



Capital Health

January 17, 2011

To Whom it May Concern:

I wish to take a moment to convey the great importance of Left Behind by Suicide Inc (non-profit organization) and the Collateral Damage Project, organizations dedicated to facilitating enhanced social awareness about the significance of suicide and the stigma that surrounds it. As attested to by Project founder Scott Chisholm and thousands of Canadians across the country, living with the aftermath of a loved one's suicide is an especially challenging experience in our society. These organizations that Mr. Chisholm has developed with others in recent years have begun to provide the supports, forums and images necessary for those in pain to move along their journey of healing.

I became aware of Mr. Chisholm's work on the Collateral Damage Project in my efforts to deal with the suicides of patients within the mental health system in Halifax, Nova Scotia. Like other mental health clinicians across Canada, we are sometimes unable to prevent suicide and find ourselves dealing with the tragedy of losing those in our care in this tragic way. Grieving and responses to suicide among professionals, and implications for subsequent care, are a relatively poorly understood and unexplored set of issues which can tie in the Project's work in some fashion. The Project's focus on elevating dialogue and addressing stigma are certainly essential, from my experience, in the social-professional microcosm of the health field.

Over the last year I have found my correspondence and contact with Mr. Chisholm to be very positive, straight-forward and refreshing. He brings great passion to this cause and has a wonderful capacity to build relationships with people from many different streams of society. The creative and artistic aspects of the Collateral Damage project, blending visual images and personal accounts, serve as very powerful routes to conveying the human experience of the aftermath of suicide. By giving voice and power to those who have lost loved ones to suicide, he has tapped into a means of communication that allows everyone to appreciate the breadth of the issue and how far we need to go as a society in making progress on these issues.

For these reasons I strongly encourage financial support for these initiatives. I have no doubt that such support will go some substantial way to saving lives and also to helping those at risk of getting lost along the way in the aftermath of suicide.

Andrew Starzomski, Ph.D., Registered Psychologist (Nova Scotia)
Capital Health Mental Health Program, Halifax, N.S.
andrew.starzomski@cdha.nshealth.ca
Ph: 902.460.7402

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