



PROTECTIVE LIVING FOR WOMEN LEAVING ABUSE

*live life empowered*

FALL ISSUE, 2009

CONTACT US  
204-982-2011

QUOTE

“Right now you are one choice away from a new beginning -- one that leads you toward becoming the fullest human being you can be.”

~ Oprah Winfrey

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**Insert:**  
**Purchase Your Dinner Tickets Today!**

# 15th Annual Dinner, November 5, 2009

## Mark the date in your calendar!

Please come out and support our 15th Annual Fundraising Dinner.

### Dinner Details

The Fort Garry Hotel  
(7th Floor Crystal Ballroom)

Thursday, Nov. 5, 2009

6:00 p.m. Cocktails

7:00 p.m. Dinner

Tickets \$75.00  
(\$35.00 tax receipt)

**To order tickets or for information on how you can sponsor the dinner, please visit [www.alphahouseinc.ca](http://www.alphahouseinc.ca) fill in the insert to this newsletter, or contact the Co-Dinner Chair at 633-6480.**

This year Janet Stewart returns as co-host with Mike McIntyre. Janet is part of the CBC News at Six Team and has been a part of our annual dinners for a number of years.



**Families are succeeding at living lives free of abuse thanks to their courage and your continued support.**

Mike is back for a third year as host/co-host of the dinner. He is an accomplished writer and crime reporter with the

Winnipeg Free Press.

This year we are celebrating the 15 year anniversary of Alpha House and our gratitude to the founders, who tirelessly worked to make the House a reality.

### The evening promises to be inspiring!

You can expect a beautiful four course meal, musical entertainment, prizes, a silent auction and more.

A guest speaker and former resident of the House will share her story of empowerment.

***We hope to see you there!***

## As one door closes another opens

Moving into Alpha House gives you the opportunity to break the patterns of the past and establish a new and successful life for you and your children. All it takes is the strength to take that first step. Realize that you are worth more than the abuse makes you

feel you are. You deserve respect, love and a better life.

If you or someone you know is in an abusive relationship and needs help please visit our website at [www.alphahouseinc.ca](http://www.alphahouseinc.ca) for more information or call us at **982-2011**.



We can be here for you when you make the choice to leave.



*"With the help and support I received at Alpha House I rediscovered myself. They helped me to dig out the hidden talents in me I was not aware I possess."*

**We're continually striving to make Alpha House a place to call home. Become a member today and be a part of ending the cycle of violence.**

## A letter from a former resident of the House

When I left my abusive relationship, I was totally deceived and broken. I was fearful, scared, shattered and moving without any hope. I was worried and stressed about how I would be able to survive with my little son in this country where I did not know anyone.

***When I was in Osborne House and my application to stay in Alpha House was accepted it gave me a sense of relief that at least I would have a roof over my head.***

Honestly at that time I was very doubtful about everything. I did not know what Alpha House was about or how things work there.

After moving to Alpha House I realized that it was a blessing for my son and I to come here and stay. I came to know kindness is not tendered on demand. The help and support I received at Alpha House is beyond words and cannot be expressed. I can only say that if there are worries

and fears in my mind and I need their help but there are 100 steps between me and them, I need to take just one step because the other 99 steps they take to help me. They are always there to help.

From time to time they always listened with care and concern. They are always there through my every tear, through all my sad sorrows and through every laugh. They always helped me to not be scared about the things I am fearful of. They always helped me deal with my strife.

***The whole year at Alpha House is a period of learning and internal growth. In my abusive relationship I was totally lost somewhere. There was no confidence left in me.*** With the help and support I received at Alpha House I rediscovered myself. They helped me to dig out the hidden talents in me I was not aware I possess.

Everybody at Alpha House helped bring back my smile and pleasure. ***I have learned how strong, valuable, capable and deserving I am as a human being. They made me understand how I need to love myself for who I am.*** I have learned that I am responsible for only my own feelings and that I do now owe anyone else an explanation for my own behaviour.

With all the help at Alpha House my thoughts are now under my own control. I am relaxed and everything is getting better everyday. I am able to understand clearly how my child and I will benefit from the healthy changes that have resulted being away from this abusive relationship. There are endless opportunities in life to try.

I cannot return to Alpha House what they have given to me accept to say thank you for being there for me.

**~ Navneet**

## We've come so far, but we're still on the journey.

### How it all began...

In 1989, a group of women concerned with the lack of programs and long-term housing to assist women and their children who had been the victims of violence and abuse, came together to see what could be done. They knew that shelters were a short-term solution and that many women traumatized by years of abuse were unable to start a new life without support. Alpha House was founded to fulfill this need. **Since opening in 1994, 166 families have had the opportunity to heal the wounds of violence in a safe and secure place.**

***"I know for a fact that I couldn't have made it without Alpha House. I'm no longer looking back; I am living each day to the fullest. A healthy future for me and my son is more than I could ask", quote from a former resident.***

### Today Alpha House Offers:

- Nine to twelve month residency stay
- Seven two-bedroom suites fully furnished
- Counselling and support groups for women and children
- Healthy coping counselling, literacy & learning program and follow-up programs
- Access to community resources and supportive transitioning into affordable housing
- A time to heal in a safe, supportive environment

The vision that the women had in 1989 was truly profound. Over the years the program has grown, changed and taken many new directions. Our thanks to each of the founding members.

Our thanks to the board members and staff who have been involved over the past 20 years, without this tremendous support the services provided to women would not be here.

Our thanks to the many community individuals, groups and organizations

who have generously donated to Alpha House through volunteering their time, monetary, household items & clothing.

**When Alpha House opened its doors to women to participate in programs, there was just one counsellor available for women. House management, dealing with crises, ongoing support, providing a therapy group, working with the board and the community was all the responsibility of one person. Over the years additional staff and programs have been incorporated. We now are staffed with a healthy coping counsellor, a women's counsellor, a children's counsellor, a family support worker, and a teacher. In addition we have direct service volunteers and in more recent years a summer program staffed with a university student .**

Being able to provide transitioning out services and follow-up services are now available. What a difference it makes to have supportive comprehensive programs to offer women. These changes add to the empowerment of the families and the ability for women to make positive changes in her life. Change can be challenging at times, but being able to focus on long term goals keeps us all working toward the same vision.

**I believe that by changing attitudes, beliefs and how we cope with crisis within families has a "ripple effect" we cannot imagine. For every individual who has entered our doors great courage has been exercised. For women and children who participate in our program they are learning and gaining every time they engage in counselling. This effect lasts not only while they are in the program but continues to impact them in the future.** The children are learning that abuse is not ok. It is not right to hurt "mom", it is not right to hurt another individual. This learning is profound and consequently it can break the cycle of violence for generations. For many clients abuse is

intergenerational and the learning will take many generations to turn around. At Alpha House we are seeing that change begin. In our communities we will all see the results unfold. **The effects of abuse are everywhere – in our schools, the health care system, the justice system, our neighbourhood, our work – the trauma and the cost to society is staggering.**

Violence continues to plague our society, families are experiencing domestic violence at an alarming rate, and the damage done to families hurts us all. Alpha House continues to provide opportunities for families to change, to begin to lessen the effects of abuse and to take back their lives. It is an honour to work with women and children, to see the untapped potential surface and to witness new beginnings unfold. As we see women gain strength and begin to engage in a healthy lifestyle we are encouraged and inspired to continue bringing hope to new families. Women truly teach us all about resilience, strength, hope, compassion and understanding.

To date we have had 166 women and 200 children enter Alpha House. What a powerful difference Alpha House has had on these 366 individuals. Women have formed healthy relationships, developed employment skills, gone back to school, gone into university, stabilized their a family, secured employment, maintained sobriety, and other tremendous achievements. **The "ripple" effect of change is often unseen by many but to the women and children who have been at Alpha House it has touched their hearts and lives. As staff, we have the privilege of seeing change develop first hand and often we are in awe and humbled and always immensely proud of these accomplishments.**

Glenda Dean  
Executive Director

## Purchase Your Wings of Empowerment Pin Today!

### Wear Your Pin With Pride and Spread the Word!

By purchasing your 'Wings of Empowerment' Pin you are helping women and their children leaving abusive relationships to *live life empowered*

For just \$10.00 you can help raise awareness for Alpha House and support the women and children who reside there.

Please visit our website @ [www.alphahouseinc.ca](http://www.alphahouseinc.ca) to purchase your pin. You can even purchase in multiples and get your friends and family involved.

**Together we can help end the cycle of violence.**



## CONTACT US

### At the House:

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Winnipeg, Manitoba R2M 5R3

**Phone: (204)-982-2011**

**Fax: (204)-254-2602**

**Email: [executivedirector@alphahouseinc.ca](mailto:executivedirector@alphahouseinc.ca)**

### At the Foundation:

P.O. Box 134 • Station L

Winnipeg, Manitoba R3H 0Z4

**Email: [foundpres@alphahouseinc.ca](mailto:foundpres@alphahouseinc.ca)**

## Golf Tournament 2010!

Plans are under way for the **1st Annual Alpha House Foundation Golf Tournament** to be held in the fall of 2010. We'll be providing more details in our next newsletter. In the mean time, if you or your business are interested in being a tournament sponsor or you want to be included in our mail out to interested golfers, please contact:

**Jean Gendron via email at [emailjean61@yahoo.ca](mailto:emailjean61@yahoo.ca)**

**We're online! Visit us at:**

**[www.alphahouseinc.ca](http://www.alphahouseinc.ca)**

## News from the House

### Reflections on the Healthy Coping Program

It's hard to believe that the Healthy Coping Program has been operating since November 1998. The Family Dispute Consortium, a group of 15 Winnipeg based agencies, developed the "Addressing Compulsive Coping Behaviours" as part of the Family Violence Therapy project. There was growing recognition that addressing conjointly the issues of abuse and compulsive coping behaviours was needed to assist women to learn to live violence free.

The Women in Second Stage Program currently operates at three

2<sup>nd</sup> stage sites. Compulsive coping behaviours are the ways in which survivors cope with trauma. Some compulsive coping behaviours tend to be maladaptive, particularly in their long term effects such as substance abuse, gambling, eating disorders. The existence of these behaviours forms a barrier making it difficult for women to develop healthier lifestyles and resolve the trauma in their lives. The Healthy Coping Program is an important component in providing the awareness and tools for women to change their lives.

Kim Smyrski  
Healthy Coping Counsellor

