

Move: Why Getting Outdoors Matters for Your Mind

by Liza Snider, Registered Psychotherapist

“I’ve noticed how much better we all do when we go outside.” A client shared these words with me recently as she reflected on how her family’s overall well-being shifted during the summer months when they intentionally spent more time outdoors.

Her observation was personal, yet it echoes what research continues to show: spending time outside — especially in nature — can reduce stress, improve mood, and support overall mental well-being. The Mental Health Commission of Canada (2023) highlights how nature-based activities, such as walking outside, can lower stress, enhance cognitive functioning, and support emotional balance.

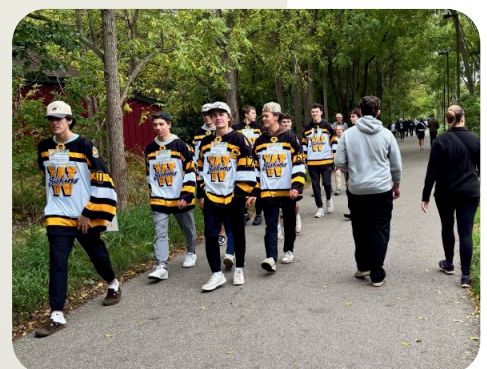
Movement, in any form, makes us feel good. The benefits last far beyond the moment. Regular physical activity can reduce symptoms of anxiety and depression, boost self-esteem, and expand your capacity to cope with life’s challenges in healthier, more sustainable ways.

Over the years, I’ve run several half marathons and experienced firsthand how running can free the body of heavy emotions, tension, and stress. But this feeling isn’t exclusive to long-distance running — it can happen during a short walk, a gym session, or even a YouTube workout in the comfort of your home. I’ve been fortunate to witness how movement can lighten, shift, absorb, and transform us.

When we move, we reconnect with our bodies. We return to ourselves. And in that reconnection, we often find grounding, clarity, and a renewed sense of alignment between body and mind.

10,000 Steps for Mental Health Highlights

10,000 Steps for Mental Health is more than just a fundraiser. The event brings people together outside, fostering a sense of community and a shared purpose. We are grateful to our donors, sponsors, and partners for their incredible support, which helped us raise over \$58,000 for accessible mental health care in our community.



When Crisis Support Isn't Enough: Building a Community Where Everyone Can Access Mental Health Care

by Carla Beharry, Registered Psychotherapist (Qualifying)

Mental Health care is not a luxury. It is an essential part of building a healthy, connected, and compassionate community.

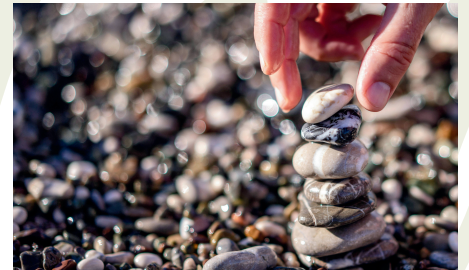
More than 100,000 calls and text messages are received each year by Waterloo Region's crisis support networks, including the 9-8-8 suicide helpline, Here 24/7, and the IMPACT (Integrated Mobile Police and Crisis Team). These services are essential, but what happens when the immediate crisis has passed and someone still needs help?

Over 4,000 people in Waterloo Region and Wellington County are waiting to access longer-term community mental health care. But who even makes it onto the waiting lists? Black, Indigenous, South Asian, and East Asian individuals are up to 80% less likely than White individuals to seek mental health treatment for depression, due to fear of experiencing stigma or discrimination from health care providers. Transgender individuals are less likely to seek care from providers who are not explicitly gender-affirming.

Community-based therapists and mental health organizations that understand trauma and culturally-compassionate care are essential contributors to building healthy and care-focused communities.

At Shalom, we believe everyone deserves access to mental health care that recognizes their experiences, honours their identities, and meet them with kindness and dignity.

Providing this care, however, depends on community support. Although provincial and municipal governments contribute funding to community mental health services, organizations like Shalom rely heavily on charitable grants, community partnerships, and individual donations to sustain work. The need for care continues to exceed our available funding, making it difficult to ensure people can access support before they reach a crisis point.



Giving Tuesday: Healing Happens Here



When someone reaches out for counselling, they are taking a courageous first step toward healing.

This Giving Tuesday, your generosity helps ensure that clients can access professional counselling regardless of their financial circumstances. When you give, you're helping someone find hope, healing, and practical support during one of the most difficult seasons of their life.

A gift today creates a safe place for healing tomorrow.

Donate Today!



Support the Journey of Hope and Healing

"Shalom counselling, in conjunction with other supports has been instrumental in my healing journey."

Shalom Client

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