



BACKGROUND

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. S2T is an effort by ABRPO to respond to the needs of long-term survivors for supportive ways to address multiple losses. Today our S2T Retreat looks much different than the multiple loss journey. The agenda is all about building skills, supporting each other and self-care resources so we have renamed it Survive To Thrive 2.0!

Since the creation of ACCKWA's Turning To One Another Working Group (TOA WG), Peers/PHAs (people living with HIV) have been trained in facilitation so that they could create a larger scope for supporting PHAs in growth. We see these skills in action at this retreat as it is peer created and led.

The retreat is 3 days at Crieff Hills Retreat and Conference Centre – 7098 Concession 1, Puslinch – in a camp setting with shared accommodations. This is a working retreat – this is not a vacation – with self-care activities during free time, such as: nature hikes, crafting, reading a book under a tree, etc. (the various activities change based on participant feedback). Participants are not permitted to come and go from the camp during the retreat.

Participants remain together for most of the programming. We learn about; ourselves, fellow peers, self-care, supporting each other, journaling activities, and so much more! After dinner, we present a fun and creative activity. Past year's activities have included art nights, drumming, improv, collage art, Colours, Music & Art Therapy, and tie-dyeing. There are different workshops each night and they change every year.

If you are a registered participant at ACCKWA there is no cost to you. If you are not registered with us the cost is \$300 per participant and this fee includes everything!

Further information can be obtained from:

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Turning To One Another Working Group

Feedback from participants:

- *I enjoy the 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.

**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.*

