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Engage!

Lead Together: Collaborative Leadership 2008

When you think of great leaders, many come to mind – Martin Luther King Jr., Winston Churchill, Nelson Mandela – but do you think of yourself?

Join David Chrislip, one of the world's foremost experts in collaborative leadership, and the Tamarack Team for the inaugural Collaborative Leadership Retreat in Kitchener, Ontario.

From May 6 to 8, we will form a learning community on collaborative leadership.

Together, we will consider working collaboratively, conceptions of leadership, and how to grow and sustain ourselves as collaborative leaders.



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Come and join us for this dynamic leadership retreat!

In addition to informative and motivational seminars, workshops and group work, you can take advantage of all of the lively music, delicious cuisine, and inspiring activities downtown Kitchener has to offer.

Rediscover the leader in you. Register for the 2008 Collaborative Leadership Retreat today!



[Learn more about this exciting leadership retreat!](#)

Related Links:

- [Register today!](#)
- [Learn more about our featured guest, David Chrislip](#)

By: Rachel Gainer

Shifting Societal Attitudes Together

“Shifting attitudes about poverty is critical to making lasting change in Canada,” says a new collaborative group.

Poverty isn’t about being lazy or lacking a work ethic.

A person working full-time, full-year at minimum wage in Ontario lives under the Low-income Cutoff. Income supports, including disability benefits, are also below the LICO.



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Yet, we often hear that if you’re poor, it’s your fault.

Two-thirds of Canadians believe that a ‘rags to riches’ life story is possible through hard work. On her television show, financial guru Suze Orman repeats, “Your net worth is a measure of your self-worth.” And, a recent report from the C.D. Howe Institute advocates a “tough love” approach to poverty.

With convening leadership from Opportunities Waterloo Region, a pan-Canadian group called Shifting Societal Attitudes Together has begun an open dialogue to explore how we can work together to develop a comprehensive, long-term strategy to shift public attitudes away from blaming the individual towards social and economic justice.



[Visit the Shifting Societal Attitudes Together group on IGLOO](#)

Related Links:

- [Public Attributions for Poverty in Canada](#)
- [Public Support for Poverty-related Policies](#)

By: Susan Eckerle Curwood

Not Easy – But Worth It!

Between 2001 and 2003, organizers in Saskatoon forged a partnership and common vision to support revitalization work in the downtown core. Residents and representatives from organizations, businesses and government identified community aspirations and developed an action plan.

But, the path forward was far from smooth. There were stalls in process, funding shortfalls, two important partners lost faith in the initiative's leadership and, for a time, it seemed as though the plan would be left high and dry by a wave of receding enthusiasm.

Fortunately, the setback was not permanent.

A new Quality of Life Roundtable has begun to work for change in Saskatoon, and a new "community enterprise centre" called Station 20 West, which will include affordable housing, public services and a vibrant market square, is currently under development.

As Saskatoon shows us, the work of collaborative poverty reduction isn't always easy – but it *can* be done!



[Read the tale of the Core Neighbourhood Development Council](#)

Related Links:

- [Learn more about Station 20 West](#)
- [Check out Vibrant Communities in Saskatoon](#)

By: Susan Eckerle Curwood

Vibrant Communities Updates

Calgary, AB – Voter turnout in Calgary increased by 65 percent between 2004 and 2007, and Vibrant Communities Calgary made a contribution to this demonstrated increase in civic engagement. Learn more [here](#).

Hamilton, ON – The Hamilton Roundtable for Poverty Reduction works at three levels of strategic activity to achieve the goal of "Making Hamilton the Best Place to Raise a Child." Read the Roundtable's complete Theory of Change document [here](#).

Edmonton, AB – Vibrant Communities Edmonton is learning from Opportunities Niagara's Job Bus initiative, facilitating discussions between Edmonton Transit and local employers to establish transit service to high employment areas. Learn more [here](#).



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Inbox Overload

If you feel overwhelmed by email messages engulfing your inbox, you're not alone.

Working to improve your community requires open communication, and email is an easy way to achieve that. But, opening my inbox every morning can be a daunting task.

"Email stress" has become a common issue in the workplace. I've tried many types of software to help control my inbox but, for me, nothing works like simplicity.



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To manage my inbox (and, come to think of it, my life), I follow the Four D's for Decision Making:

1. *Delete it* – Does the message contain information you can find elsewhere or does it refer to a meaningful objective you're currently working on?
2. *Do it* – Does the message refer to an action you can do in two minutes or less?
3. *Delegate it* – Would someone else benefit from the message more than you?
4. *Defer it* – Does the message refer to an action that will take you longer than two minutes?

After all, we could all benefit from a little less time in our inbox and a little more time effecting change in our communities.

 [Too much email got you down? Find a new approach to your list of things to do on Rachel's blog.](#)

Related Links:

- [Common Craft explains email in plain English](#)

By: Rachel Gainer

What's Love Got To Do With It?

Whether you celebrate or steadfastly ignore it, Valentine's Day offers an opportunity to reflect on love and its role in our lives.

I asked some of my colleagues to share what love means to them and was touched by their responses.

Love, for all of us, is wrapped up in people, ways of being and time. It manifests at early morning hockey practices with our kids, in memories of those who have passed, even in our daily routines. Laura simply calls it her source of hope.



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To conjure love, Rachel opens her mental photo album, while Kathleen finds inspiration in the words of Henri Nouwen, "Words of love and affirmation are like bread. We need them each day, over and over. They keep us alive inside."

Today, we wish you love.

[More...](#) [Read more of our reflections on love](#)

Related Links:

- [What does love mean to you? Let us know!](#)
- [Visit Wikipedia to learn more about St. Valentine](#)

By: Louise Kearney

Featured Resources

[A Medium-Term Sickness/Disability Income Benefit](#) - This paper focuses upon a serious weakness in our income security system – the gap in social insurance coverage for millions of Canadians whose work and earnings are interrupted because of illness or disability. Download the paper [here](#). [Source: The Caledon Institute of Social Policy]

[Casey Connects Winter 2008](#) - Anne E. Casey's community change strategy is grounded in the belief that improving distressed neighbourhoods will boost children's odds for success. This issue of Casey Connects highlights efforts in Baltimore and other cities to promote responsible redevelopment -- to ensure that residents who either stay or are relocated truly benefit and that the rebuilding process is carried out in partnership with the community. Download the issue [here](#). [Source: The Annie E. Casey Foundation]