



Vancouver Island Voices for Eating Disorders

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Thursday, November 21, 2024

Invitation to Attend—Virtual Town Hall on Eating Disorders *Eating Disorder Awareness Week (February 1st to 7th, 2025)*

Vancouver Island Voices for Eating Disorders (VIVED) invites you to join us for our third **Virtual Town Hall** meeting on **Saturday, February 1, 2025** from **6:30 to 8:00 PM PST** via **Zoom** to kick off National Eating Disorder Awareness Week (EDAW) – February 1 to 7, 2025.

We can't afford to wait any longer for the government to fix our broken healthcare system. We have to conserve our energy for what we **can** change. For this year's panel discussion, we want to inspire you to help us **Build a Community of Care** on Vancouver Island and across the province of British Columbia.

"The struggle for freedom and transformation is not a dream. It's a fire that's burning in real time. And the blaze is spreading." – Kelly Hayes

This is your invitation to join a counterculture of reciprocal care that celebrates our common humanity and creates a system of collaboration, mutual aid, and empathy. For the peer community. By the peer community.

Date: Saturday, February 1, 2025
Time: 6:30 to 8:00 PM PST
Zoom Link: <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/85750037861?pwd=PEUG1WlIG8R2a28HF2lQu6iHSwb1yg.1>
Meeting ID: 857 5003 7861
Passcode: 328053

This event is facilitated by VIVED members, including our moderator and peer support volunteers. Our panel of speakers includes persons with lived and living experience of an eating disorder, their loved ones, and professional allies. We will discuss:

- What we've done, what we're working on now, and what we continue to fight for
- Actionable steps on how to get involved and build a community of care
- Our Eating Disorder Advocacy Nurse pilot project

Safety

The virtual meeting will be hosted via Zoom platform and there is no event registration or authentication required for a more accessible and barrier-free experience. You are welcome to join us anonymously and if you are logging in with your personal or workplace Zoom account, you will be reminded to change your display name to protect your identity. Please make sure your device is fully charged and that your Zoom app is updated to the

most recent version to prevent having to install updates prior to the meeting. We encourage you to sign-in 15 minutes early to make sure you have no technical problems or accessibility barriers that need troubleshooting.

The microphone and video function will be disabled for all attendees. Although the chat function will be limited, you can DM any of our co-hosts during the event if you have a technical problem or concern. There will also be an opportunity to ask panelists questions and we will provide you with a Slido link to post anonymously and upvote your favourite questions.

This event is closed to the media and there will be no recording of the session for confidentiality of all in attendance. A summary of the panel discussion will be sent to all attendees and anyone who can not attend.

Accessibility

Closed captions will be turned on. VIVED will do our very best to make sure that our slide presentation includes high contrast and readable fonts. There will be no flashing lights or flickering animations.

Although there will not be a scheduled break, we encourage all attendees to take care of your needs and reach out to a designated peer support volunteer if you need extra support. We will identify our peer support volunteers at the beginning of our presentation and they will be available via direct message (DM) in the chat.

If you have any other accessibility needs, please email vanislevoicesforeds@gmail.com. We would love to connect with you to figure out what accommodations could make it easier for you to participate!

Process

The virtual town hall is a **90 minute event** with two parts:

Part 1 - Panel Presentation

- A) What VIVED has done
 - History of our peer support group
 - Other groups and peer activities we have led over the years
 - Meetings and consultations with government, healthcare administration, and policy makers
- B) What VIVED is doing
 - Overview of our Service Mapping Project and what our work is revealing
 - Fundraising efforts for Tara's Nook
 - Introducing our Eating Disorder Advocacy Nurse Project featuring guest speakers, Jonny Morris and Alisa Harrison, from CMHA BC
- C) What VIVED and allies in our community continue to fight for
 - What we are ultimately hoping to build in our community and how we can help each other

Part 2 - Question Period

A Slido link will be provided at the beginning of the meeting. Attendees are invited to post anonymous questions and upvote the ones you want answered first. Following presentations, panelists will answer questions from attendees in order of highest ranking. Forward your questions in advance vanislevoicesforeds@gmail.com.

Rules of Engagement

This discussion may feel uncomfortable or evoke strong emotions, especially when sharing personal stories from people with lived and living experience who have been harmed and are still being actively harmed by a broken healthcare system. Our intention is not to point fingers or assign blame to the individual professionals who work within these systems, but to honour the courage it takes to have difficult conversations.

We aim to recognize and respect each person's capacity to navigate challenging feelings and difficult conversations as we know these are the opportunities that allow us to collaborate in fostering positive change. We want to inspire a culture of collaboration and reciprocal care. Together we can build the roadmap for a Community of Care for adults with eating disorders.

1. Use respectful and appropriate communication, both verbal and nonverbal.
2. A collaborative tone is expected from everyone who participates.
3. We will use Slido to answer questions from the audience.
4. Allow others to speak without interruption.
5. No screen captures or recording of the session.
6. Maintain confidentiality of all in attendance.
7. If you need peer support, please send a private message to one of our designated volunteers.

Reflective Prompts

Here are some reflective prompts inspired by the [Reading & Discussion Guide](#) for [Let This Radicalize You: Organizing and the Revolution of Reciprocal Care](#) by Kelly Hayes & Mariame Kaba. We found this book incredibly inspiring and it helped us reimagine what care could actually look like in our own community if we could build it. Please consider reading over the following questions prior to our Virtual Town Hall to help situate yourself within our current systems and communities of care.

How can we support people in our community?

If you are a person with lived and living experience of an eating disorder, what kind of support feels helpful to you? If you are an ally, what can you do that feels supportive to your loved ones or clients? We encourage you to ask them what they find most supportive.

- What is the outcome you want?
- Do your words and actions support that outcome?
- If they don't, how can you re-align them for improved results?
- What is the impact you would like to have within our community?
- Do you believe you are capable of making that impact and how will you do that?
- If you don't think you are capable, what are the barriers you are facing?
- What actionable steps are you able to take in your current role to overcome those barriers?

How do we make space for our collective grief?

When people do not have equal access to the healthcare and support they need to meet their basic needs for recovery, it significantly impairs their ability to participate in community and live their best lives. How do you come to terms with the loss of the life you dreamed for yourself? How do you tolerate the discomfort of bearing witness to painful emotions in others?

- In what ways do you process grief?
- How can a loving practice of grief serve as a form of resistance against a system you cannot change?
- Where can you find ease in your life when you are suffering?
- What would help you feel safe to express big feelings?
- How can you make space for other people's big feelings without taking offense?
- How can you resist judging people for not meeting recovery expectations?
- How can you practice the Indigenous wisdom of planning for the next seven generations to come?

Where do we find hope when the future is uncertain?

Positive recovery outcomes are intrinsically tied to believing there is hope for a better future. What is the practice of active hope? How can this support you when you feel hopeless? What could a practice space for hope in your community look like?

- How do you cope with hopelessness when you can't get the help you need?
- How do you cope with other people's hopelessness when they can't get the help they need?
- How can you create a safe space to express feelings that respects and validates their experience?
- In what other ways can you support someone without problem solving or pointing out the bright side?
- What might your discomfort in tolerating someone else's hopelessness be telling you about yourself?

How do we take better care of ourselves?

Burnout can be a natural response to the intensely emotional work we do and the energy we give to advocate for the eating disorder community and other marginalized populations. It is important that we acknowledge this reality so we can sustain our own wellbeing while continuing to support our community. How do you practice self-care? Are you practicing self-care regularly, or has it taken a backseat to your other responsibilities?

- What physical, emotional, or mental signs might suggest you may be experiencing burnout?
- Are you able to notice these warning signs before you crash and burn?
- What helps preserve your own health and wellbeing?
- How often do you make time for activities that bring you joy or relaxation?
- Who can you turn to when you need help, advice, or encouragement?
- What originally inspired your involvement in this work and do you still feel connected to that purpose?
- How can you support the creation and use of care strategies and relief teams within your community?

What guides our ongoing reflection?

As we continue to navigate the complexities of our work, we all must reflect on the practices, perspectives, and priorities guiding us. In our current healthcare and political landscapes, resources and research in eating disorders are limited. What resources exist so that you can better educate yourself? How can we ensure these practices remain meaningful and impactful?

- What resources are available so that you can continue to educate yourself?
- Whose voices are you listening to? Do these include the people most impacted?
- Do you value the expertise of lived and living experience in the same way you would a professional?
- Do you compensate people with lived and living experience for their contributions?
- Are you making a conscious effort to seek out guidance, stories, and resources from those who are marginalized within our overlapping systems of oppression (e.g. individuals experiencing racism, homophobia/transphobia, fatphobia, ableism, etc)?

Final thoughts on your self reflection

Which question(s) were most difficult for you to answer? Take a moment to reflect on why it was challenging for you. What are the different sources of power within the broader understanding in these questions? Whose voice is likely to be valued or heard as truth? Whose voice is at risk of being ignored or dismissed? What specific action can take within the next few weeks to further your engagement or activism practice?

We can't do this alone, we can only survive together. Let's Build a Community of Care!

We want to make this event feel safe for everyone to attend and participate. If you have any questions or concerns, please reach out to the VIVED team and we are happy to accommodate!

Take care,

Sally Chaster (they/them) – Co-founder

Shaely Ritchey (they/she) – Co-founder

Kalina Hunter (she/her) – Organizer

Sara Maximus (she/her) – Organizer

Chelsea Kelly (she/her) - Organizer

Nikita Bouwmeester (she/they) – Volunteer

Grace Guiney (she/her) – Volunteer

We want to acknowledge the contributions of other members of our team who choose to remain anonymous.

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