

# The Value of Uncertainty

by Lyn McGinnis

Uncertainty is something most avoid at all costs. To be uncertain implies being powerless, ignorant, impotent and worst of all, vulnerable. Life is a mystery. We are alive without knowing why. We continue to live without knowing why. Our existence is an enigma we shuffle through like a sleepwalker. When we do have moments of clarity, we find ourselves in the vast and incomprehensible landscape of existence. How then to deal with our uncertain role in this immense panorama?

For many years I thought the answer involved a quest. There was a clear meaning to life, you just had to look hard enough for it. It was in the next chapter of the next book, across the street, around the world. It could be found in the next relationship, in the next seminar, the next guru. The danger with wishing is, you might actually get what you want. What I wanted was certainty, and I found it. Again and again and again!

Having read most every sacred text and visited many a religious site, I found they did have something in common. Their appeal was also their flaw. In offering security within an exclusive system, however emotional or sophisticated, placed me in a closed universe composed of fixed absolutes. The problem with this situation is life has the ability to flow through the cracks of all idea systems and reveal their inadequacy.

Existence is far too vast and complex to be held within any comforting human concept. The stars, solar systems and galaxies are born, constantly change in

themselves and in relation to each other, and die. All space and time are said to have begun in the Big Bang, suggesting they will also end. Some have theorized this process has occurred many times, suggesting the entire universe is repeatedly recycled. An existence of such an expansive and elastic nature is intimidating. We tiny mites on our one small planet have many times cast ourselves as the centre of all creation as a way to compensate for our sense of inadequacy.

A sunset won't be reduced to dogma. A leaf trembling in the breeze cannot compel obedience. The song of a bird invites us to join life at an elemental level, not dominate it or reduce it to an abstraction. Symbols can be manipulated and give the illusion of control, life cannot. To allow ourselves the cultivation of wonder, transcends every tradition and puts us beyond the reach of demagogues.

It is within this wonder we can glimpse the value of uncertainty. In acknowledging our powerlessness, ignorance, impotence and vulnerability, we acknowledge our humanity. When we embrace our mortality and incompleteness, we add to our appreciation of each moment. To fully experience life, we have to let go and live it. The unknown is not our enemy. It is our destiny. Life is a mystery. We do not know why we are here or where we are going. This makes our lives full of uncertainty - and full of glory.

*This is a much abridged version of a talk given at what is now Grand River Unitarian Congregation on Sunday, February 25, 1996. lynmc@rogers.com*



## Rainbow Community Calendar

The **Rainbow Community Calendar (RCC)** is a monthly publication serving the LGBTQ community of Waterloo Region. It is named in tribute to the **Pink Triangle Community Calendar** created in 1989 by community activist Lisa Simkins. The **RCC** is issued by the **Rainbow Community Calendar Collective**, an action group of **SPECTRUM-Waterloo Region's Rainbow Community Space**. Print copies are available at SPECTRUM, ACCKWA, and various bars, clubs, cafés et cetera in Waterloo Region.

Online at: <http://ourspectrum.com/rainbow-community-calendar/>

Send events to: [info@ourspectrum.com](mailto:info@ourspectrum.com) by the 20th of each month.

**Please e-mail calendar editor Lyn McGinnis with corrections or new information: [lynmc@rogers.com](mailto:lynmc@rogers.com) please put **RAINBOW CALENDAR** in the subject line.**

SPECTRUM's **Resource Centre and Drop-in Space** is in Unit 210 at 283 Duke Street West, Kitchener, N2H 3X7 (corner of Duke Street West and Breithaupt). Park on Breithaupt Street side of the building, near the loading dock. Go in the Duke Street entrance, up the stairs, through the door, down the hallway to Unit 210.

**Website:** <http://ourspectrum.com/> **NEW!** (with hours of opening and much more)

**Facebook:** <https://www.facebook.com/SpectrumCommunitySpace/>

**Twitter:** [@our\\_SPECTRUM](https://twitter.com/our_SPECTRUM) **E-mail:** [info@ourspectrum.com](mailto:info@ourspectrum.com) **Phone:** 226-779-9695

### December Events

**Starting December 1**

**Trans Peer Support Group.** 7-9 PM on the first and third Thursday of the month. **December 1** and **15**. New day - new time - new facilitators. A safe and normalizing environment for anyone identifying in the trans/gender variant umbrella at SPECTRUM. More information: [trans@ourspectrum.com](mailto:trans@ourspectrum.com)

**Rainbow Connections - Kitchener meetings,** 7-9 PM first and third Thursdays of the month: **December 1, 15**. LGBTQ and Mental Health Group Main

Floor, Self Help Alliance, 67 King St E. Kitchener. If you will be late, please contact us in advance so we know when to let you in. Also note that there is now a 15 minutes time-period that we can let you in, otherwise it becomes disruptive to group. We will be in the downstairs room, so ring the downstairs doorbell to be let in. Call 519-570-4595 to speak with either Jasmina, ext. 4052, or Brenda, ext. 4061 to verify meeting date and time, or for more information.

**World AIDS Day Vigil.** 7-9 PM Victoria Park Pavilion. <https://www.facebook.com/ACCKWA/>

#### Starting December 2

**day5games.** 7-11 PM **December 2, 9, 16, 23, 30** at SPECTRUM. Join us as we gather at our space to play board and card games, assemble jigsaw puzzles and fiddle with constructions in an informal atmosphere.

#### Starting December 3

**SPECTRUM Saturday Symposium** 2-5 PM Saturdays, **December 3, 10, 17, 24, 31.** We meet Saturday afternoons to discuss a topic of interest to our community. Ideas for topics will usually come from participants and be posted here ahead of time. Our inaugural meeting was held Saturday, June 18, 2016 at 2 PM. The group dynamic is expected to change weekly as each topic will likely attract a different crowd, though one is not expected to be of a particular bent to attend. All are welcome every Saturday. Attendees are free to participate or not in the discussion according to their own temperament. You need not be an expert on anything to contribute as we are all here to learn from each other. We emphasize speaking about your own experiences. Come with an open mind. The group is mildly moderated at SPECTRUM.

#### Starting December 4

**ORG-SPECTRUM's Outdoor Recreation Group.** Sundays. Events alternate between Lite and Regular:

**December 4** - 1- 5 PM, Activa Sportsplex, Lennox Lewis Way, Kitchener. "McLennan Park".

**December 11** - 2-4 PM, GRT Ainslie Terminal, Galt, Cambridge.

**December 18** - 1-5 PM, WPL Harper Branch/Stork Y, Waterloo.

"Waterloo West".

**December 25** - 2-4 PM, Victoria Park south gate washrooms, David/Jubilee/Courtland, Kitchener.

Drop-in at SPECTRUM follows 5-8 PM

**January 1** - 1-5 PM, SPECTRUM.

"Kitchener Downtown"

Drop-in at SPECTRUM follows immediately; 5-8 PM

William Pensaert, General Manager, SPECTRUM, office: 226-779-9695, mobile: 519-503-9313.

#### **Friends of Dorothy Bowling League Event.**

1:15pm practice; 1:30 - 4pm bowling, Sundays: **December 4, 11, 18,** at Brunswick Frederick Lanes, 385 Frederick Plaza, Kitchener.

#### Starting December 5

#### **Rainbow bereavement support group**

**Mon. Dec. 5** 1:30-3:30. **Wed. Dec. 15** 6:00-8:00 PM. All LGBTQ caregivers, spouses, friends suffering loss. 298 Lawrence Ave. Kitchener. Call 519-743-4114 ext. 117. [barb@hospicewaterloo.ca](mailto:barb@hospicewaterloo.ca)

#### Starting December 6

#### **Queercraft - a Queer Crafting Group.**

6-8 PM, Tuesdays: **December 6, 13, 20, 27.** Bring your portable craft to SPECTRUM!

**OK2BME Youth Group.** 6-7:30 PM Alternate Tuesdays- **December 6, 20** More information: <http://ok2bme.ca/>

**December 6 Vigil** 6-7 PM Kitchener City Hall. The National Day of Remembrance and Action on Violence Against Women. <https://www.facebook.com/events/688238474687527/>

#### Starting December 7

**Older Adults Group.** 7-9 PM, first and third Wednesdays of the month - **December 7** and **21** at SPECTRUM. We see things differently as we age. Priorities shift. Social circles change. Join us in a **new** discussion and social group for older LGBTQ adults. And if you are concerned about whether the group is a fit for you, then try it out to see. Lately, we have been sharing stories about our lives. We will also continue to think about what kinds of discussions and activities we might like to have in future. We hope that this will be a step in the direction of creating a community support for us as we age.

<http://ourspectrum.com/older-adults-group/>

#### Starting December 8

**Rainbow Newcomers** Thursday, **December 8**, Wednesday, **December 28** at SPECTRUM. A place for LGBTQ-identified immigrants and refugees to socialize with each other and with LGBTQ people who have been in town for a while, and discuss issues related to being a newcomer to Canada. More information:

[RainbowNewcomers@gmail.com](mailto:RainbowNewcomers@gmail.com)

#### Starting December 14

#### **Transgender Peer Support Group.**

7-9 PM on the second and fourth Wednesday of the month. **December 14** and **28.** For individuals who identify as transgender and questioning. Self Help Alliance, 67 King Street East, Kitchener. Call 519-570-4595 to speak with either Jasmina, ext. 4052, or Brenda, ext. 4061 to verify meeting date and time, or for more information.

#### December 20

#### **Waterloo - Wellington - Perth PFLAG, Parents Family and Friends Peer-Support Group**

7-9 PM on the third Tuesday of the month. **December 20.** Are you having difficulty coming to terms with the sexuality, gender identity or gender expression of someone close to you? Join us in a warm, welcoming and safe place for all family and friends of people of the LGBTQ community at Pre-School Room, Downtown Community Centre, 35-B Weber Street West, Kitchener. More Information: <https://www.facebook.com/PFLAG.WWP>

#### December 27

**Good Laughs.** 7 PM until closing, last Tuesday evening of the month: **December 27.** A safe space for trans people to explore their identity in the community; open to allies as well at Symposium Café, Waterloo (corner of King and Erb) - back room. More information:

[goodlaughs81@gmail.com](mailto:goodlaughs81@gmail.com)

<https://www.facebook.com/goodlaughs81/?fref=ts>

## Special Drop-In Hours

at SPECTRUM:

December 24, 5-8 PM

December 25, 2-8 PM

January 1, 5-8 PM

If you're looking for some company and some snacks, come and spend some time with us in our comfy space!



## January event

**Cliterature January 20 to 22**, Victoria Park Pavilion. This is a transformational and artful celebration of women's sexuality through erotic readings, live music, dance and more! Over 25 talented performers to the stage in this weekend long marathon of sexiness! Be sure to get a weekend pass so you don't miss a thing!

<https://www.facebook.com/events/1279770358764856/>

## Volunteering with SPECTRUM

Are you interested in helping SPECTRUM make a difference in the LGBTQ community? We are looking for enthusiastic, responsible individuals who are able to make a commitment to volunteer with SPECTRUM. For a detailed list of areas where we are looking for volunteers see: <http://ourspectrum.com/get-involved/volunteers/>