

# Ishaawin Counselling Centre

Thunder Bay, ON



In his book, Addictions and Grace, Gerald G. May provides the foundational concept that we are all addicted to something. With that in mind, we are left to reflect on the following:

*It is addictions that keep our love for God and neighbor incomplete. It is addiction that creates other gods for us. Because of our addictions, we will always be storing up treasures somewhere other than heaven and these treasures will kidnap our hearts and souls and strength.*

May's statement leaves me pondering what would change in my life, family, ministry or business if I was storing up treasures in heaven, rather than allowing addictions to rob me of giving my complete love to God and others. May we all pause to consider that question as we reflect on Christ this season!

As a counselling agency we journey with others on the road of discovering what challenges led to their specific addiction and address-



*Competent Caring 2 Workshop*

ing belief systems that continue to cripple their recovery progress. It is often a long and challenging journey, and one that takes an incredible amount of courage and perseverance. We covet your prayers! First, for each person that enters into the battlefield against

his or her addiction, and secondly, for the Ishaawin team as we come alongside each person struggling to win that battle.

Apart from addictions, we continue to support those healing from abuse, those adjusting to significant life transitions, those families and couples weary of the ongoing cycle of conflict and many other challenges. We are in this together and I want to thank you for your ongoing partnership as you support us in the healing work that is taking place in individuals, couples and families. Let me share with you some highlights of the past months.

Men's Group: Two staff members have been running a weekly group at an addictions centre for young men. Over the months the

interactive learning has been focused on healthy relationships. Together we looked at deference versus respect, commitment, earning trust, and much more.

Networking: Approximately two years ago we entered into a partnership with NorthWind Family Ministries, a First Nations organization that focuses on whole-life discipleship. They offer life skills training, biblical teaching, recreation opportunities such as family camps and events, and one-on-one mentoring and discipling. The networking agreement has allowed for shared resources such as staff and space, and provides a more holistic approach in supporting others. There have been a number of joint ventures with increased success due to this relationship. These ventures include: workshops streamed into northern First Nations communities, training for leaders and lay-helpers in our church community, and support groups such as the one mentioned earlier. We rejoice in what has been accomplished as we continue to work together.

As the end of another year appears on the horizon, we both reflect on the past and prepare for the coming year. Our dedicated team of qualified counsellors continues to maintain client contact hours between 700-800 in both 2015 and 2016. As mentioned in an earlier update, we also serve as a training facility for students seeking to complete their MA in psychology/counselling or BA in Social Working. Apart from counselling, we are committed to offering support groups in the coming year and look forward to sharing more about these in the new year.

In a month, we will not only be ending the calendar year but also our fiscal year. There have been a number of times this year when we wondered whether we would have to make the difficult decision of cutting programs or staff hours to address our financial challenges. Miraculously, each month there was enough to cover expenses, but the financial instability has been difficult. We desire to continue to offer counselling at reduced rates, so that people in difficult economic situations can receive professional counselling. But we need your support! Please prayerfully consider giving a one-time gift before the year end and/or commit to monthly support for the coming year. Once again let me express our sincere gratitude for your prayers and financial support for Ishaawin Counselling Centre.

*-Bonita Ledua, General Director*

## RIDE FOR REFUGE



The Annual Ride For Refuge fundraiser- best ever results!

Rising Above is a long time participant in the annual Ride for Refuge, a fun, family friendly biking and walking event designed to help charities working with displaced, vulnerable or exploited people, raise money for their work. This year's event netted a total of \$21,200 for the ministries of Rising Above. A big thank you to the riders/walkers, team captains and donors who contributed: a team of 15 in Winnipeg, the Marco Clay team of 8 in Kitchener/Waterloo, two Ishaawin teams in Thunder Bay with 10 riders, and a team of 10 from Woodside Church in Kitchener/Waterloo.

Rising Above was the host charity of the Winnipeg location directed by Terry Martin. This year the Winnipeg event exploded, nearly doubling in number of participants from the previous year. In all, 600 riders and walkers representing 27 different charities, together raised nearly \$180,000. As the host charity, Rising Above receives 5% of the net proceeds.



*Ishaawin Team*