

President's Message

Happy New Year!

It's already been a busy start to the semester. This newsletter was planned for distribution in December, but time just came and left too quickly.

In November I attended the FPSE Presidents' Council meeting and Open the Doors Gala. Approximately 300 applications were received for the contest. Cash and gift certificates were presented at the evening gala.

CORFA awarded our Open the Doors bursaries in September. We are working toward a video and/or digital booklet to highlight our recipients.

I attended part of the BC Federation of Labour Convention in Vancouver followed by the CAUT's Senior Grievance Officer's Forum in Ottawa the following week.

My door is open and my phone and computer are close by. Please feel free to contact me anytime.

Joan Kain

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Office 236A



Meet your Stewards!

Weldon Cowan, CORFA's FPSE Staff Representative, came to the college on November 7 to meet with the Stewards and President for a full day of training. He went over: the Role of a Steward, the Collective Agreement/ Common Agreement, How to Handle Grievances, and Discipline. They worked through a few case studies and included a discussion on Member to Member Conflicts. They learned the importance of "Conflict of Interest" at a small college and how the Stewards work to prevent this.

Sandi Lavery is CORFA's VP, Stewards. She has been with the College for over 28 years, predominantly in the Kinesiology program. She has seen 3 College Presidents leave the college, has reported to over 25 different Deans/Managers and can be often heard saying "Hang in there,

management is due to change again soon!", although she loves her current management team. Sandi became involved with the Executive 3 years ago, when a program suspension threatened Kinesiology. The "power of solidarity" is what saved the program and is what Sandi preaches now. She states that successful departments work collaboratively and transparently.

Tim Ross was hired on as an auxiliary instructor in 2002 to do the Basic Welding for the Industrial Mechanic students. He had many short stints, from one day up to a couple of months. He became an auxiliary in February of 2009 for sick relief, and through retirements and promotions gained term status and eventually became regularized. Tim became a Steward so that CORFA had Trades Representation.



Natasha Fontaine, Tim Ross, Patti Thygesen, and Sandi Lavery.

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Life in the Fast Lane

What if you prioritised a little time every day to unplug and slow down?

I have heard from many people that they feel too busy. We can barely catch our breath. I constantly see faces that portray the story: 'Life is very full and I am doing my best to keep it all together'. We are juggling multiple jobs, family commitments, health concerns, errands, entertainment and friends. I don't see it letting up any time soon.

Often we don't feel we have time to be mindful or exercise or eat right or get to bed early. And at the same time we want to give ourselves a break because we feel we deserve it. So we drink a glass of wine or five, eat a bag of chips or two, gobble up 5 or 8 cookies all in an attempt to help ourselves feel better, to give ourselves a treat for working so hard. In this way we are trying to make ourselves feel better by doing even more – consuming more, taking more in.

I am advocating a different kind of option. What if you prioritised a little time every day to unplug and slow down? Just for a few minutes. Just a little bit. What if once a day you drank a glass of water, and just drank the water. I mean consciously, completely, in the moment drinking water. Just drinking water. You could watch the water level decrease in the glass as it fills

your stomach. Feel the liquid pour into your mouth and down the throat. You might notice the muscles it takes to swallow. And the feelings of fullness begin to grow in the stomach. It doesn't have to be drinking water. It can be any number of daily activities. The point is to practise bringing your full attention to what is happening as it happens in the moment. Instead of behaving blindly and unconsciously, be very deliberate with your movements and notice the sensations in the body.

Paying attention deliberately and with an attitude of curious fascination is one way to combat the busy-ness and stress of life. I know you don't have time to do this. But what if you tried it anyway?

Maureen Smith MSW, RCSW works as a Substance Use Counsellor at East Kootenay Addiction Services Society and teaches mindfulness meditation drop-in sessions twice a week for students and staff at College of the Rockies in Cranbrook. Check out the schedule online at www.cotr.bc.ca/counselling/cotr



Save the Date

Our next **General Meeting** will be held on Thursday, January 19 at the Heritage Inn. All members are welcome and encouraged to attend! Please RSVP to Sheena at ssvitich@cotr.bc.ca.

CORFA's 40th Anniversary Celebration is planned for March 10. This event is in the planning stages. The Planning Committee is looking for photos celebrating CORFA and/or EKCCFA. Images of union events, meetings, parties, executive members, etc. will be featured in the slide show. Please forward your digital photos to sdemaiane@cotr.bc.ca.

Steward Contact Info: You can reach your CORFA Stewards by email or phone.

Sandi Lavery: Office 207C, Local ext. 3421, lavery@cotr.bc.ca

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Patti Thygesen: Office 202J, Local ext. 3404, pthygesen@cotr.bc.ca

Just Say No!

Reduce the overwhelm with one simple word

Around this time of year, we often feel we have too much to do. There are so many seasonal tasks, like marking exams and submitting final grades, preparing to teach in January, end of term department meetings, holiday parties, gift shopping, not to mention the everyday responsibilities of home life as we approach the holidays! Many of these tasks are part of the "job description": we cannot avoid them.

Step one is to prioritize your tasks. Determine what needs to be done immediately and do it! Critical tasks get your attention next.

Step two involves sorting through the remaining tasks. Consider doing quick tasks or those that can be blocked together next.

Step three: Make a decision. There are always items on your list that are not critical. For those bonus items that are not a requirement of the job or the functioning of the household, you have three options:

- 1) **Do it:** What's a little more overload this time of year?
- 2) **Delegate:** Ask for help.
- 3) **Just. Say. No.**

Your health and wellness are more important than getting it all done! ***The best gift you can give those you love is your time.***