



**Sunshine Coast
Health Centre**
Powell River, BC

Sunshine Coast Recovery News

Your Partner in Recovery

Spring 2007

New Staff at Sunshine Coast

We are pleased to welcome two new members to the clinical team at Sunshine Coast Health Centre.

Geoff Thompson, MA CCC, is our newest counsellor. Before joining the treatment team at Sunshine Coast, Geoff spent several years as a Clinical Addictions Counsellor at Maple Ridge Treatment Centre, as well as managing two provincial government nonresidential treatment programs. He volunteers his time as Executive Director of INPM, a learned society, and is managing editor of the International Journal of Existential Psychology and Psychotherapy. In 2006, he was program director of the largest addictions conference ever held in North America, whose theme was Addiction, Meaning, & Spirituality. He is the author of *A Long Night's Journey into Day*, an in-depth look at cutting-edge treatment, as well as dozens of articles on recovery.



Geoff Thompson

Finding a psychiatrist in a small town is never easy and we were, therefore, surprised to learn that we had one in our own back yard.

Dr. Stuart Howard resides on Texada Island (the land mass you see as you look out across the water from the Sunshine Coast campus) and has been commuting to Cranbrook Mental Health and Addictions (a few hours drive west of Calgary). We thank fellow South African Dr. du Toit, Sunshine Coast Medical Director, for making the connection!



**Dr. Stuart
Howard**

Dr. Howard is joining us as a consulting psychiatrist and will make an immediate contribution to the mental health program at Sunshine Coast.

As we grow, so must our clinical team and we are looking forward to working with both Geoff and Stuart.

Happy Birthday!

March 15, 2007 marks three years for Sunshine Coast Health Centre. We have grown from a clinical staff of 4 (1 Program Director, 2 counsellors, 1 Medical Director) to a current clinical staff of 10 and 4 part-time adjunct therapists. Fortunately, we have been able to expand from the

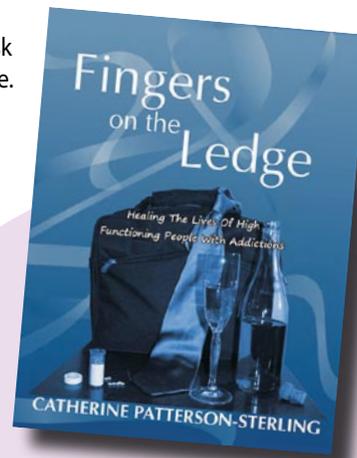
original 16 beds to a current census of 25 beds. Our current expansion will allow us to go to 32 beds in Spring 2008. Thank you to referral agents, alumni and staff who have contributed to our growth. If you haven't been to Powell River for a recent visit we invite you to come up and see the changes.

An Excerpt from Cathy's New Book

Here's an excerpt from **Fingers on the Ledge: Healing the Lives of High Functioning People with Addictions** due out August 1, 2007:

"... just because individuals have nice families, large homes, and professional careers does not mean that they are immune from alcoholism or other forms of addiction ... the high functioning alcoholic/addict who develops a dependence on chemicals can still suffer from the effects of their disease (addiction) while maintaining their home, family, and career. The high functioning alcoholic spins a myriad of lies, detaches from the family, suffers with unmanageable thoughts as well as emotions, deals with suicidal ideations, balances the fine line between sanity and chaos while self-destructing with alcohol at the same time. Other high functioning alcoholics may even have addictions to prescription drugs or process addictions such as gambling, shopping, food, internet, or sex.

Such difficulties are hidden behind the mask of success and influence. On the outside high functioning people with addictions appear to be in control as they make very important decisions for their companies, handle responsibilities, live in immaculate houses, and have well-mannered children. Such individuals are charming, talented, and successful but on the inside they are one straw away from completely falling apart. On a metaphorical level, these people are with fingers on the ledge of a window of a tall skyscraper clinging in hopes of not falling further into the spiral of self-destruction with alcohol, drugs, or other activities."



Cathy Patterson-Sterling, MA RCC, is Program Director at Sunshine Coast Health Centre.

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