

SURVIVE TO THRIVE! 2.0

The AIDS Committee of Cambridge, Kitchener, Waterloo & Area (ACCKWA) participated in many Survive To Thrive (S2T) Retreats with The AIDS Bereavement & Resiliency Program of Ontario (ABRPO) throughout our history.

Since the creation of ACCKWA's Turning To One Another Working Group (TOA WG), PHAs/Peers have been trained in facilitation so that they could create a larger scope for supporting PHAs in growth.

Today our S2T Retreat looks much different than the multiple loss journey. The agenda is all about building skills and self-care learning and we have renamed it Survive To Thrive 2.0!

The retreat is 3-4 days at Crieff Hills Retreat and Conference Centre - 7098 Concession 1, Puslinch in a camp setting with shared accommodations in rooms of 2-3 bunkbeds. Participants will not come and go from the camp during the retreat.

This is a working retreat with self-care activities during free time, this is not a vacation. Self-care activities include things like: massage, nature hikes, manicures, crafting, cooking, etc.

Participants are placed in 1 of 3 Pods for programming which provides a more intimate atmosphere. We learn about ourselves and our peers; self-care; supporting each other; journaling activities and so much more!

After dinner we present a full group activity such as: art night, drumming, improv, collage art, Colours, Music & Art Therapy, tie-dying. There are different workshops each night and they change every year.

ACCKWA partners with The HIV/AIDS Resources & Community Health (ARCH) and all retreat fees for registered clients of both agencies are covered.

If you are not a registered client the costs vary each year depending on length of retreat and activities. Past registration fees were: 2015 - \$270, 2016 - \$350, 2017 - \$215, and 2018 - \$300.

History of S2T

Survive and Thrive (S2T) is an effort by (ABRPO) to respond to the needs of long-term survivors for supportive ways to address multiple loss.

ABRPO works in partnership with programs for people living with HIV/AIDS (PHA) of the Ontario AIDS Network (OAN) to help transfer the knowledge and skills that participating community members and AIDS Service Organization (ASO) staff require when responding to the impact of catastrophic loss.

Further information can be obtained from
Lynn Cashubec
ACCKWA's Coordinator of Volunteers & Peer Engagement
volunteer@ackwa.com 519-570-3687 x305

Feedback from participants:

- *I enjoy the Pod work, an open and comfortable group, I feel like I belong.
- *I am opening myself up to things I never would have had the chance to do elsewhere, very positive!
- *I enjoy the humour, pushing my limits, the creativity and new experiences.
- *I came in as a newbie; blindly; zero expectations. I leave with new found friends, self-awareness and enlightenment.

