are barren, grey and quite frankly look dead. And yet with the dawning of spring those same seemingly lifeless trees begin to lift and bud. And that’s just the beginning, we know more is coming, past experience reminds us that in time flowers, leaves and fruit will appear. We just have to trust the process and be reminded that one season does follow the other. As unimaginable as it might be

in the moment, even when hope has been deferred for a very long time, things can change and some of those things that we have been longing for can become reality. Obviously not all things. Some of the things we long for we will not see this side of Heaven. The truth is much is beyond our control. We can't change someone else's poor behaviour. We may not be able to reverse financial hardship. The dream job might be given to someone else. Some of our loved ones will get sick and not be healed.

So why talk about change? What's the point? The point is this, there are changes to be made that do make a difference, a BIG difference. I can't control world peace but I can learn to live a more peaceful life. I may not be guaranteed perfect health but I can do my part to live a healthy and balanced life for all the days that are given to me. I may not be able to control my partner's behaviour, but I can bring my healthiest self to our relationship, wholeheartedly, and even remain intact should the relationship fail. I can face depression and anxiety with as many tools as I am willing to learn and refuse to be defined by either one. You get the picture, I may not be in control of every facet of life but I am not stuck and bogged down by them either.

**Last thought: sometimes in the winter seasons of our lives it is difficult to catch a glimpse of the coming spring. Sometimes it is through someone else's eyes we hear that a robin has been spotted or a crocus has emerged.** In other words, although everything within might want to hibernate and isolate, this is not what we need. If any of these thoughts have resonated with you, and you are recognizing your own winter of the soul, my prayer is that you would reach out today. You might even consider calling us here at Cascade Christian Counselling. It may be the first of many changes to come. Changes for the better and the promise of a new day, the promise of a new season.

## **DO YOU LIKE TO GOLF?**



### **Cascade Christian Counselling Golf Tournament**

ROYALWOOD GOLF COURSE –Chilliwack, BC

**Friday, May 9, 2014 at 1pm**

**Check-in at noon**

Come join us for a great afternoon of golf, dinner  
and door prizes and help support  
Cascade Christian Counselling.

Individual player fee: \$135, Foursome: \$500

Space is limited, call soon to reserve your spot!

### **ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING**

**May 28, 2014 at 7:30 PM**

**At Fleetwood CRC**

**9165 – 160<sup>th</sup> Street, Surrey**

This will be a business meeting only.

All are welcome!

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