I’m a little critical of peace movements that focus solely on how nations and their leaders should change. Peace in the Middle East will never be brokered by those with no commitment to meaningful conflict resolution in everyday life.

Peace begins in our personal lives as we restore broken relationships with those close to us and flows out through our families, schools, workplaces, communities, and nations.

I see restorative justice like a robust river with many tributaries. Though CJI started an important model of restorative justice, we are not the source of the river. Many indigenous peoples in Canada, New Zealand, and other nations have practiced restoring community members following harm or conflict for thousands of years, recognizing its importance to the health of their groups.

I believe that as human beings we have a natural desire to be reconciled after we cause harm. That’s why when people see restorative justice in action they often resonate with it.

Our clients routinely report feeling more capable of addressing other significant conflict in their lives after experiencing a restorative justice process. As well, volunteers and placement students often adopt restorative practices for themselves after working at CJI.

Though it takes courage to implement, learning to resolve conflict is actually deceptively easy—there is no magic to the process. It reminds me of a science experiment. If you shake black pepper into a glass of water and touch it with your finger, nothing happens. But if you coat your finger with dish soap, the pepper dissipates—it’s simple, but looks miraculous.

Helping people who have caused harm, and those who have been hurt, to hear and respect each other is like that. It builds understanding and enables people to restore their relationship so that they can co-exist without fear of further injury.

CJI creates the conditions for peace through our restorative programs and practices. But it is up to those involved to create their own solutions that meet needs for accountability, fairness, respect, safety and closure.

Many people who come into contact with CJI, become tributaries of restorative justice as they implement the straightforward principles into their lives. In this way, the brand of restorative justice started by CJI has spread to countless individuals and to organizations in more than 55 countries.

Some become rivers of restorative justice for all to see, while others are like underground streams, changing the world as they quietly resolve conflict wherever they go.

Thanks for being a channel of peace as you partner with CJI to build strong, connected, accountable communities.

Sincerely,
Chris Cowie, Executive Director, CJI
An Engaged Community Restores Lives

In 2015/2016 CJ1 impacted 11,485 people through direct services, program trainings, and community education.

Spreading the Word

Through 116 community outreach activities including workshops, events, committees, speaking engagements, and newsletters 9,112 community members heard stories and facts about the power of restorative justice.

They Helped...

- 310 federally sentenced women to build skills & positive relationships inside & outside prison
- 230 youth to take responsibility, build skills & positive relationships inside & outside custody

Spreading the Love

With leadership from 23 CJ1 staff, 227 volunteers gave a total of 12,226 hours as they facilitated restorative justice processes with 2050 men, women, children, seniors and youth.

- 415 victims & offenders to resolve conflict through 104 mediations
- 185 people affected by sexual trauma to find understanding & healing
- 619 seniors to resolve conflict with family & caregivers regarding ongoing care and elder abuse
- 405 neighbours, family members, classmates & coworkers to resolve conflict
“What makes you think you can come into our community and tell us what to do?” an older adult asked Wendy Meek. As CJI’s Elder Mediation Service Coordinator, Wendy was leading a Talking Circle at a conflict-embroiled housing complex. Neighbours were agitated as the meeting started. Some didn’t like sitting in a circle because they usually sat scattered in the room wherever they wanted and it meant they had to face each other. A few defiantly sat outside the circle. At the last minute, like the skillful peace-builder she is, Wendy deftly encouraged everyone to move their chairs back one step ensuring that there were no outsiders.

Frustrated with neighbours harassing each other over a period of months, Housing Services’ staff had reached the end of their expertise and patience as landlords. That’s when they called the CJI Elder Services Team to help put out relational fires.

After an introductory meeting hosted by a housing authority, Wendy and her team of staff and volunteers usually knock on doors and meet people individually—often over a cup of tea. Instead of approaching the older adults with a clipboard and forms, Wendy says, “We listen to their stories to get the information we need. That helps us build a trusting relationship.”

Once they have heard from residents, the team discerns patterns and determines where to start. One time, they helped to disband then restart a dysfunctional social club. The team has also held luncheons where residents socialize, build relationships and casually discuss ways to reduce conflict. Another time, they offered weekly sessions on diversity and inclusion. Wendy and her staff are careful not to impose solutions. “You can’t take programming used in one community and transplant it in another,” says Wendy.

When people object to CJI’s presence, Wendy assures them that she is there to facilitate a solution that neighbours develop on their own. Best of all, the river of restorative justice flows on as residents are equipped to manage their conflict, diffuse tensions and restore peace among themselves.
A River of Restorative Justice Flows…

Mediation

In Workplaces, Housing Complexes, and the Community

CJI staff:
• Presented 10 workshops on building conflict resolution skills in local workplaces
• Trained 323 people from the community during 22 Conflict Resolution workshops
• Began providing mediation services to residents living in Guelph-Wellington Housing subsidized complexes
• Presented workshops on: Why No is Important and How to Say It, Conflict 101: Understanding and Resolving Conflict, and Dealing with High Conflict Personalities

A Mediation Tributary Began…

In 2016, CJI spearheaded the start-up of Mediation Services in Guelph-Wellington—a collaboration among social agencies, individuals, Guelph Bylaw Office, and Guelph Police Service.

Among Victims and People Who Have Offended

In 2016, as local officials increasingly saw the value and power of Restorative Justice:
• 104 cases went to mediation—including situations involving domestic violence, bank robbery, assault with a weapon, fraud etc.
• In 100 of these cases, victims and offenders reached a resolution without returning to court

Among Youth In Schools and in the Community

CJI staff:
• Trained teachers, guidance counselors, and administrators at St. Mary’s High School, to deal with conflict among students restoratively and proactively. Mediation and restorative circles are used in classrooms, after fights, to reintegrate students after suspension etc.
• Also facilitated restorative circles for youth returning to Waterloo Region schools after a criminal charge, and coached conflict-prone students to more effectively handle interpersonal challenges
• Partnered with Police School Resource Officers and introduced them to restorative processes for dealing with criminal activity in schools
• Helped youth with significant criminal charges take responsibility for their actions and experience restoration through circle processes with victims and surrogate victims

Family Centred Programs

Among Families Involved with Child Protection

Family and Children's Services of Waterloo Region referred a record 42 families to use CJI’s Family Group Decision-Making process to develop a long-term care plan to strengthen their families and resolve child protection issues.

Through CJI’s Conflict Coaching Groups, 120 families incapacitated by conflict built communication, problem-solving, and resolution skills enabling them to address child protection concerns. Without this coaching, family violence often continues.

In 82% of cases, families and child protection workers said their goals were achieved through Family Centred Program services! None of families referred to our program had children admitted to society care within 12 months. In 2016, CJI started a pilot project to help youth and parents, who had been referred to Family and Children’s Services because of escalated conflict, to improve relational skills.
T
ell me your life story,” said Christiane Sadler as she started the tape recorder. While on a placement at CJI in the 1990s, she conducted research for her master’s thesis with men who had sexually offended.

Christiane’s qualitative study went beyond individual actions to unearth societal and contextual factors that influenced the men’s behavior. “I had two key findings—first, that every one of these men had experienced horrendous physical, emotional, and sexual abuse. And the other…not one had spoken about the abuse until they were arrested for having abused someone else,” says Christiane. Upon hearing her analysis, the ten men said, “We need to break the silence.”

True to CJI’s grassroots nature, Christiane and the men, along with CJI founder Mark Yantzi, started a workshop to share the study results and the men’s stories. Through these “An Ounce of Prevention” workshops, which ran for eight years, CJI sought to raise awareness about the grievous harm of childhood sexual abuse and the potential to prevent it.

When asked what she learned at CJI, Christiane says, “That anyone can change if you believe in them long enough.”

This belief and other restorative justice principles continue to inform her work as Executive Director of the Waterloo Region Crime Prevention Council, a post she has held since 1995. The 40 members of the Crime Prevention Council—representing the community-at-large, education, social agencies, police, public health and other sectors—collaborate to address root causes of crime.

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A River of Restorative Justice Flows...

Stride

Among Justice-Involved Women in Prison and the Community

48 volunteers connected with 296 women in prison at Grand Valley Institution for Women (GVI) during 69 Stride Nights. Community Partners including Art Innovators, Janice Lee (Spoken Word Artist), and St. Michael’s Choir provided demonstrations on a diversity of artistic techniques and performed for and with women during these recreation evenings.

To impact even more women, CJI brought Stride Night programming to women living in GVI’s new Minimum Secure Unit. Four Fresh Start Creations events were held in GVI; 54 inmates participated.

In total, 69 volunteers gave 3895 hours as they supported women coming out of prison through Stride Circles.

Stride Tributaries

• Eight communities across Canada including Toronto, Hamilton, Niagara, Edmonton, Halifax and Montreal want to establish a Stride Program in their communities
• Stride Night has been operating at women’s prison in Winnipeg for 3 years. Organizers continue to seek funding to facilitate Stride Circles to help women reintegrate to their community.

Among Youth in Custody and the Community

28 volunteers built relationships with 106 youth in local custody facilities during 199 Backhome recreation nights. 10 youth were supported by volunteers through a Circle as they reintegrated into society.

In total, 49 Backhome volunteers contributed 4,003 hours.

CJI Annual Report 2015/2016 • 7

Our amazing Stride volunteers were awarded the Volunteer Impact Award for Waterloo Region for their outstanding contributions to the community!

Stride Shows Educator Another Kind of Justice

“CJI was my first glimpse of another kind of justice,” says Associate Professor Felice Yuen. “As a student, I was reading all of these [restorative justice and social justice] theories. But Julie [Thompson] was a real life example of how you could approach incarcerated women…CJI exemplified a lot of what was in the literature.” While a graduate student at University of Waterloo, Felice was Dr. Alison Pedlar’s research assistant as she studied CJI’s Stride program at Kitchener’s prison for women (GVI).

Through her work with Stride, Felice met First Nations women at GVI and decided to study the Native Sisterhood for her PhD dissertation. “Justice from a dominant Western perspective is about retribution…Justice from an Indigenous perspective is about harmony and relationship.” She adds, “I was ready to embrace Indigenous notions of justice because of my experience with CJI.”

Today Felice is an Associate Professor at Concordia University in Montreal. Interested in leisure as a context for community development, Felice has studied such topics as youth gang prevention using hip hop and healing for Aboriginal women through body mapping (visual art).
A River of Restorative Justice Flows...

Revive

Among Men and Women Affected by Sexual Harm

In 2016, 24 volunteers shared their skills as they created a place of belonging for 179 men and women, who have been impacted by sexual harm, through 11 support groups and 1 Healing Circle. Volunteers gave 1250 hours and were equipped through 24 training opportunities.

Community is more than just a part of CJI's name; it is a feeling that comes from being in a safe, non-judgmental, supportive space where sharing, learning and acceptance are fostered.

—Revive Group Participant

Among Community Members Seeking to Understand Sexual Harm

CJI’s Revive Staff educated and dispelled myths as they spoke to:

- Students from Lakehead University, University of Waterloo, and local colleges (St. Jerome's, Renison, Conestoga and Medix)
- Professionals at the Women’s Health Alliance Forum in Guelph, Intercultural Dialogue Institute of Waterloo Region, and the Probation Officers' Association of Ontario Symposium in London.
- For the first time, Revive staff also spoke about sexual victimization and responses to disclosure at Kitchener Masjid as they engaged with the local Muslim community.

Revive staff instructed and equipped:

- Students from Conestoga College, Social Service Worker program and Wilfrid Laurier, Master of Social Work program, and Sexuality, Marriage and Family Studies program at St. Jerome's University College (U of W).
- Community professionals working with people affected by sexual harm through a new self-care support group (Together We Heal) developed by Revive staff to combat vicarious trauma and compassion fatigue.

As members of the Rainbow Community Council, SART (Sexual Abuse Response Team), Aftercare Committee, Waterloo Trauma Network, Revive staff collaborated on and made important contributions to our region’s response to sexual harm and healing.

Former Student Carries CJI Learnings Into Current Work

When Mark Yantzi came to Conestoga to talk about a [CJI] placement opportunity, many students were turned off by this “restorative” thing where people who had done horrible things were treated with dignity and respect. I was excited to hear there was an agency that worked the way I felt about social work.

[After my placement and] throughout my employment at CJI,... I embedded respectful language into my vocabulary... In discussions about “perpetrators and victims” I answered with “people who have offended or people who have survived”. I have carried the possibilities of what transparent, honest, safe and supported conversations can yield into my work in Corrections as well as supporting women and their children who have experienced or are experiencing domestic violence or sexual assault.

—Jennifer Davies was a placement student at CJI in 1994/1995. She went on to direct CJI’s Revive program until 2009. Today she is Director of Clinical Programs and Services for Guelph-Wellington Women in Crisis.
Resourcing the River
CJI Operating Fund 2015/2016

Revenue
- Government grants & contracts: 983,534
- United Way: 97,600
- Donations and fundraising: 235,201
- Fees and other income: 125,565
Total Revenue: 1,441,900

Expenses
- Wages, benefits and contract services: 1,082,304
- Office and facilities: 105,103
- Travel: 43,464
- Staff training: 28,527
- Programs and events: 24,332
- Promotion and fundraising: 12,407
- Purchased services: 172,573
Total Expenses: 1,468,710

68% 74%
7% 3%
9% 2%
16% 1.5%
7% 1%
12% 12%
A River of Restorative Justice Flows...

Through The Elmira Case Story
In November 2015 during Restorative Justice Week, CJI showcased The Elmira Case short film with a sold-out opening at the Apollo Theatre in downtown Kitchener.

A panel discussion about the famous case that sparked a global restorative justice movement followed the film. Panel members included Chief Brian Larkin, Waterloo Regional Police Service, Christiane Sadler, ED of Crime Prevention Council of Waterloo Region, Derek Haime, Superintendent of Education at Waterloo Catholic District School Board, and Michelle Jackett Centre for Peace Advancement Coordinator. The audience also heard from Russ Kelly, one of the two teens who vandalized properties in Elmira in 1974 and later apologized to victims with guidance from then probation officer Mark Yantzi (who later founded CJI). An Elmira couple whose home had been vandalized in the incident also attended the screening.

Rosco Films created the documentary, which was chosen as a featured film at Peace on Earth Film Festival in Chicago in 2015. CJI ED, Chris Cowie, along with the film directors spoke during a Q&A at the festival.

Research Measuring the Impact of CJI Services
We know CJI programs work but research can help to tell us how well, why a service works, and what can be done to achieve even better results.

• In collaboration with St. Jerome's University (Sexuality, Marriage and Family Studies Department) the impact of our programming for people who have offended sexually continues to be studied
• We continued to work closely with University of Waterloo and Public Safety to ensure ongoing quality of Stride and to demonstrate the impact of the program on participants and volunteers

Order Your Copy of the Elmira Case DVD
Online at www.cjwr.com or Bernice at 519 744-6549 x 119 office@cjwr.com
Personal use $10
Rights for classroom use $100
and public performance
Non-profit use $30
Plus $15 for shipping & handling

THE ELMIRA CASE
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From The Board Chair

The Board of Directors of Community Justice Initiatives (CJI) is very proud of our busy, successful year. We not only spread the word about restorative justice in our community via the November release of the short film The Elmira Case, but also through national interest in our Stride Program. Spreading awareness of restorative justice is the modus operandi of the CJI Board of Directors. We believe that justice can be served by honest, respectful dialogue with the goal of bringing a peaceful resolution and forgiveness to difficult situations.

Please consider joining CJI as a member to help spread awareness of restorative justice as the peaceful alternative to justice. An increased membership will help to promote the positive outcomes that restorative justice has on our community. Members serve as goodwill ambassadors, provide thoughtful oversight of the Board of Directors, are eligible to join the Board and can vote at meetings.

Imagine a just community!

Bridget Davidson, Chair, Board of Directors

CJI Supporters 2015-16

Astley Family Foundation
Cambridge & North Dumfries Community Foundation
Crime Prevention Council of Waterloo Region
Kindred (formerly Mennonite Savings &) Credit Union
KWCF
May Court Club of Kitchener-Waterloo
Ontario Trillium Foundation
Ray of Hope
Region of Waterloo Arts Fund
Samuel Rogers Memorial Trust
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Spaenaur Philanthropy Fund
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Waterloo Region District School Board
Zonta Club of Kitchener-Waterloo

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Public Safety Canada

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Ministry of Attorney General
Ministry of Community Safety & Correctional Services (Probation & Parole)
Ministry of Community & Social Services
Ministry of Children & Youth Services
Ontario Senior’s Secretariat
Volunteer
Apply at www.cjiwr.com
or contact Peggy at 519-744-6549 ext. 208 or peggyl@cjiwr.com.

Give
To make a donation by phone, contact Sheila at 519-744-6549 ext. 202.
Or donate online at www.cjiwr.com
Please make cheques payable to:
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Join the River of Restorative Justice

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