

Quotes from Deep Dialogue Interviews with Stakeholders, Spring 2015

"BTP was very important for me at that time. It brought my survivor path and spiritual path together in the same space..... It allowed me to integrate parts of myself I didn't know I needed."

"BTP afforded people a vehicle for their enthusiasm to do something. It made them feel welcome, and provided more avenues for a feeling of community and belonging. It highlighted the emphasis on relationships."

"What really moved me was that your approach to community partners was always proactive and professional. It didn't change the goals but it made things more possible. It has been very optimistic and productive. It's really refreshing to approach things that I am passionate about in that way. That works for me."

"One of the things that really strikes me is that what Be the Peace was doing was so parallel with what happens when you are working with women who experience violence – the same patterns that keep women quiet about their abuse are the same patterns that keep the community quiet. It was about breaking the silence and finding another way of looking at the issue."

"I don't think that I have ever seen the community come together as they are now. We are so much stronger together. Together we paint a whole picture. It has changed how we do things in our organization."

"I'm impressed. A small group of people who went for it and achieved what you set out to achieve."

"A blessing has been the phenomenal amount of work in terms of engaging various sectors and getting real concrete uptake about doing things differently. Second Story, in terms of sexual assault services, wouldn't have been so far ahead if it weren't for the developmental work done by BTP. The whole youth work, HRY in the schools, so many things."

"I have seen a difference in the way that the community is involved. We are talking. I can call someone in Education etc., and see what we can do differently together. We are all at the table and we can come up with a better solution together. That's gold. It used to be that everyone was protective of their stuff, now professionals are letting their guard down at the table."

“The training has impacted me – trauma, and restorative. It has impacted our whole team. I find my work more challenging in some ways, but it is better work.”

“More than anything else, it has scared me - the enormity of the issue, which became more vivid, more real, more imminent. More overwhelmed with the insanity of the structures- the world out of balance.”

“We have come a long way and a big part of it has been Be the Peace. It has helped to begin to change the culture of our organization. Change has just begun and needs to move forward in many ways, including understanding women’s issues.”

“BTP ignited a lot of hope that things are possible... rejuvenated some of the focus on the people. It’s a heavy issue, easy to feel nothing is possible. The project contributed to feeling hopeful.”

“There was value in “first voices” (survivors) being able to speak to power and authority figures. That doesn’t happen easily.”

“When I started to crash, there were still glimpses of life around me, that there were people trying to make change. With the very gentle, undemanding support that was being offered, I could examine safely things that I could not examine before.”

“All opinions were valued versus dismissing my opinion because I’m young. It was very informal—everyone was able to be heard and we were very productive overall. SSWC was a warm environment... so people were willing to open up in their sharing and we got a lot done.”

“You had no structured or preconceived agenda- that influenced us a lot- it opened a door to a different pathway, and broader inclusion. BTP offered the bridge to a new approach—“now how to integrate it as a best practice.”

“The men have been seriously impacted by your direct, unequivocal outreach and call and challenges.”

“I learned a lot from BTP – about where we should be directing our work and what we should be doing.”

“I was inspired by the people at the first public forum – survivors, Braden. You seemed to be able to draw them in.” And how many men were there. I was impressed with that, because its usually just women.”

“It was eye-opening for me to see everything- I was flabbergasted to see the different kinds of domestic violence and everything that goes on. It was a little bit of a culture shock. My perspective on hypersexualization opened up a lot—looked at a lot of things and tore them apart.”

“What stands out to me—the public forums—the work we were able to do there was fantastic—don’t have a lot of that in Lunenburg County- well over 100 people out each time...all who care. Were not too many people who left there thinking ‘why should I care? ...did an incredible job of bringing people together.”

“Grateful for the ideas, resources, brainstorming, connections that BTP shared- for the program opportunities for students and the community here in LC. For a principal to feel so connected to community feels very supportive (versus feeling pressured). Just having conversations with us was so helpful.”

“The approach was warm and welcoming, non-threatening and willing to share ideas with no pressure. “

“BTP has shown it is possible to bring decision makers to table and have a woman centred conversation and sit there as equals and be listened to.”

“Three years and 2 women working part time haven’t overturned the system but the impact has been huge. The work plan was brilliant, the community forum, lots of awareness, consistent work with getting key partners to the table, going to municipal councils, really impressive community development process.”

“Had not developed partnerships before with community organizations.”

“The public forums were the beginning. The first person stories really affected me- this was different from doing an investigation.” “It was the largest public gathering in many years- it was clear there’d be action. It was very organized and got going very quickly from the public forum- engaged people on a number of different levels. “

“We’ve made incredible jumps in the past 3 years. We have a level of collaboration that can sustain it.”

“I learned a hell of a lot from you guys.” “You fine-tuned my thinking, steered me in the right direction.....We want to help, not retraumatize! Our assumptions were not quite right.”

“You went out of your way to see things from our perspective so it made it easier for us to see things from your perspective.”

“BTP made us face some important questions. That was good for us. You were part of

what helped the team in this office to grow and learn, to change practice in the community.”

“I was totally impressed with how many pots were in the fire- BTP was everywhere, in every aspect- that totally impressed me.”

“Thanks for asking the tough questions. You made a lot happen. And for being the spark that brought us together. You put us on the spot about how we do our work and it’s been good for us. There was just enough curiosity to make your questions good ones.”

“I appreciate the processes – have worked in projects where process is more limiting. Very open process. Left space to think outside the box. Different ways to approach youth. Sometimes policy, history, frame of mind becomes a road block. Doesn’t feel like that has happened (in BTP).”

“I’ve admired the ways that you have brought new ways to bring in community, e.g. parent cafes. That is a significant move forward. It may not affect violence in families right now, but it may influence another generation.”

“BTP acted with integrity to the people that it was designed to serve. So careful, so considered, so safe, no demands, it was to find within yourself what you could bring if you wanted to and to take if you needed to.”

“Thru the beginnings of BTP there was safe, solid, consistent support” “Gravitated to BTP events- to help me find strengths in myself. And when I didn’t have voice, I could hear them from others.”

“It was such a simple concept- how to be peace- of course I wanted to be involved.”
“Very gentle invitations, over and over, undemanding, non-invasive, always welcoming, never felt showing up was only for this group or that group... encompassing an offering- just a caring interaction.”

“It is one of the most successful projects I’ve seen funded by SWC—and by the facilitation, implementation and outcomes.” “Your approach! It was respectful, inclusive, open, very welcome- you were willing to dialogue with government. It was exciting to have this kind of partnership with community. And you made it easy for government to be involved. There was no blame, no judgment, no pressure for a perfect answer.”

“BTP looked for every possible opportunity for shared work, shared problem solving”

“The community engagement piece was enormously successful, the level of engagement was impressive.”

“The issue of sexualized violence is understood more broadly now- the community is primed-- BTP raised the profile/elevated the issue of sexual assault”

“When I looked around the room I thought that it never would have been possible, even a year ago, that all those people would be in the same room together with a shared concern. It was like the UN of Lunenburg County- could you ever dream that up?”

“Your approach with controversial issues was proactive and professional, didn’t water down your goals or change principles without a fight.”

“Respectful treatment of all has meant movement at all levels. Giving voice to those who don’t have it- personally empowered me to carry on.”