

## Mark Your Calendars:

Physical health and movement are important to good mental health. Shalom will be holding the first

### 10,000 Steps for Shalom

On the morning of  
Saturday,  
September 17, 2016

Get ready to walk, bike, run, or move in support of Shalom.

More details to come.



## Grand Opening: A Growing Home for Shalom



Shalom Open House ribbon cutting. L-R: Murray Leis (Contractor), Wanda Wagler-Martin (Executive Director), Brian Shantz (Building Consultant), Andrew Roth (Building Committee Chair), Ken Seiling (Waterloo Regional Chair), Melissa Durrell (Waterloo City Councillor), and Zyg Janecki (Kitchener City Councillor).

The “A Growing Home for Shalom” capital project began as a dream in Shalom’s strategic planning process in 2012. After 3 years of dreaming, planning and fundraising, Shalom’s open house and ribbon-cutting on December 10, 2015 marked the successful completion of the “A Growing Home for Shalom” expansion project.

This event provided an opportunity for Shalom’s community of support, including donors, community partners, local dignitaries and other supporters to explore the expanded facility. Shalom staff and board members provided tours of the new space. Tours ended in Shalom’s new group room where cookies and apple cider were available for guests.

Guests were invited to gather in the expanded waiting room to celebrate and dedicate Shalom’s renovated home in a ribbon cutting ceremony and a prayer of dedication.

A highlight of the event was the announcement that not only was “A Growing Home for Shalom” completed on time, it came in under budget. Shalom is ever grateful to Murray Leis Construction, the Building Committee, the Development Advisory Committee and the many people who played a role in keeping this project on track.

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# Fundraising Breakfast

## *Struggle and Hope*

One family's  
journey  
with  
mental  
illness



Shalom counsellor, Melody Leclair and her family will be sharing their experience with mental illness. Hear their story of struggle, hope and inspiration

**Saturday, May 7, 2016**

8:30 to 11 a.m.

Steinmann Mennonite Church  
(1316 Snyder's Road. West, Baden)

**Tickets  
\$30**

Subsidized tickets  
available for  
students / underemployed

To Purchase Tickets please contact  
Shalom by May 2<sup>nd</sup>.

**519-886-9690** or

[admin@shalomcounselling.org](mailto:admin@shalomcounselling.org)

Tax receipts will be issued for \$15 of the ticket price and for all other donations.



**United Way**  
SERVING KITCHENER-WATERLOO  
And the Townships of Wellesley, Wilmot and Woolwich

# The Gift of Resilience

By Wanda Wagler-Martin, MSW, RSW

*“For the human soul is virtually indestructible, and its ability to rise from the ashes exists as long as the body draws breath.”* (Alice Miller, *For Your Own Good*, 1980)

This quote has long inspired me, and I feel grateful to have witnessed the power of resilience enacted in people’s lives. Observing the journey of healing, has underscored the vast potential in each of us to move through and beyond life’s challenges. We all know those who have lived through the unimaginable, and have demonstrated the resumption of hope and purpose. At Shalom we are daily witness to this.

Resilience, as defined by the American Psychological Society is:

*The process of adapting well in the face of adversity, trauma, tragedy, threats or significant sources of stress—such as family and relationship problems, serious health problems or workplace and financial stressors. It means “bouncing back” from difficult experiences.*

People seeking service at Shalom already demonstrate a measure of resilience when they reach out for help. While we manage many things in life, drawing on our skill sets and communities of support, at times we may need something more. We can be resilient and still be overwhelmed by the difficulties we face. Being resilient simply nudges us to take the steps that may be needed. For some, counselling is the avenue chosen to assist them in restoring a sense of hope and well-being.

Resilience is a skill that we can develop. While some people may appear to flow more easily with life’s ups and downs, each of us can grow our resilience by practicing behaviours and thoughts that allow us to respond to difficulties with flexibility and perspective. When we practice resilience in small ways we will be able to draw on these skills when life brings greater challenges.

We can build resilience by nurturing our relationships and ensuring that we are surrounded by a network of support. We also build resilience by putting things in perspective. How we name what happens in our life has a big impact on how we feel



about things. Accepting the reality of struggle in life is an important part of being able to face the dark times with courage and resilience.

Henri Nouwen, writing in *Life of the Beloved*, points out how easy it can be for people to experience any pain as a confirmation of the negative feelings they have about themselves. He writes, *“There is always something in us searching for an explanation of what takes place in our lives, and if we have already yielded to the temptation of self-rejection, then every form of misfortune only deepens it.”* (p.96-97). When things go wrong, instead of understanding that life contains challenges and struggle, we may be tempted to assume that our struggle is simply confirmation of our negative self-view. Practicing resilience means pushing ourselves to reframe these experiences in ways that do not reinforce this perspective.

We don’t typically choose what difficulties come our way, but we do have choices about how we respond and what steps we take. We are also naturally more resilient than we sometimes imagine. However, when someone finds themselves in the midst of an immensely difficult situation they are often surprised by how readily they draw on resources that they may not have known they had. Our level of resilience can surprise us and equips us to take one small step at a time to find our way back to a place of well-being.

May we continue to celebrate the gift of resilience as we see it expressed in people’s lives and as we commit to continuing to grow our own capacity for it.

## Seedlings

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Volume 6 Issue 1

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Wanda Wagler-Martin.*

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**Helping People Grow Toward  
Peace and Wholeness**

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# The Story of 2015: Overwhelmed by Goodness

*“To be overwhelmed is often associated with negativity, but we have experienced being overwhelmed in the most positive of ways this past year. We have been overwhelmed with goodness.”*

This reflection by Wanda Wagler-Martin, Executive Director of Shalom in the recent 2015 Stewardship Report expresses the gratitude that is felt for the many gifts received by the organization.

Some of the ways in which Shalom was overwhelmed by goodness in 2015 include:

- A community who supported Shalom’s capital campaign, “A Growing Home for Shalom” by pledging and donating more than \$1 million to complete the project.
- Erb St. Mennonite Church graciously allowing Shalom to use the Church to provide counselling services throughout the building process. This allowed Shalom to not miss a single day of service.
- The Building Committee, Development Advisory Committee, Murray Leis Construction and all the sub-trades who brought the “Growing Home for Shalom” project to completion on time and under budget.
- The dedication of Shalom’s staff who increased counselling and consultation services by 13.5% in the midst of transition and significant change.

Thank you to everyone who made 2015 such a wonderful year at Shalom.

## You Can Help

Shalom relies on the financial support of our community to provide counselling subsidies to ensure that counselling is accessible to all, regardless of income. This mutual aid, supporting others in a time of need, is important to enact Shalom’s mission, “helping people grow towards peace and wholeness.”

If you are interested in donating to the ongoing work of Shalom Counselling, you can donate in the following ways:

### Cheque

Cheques can be made payable to:  
Shalom Counselling Services Inc.

### Credit Card

Credit card donations can be made online or by phone:  
[www.shalomcounselling.org](http://www.shalomcounselling.org)  
(519) 886-9690

### Legacy Gifts

Legacy gifts (estates and wills) can be made through the Mennonite Foundation of Canada (MFC)