

Changing Times

News from the **Changes Parent Support Network** community | Fall 2021

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Q: Do our Changes tools and support translate well to a fully online environment?



Most Changes members know that we have active chapters in Seattle, Everett, Redmond, and Utah, all of which moved to online meetings in the wake of COVID shutdowns. What may not be universally known is that last year, a group of members including **Martha Shegrud, Katie Joannes, Jean Ross, Dorothy Roca, Terry Olsen, Bill Gustafson, Sandy Barnes,** and **Soph Davenberry** spent a significant amount of time to create a new, National Online Chapter that meets weekly on Saturday mornings at 10AM Pacific Time. This chapter currently supports 20-25 members weekly from 10 states, giving Changes Parent Support Network a nationwide presence.

To answer the question in the title, we interviewed **Laurie Sivonen**, who lives about 90 minutes north of Boston in southern Maine. Laurie joined Changes with the creation of the National Online Chapter in September 2020. She was referred to Changes by her sister, **Lisa Atwell**, a Redmond Chapter Representative. Laurie's star child is an adopted daughter, who has—in Laurie's words—"an alphabet soup of issues." Most disruptive to the family were physical and emotional outbursts, oppositional defiance, and suicidal ideation.

of the online meeting format as she runs a low risk of running into any of her clients or their families. Taking the Changes meetings online from home did not increase her profile or increase the conflict level with her star child, as she was already working from home and simply added her Changes meetings to the mix. She noted that some of the online chapter members routinely participate in the weekly meeting from their cars so that they maintain privacy from their star children, but that has not been necessary in her case.

Laurie found that No ACE and One Liners were the two most immediately useful tools for her. She quickly formed a team that includes a mix of Seattle, Redmond, and online chapter members. When asked how things are now, her response is energizing. "Oh my gosh, it's a whole different world. She [star child] doesn't yell, doesn't scream, she comes home on time. We have a fabulous relationship."

Naturally, they are still figuring out some things. Her daughter's self-care is apparently still an issue, resulting in some disruptive ER visits, and she still catches Laurie off-guard with some of her dramatic declarations. But instead of reacting in the moment, Laurie now calls her team and

Laurie was at the height of her family crisis when she joined Changes, so she has limited recall of the details of her orientation or first meeting. She does remember feeling a great sense of relief and non-judgmental acceptance from the other parents in the meeting. She credits her 6-week mentor, **Sandy Barnes**, with helping her move to more fully accept the principle that we must change ourselves rather than try to change our children. "I feel like she really held my feet to the fire."

As a mental health professional, Laurie placed a lot of pressure on herself to know how to manage the situation. She naturally tended to default to the way she herself was raised, which included clear explanations from her parents regarding why they made specific decisions.

Given Laurie's stature as a mental health professional, she is grateful for the confidentiality

creates a plan.

We asked if there were any areas of improvement that could be made to make her interaction with Changes easier. She cited the time zone difference as her greatest challenge as it means the Saturday meeting lands mid-day for her and it can make it tough to find good times for her team meetings. She also mentioned that she would find it helpful as a new member to have a brochure or card that summarized our organization, its structure (including some of the key roles) and a concise summary of the basic tools.

But, in summary...

A: Yes, they do.

Self-reflection question: Am I giving back to others in the group more than what I take?

This is part of Changes Guiding Principle #5, and it's why we have succeeded and sustained ourselves as an organization for 26 years. When you first come to Changes, you are in crisis mode and your energy is best spent understanding and implementing the Changes tools. As you move out of crisis, we expect you to give back by helping others.

This can take many forms based on your interests and time constraints. Some examples: act as a mentor to a new member, volunteer for one of the open positions identified in the weekly email, participate on someone else's team once you've formed your own, present at a chapter meeting, serve on a committee, donate, share

your experiences on our new, private Facebook page.

We stand on the shoulders of earlier Changes members, and we give back to others in the community in recognition and thanks to those that helped us when we were in crisis. Please volunteer in some capacity so parents continue to have Changes as a resource to help them move from chaos to calm.

#giveback

Changes @ Changes

Changes adapted to the pandemic rapidly and moved to online meetings. We now have a coast-to-coast presence with the formation of our National Online Chapter profiled elsewhere in this newsletter. There are also other significant changes in our marketing and outreach that are underway which you may find interesting and exciting.

Presentation Templates

This portion of the project is just kicking off and will deliver PowerPoint templates that can be utilized by the **Program Review Committee**, **Outreach Committee**, and others to create professional presentations for large group meetings and other uses such as outreach. We already have a solid library of excellent presentation content produced by our **Program**

Agency Alliance

We've partnered with Artitudes, a professional design agency in Seattle. Artitudes gives back to the community by providing their services to select non-profit organizations at a very low cost. We are thrilled that they saw value in our mission and have been working with us since March on a variety of projects this year.

New Logo/Brand ID

We had been using our existing logo for approximately 10 years, and while there was nothing inherently wrong with it, the Communications Committee decided to revamp our logo and color scheme to coincide with a new push to drive greater awareness of our organization and its mission.

CHANGES

PARENT SUPPORT NETWORK

This new, contemporary logo more explicitly represents the shift from chaos to calm that working the Changes Insight Program[®] can bring to parents and caregivers.

You may have noticed our new logo in the footer of this e-newsletter; we will now begin to roll it out across our website, letterhead, social media pages and presentation content library.

Expanded Image Library

We have historically drawn upon a relatively limited set of images for our brochures and promotional materials and felt that we needed to have more choices and add images representing diverse and blended families as well as before Changes /after Changes scenarios using the same family. Artitudes has helped us fill these gaps.

Review Committee; you can consider this project as “window dressing” to deliver an additional level of polish and professionalism to the content.

Social Media Reboot

As the **Communications Committee** reviewed our approach to social media, it was clear that we lacked a clear strategy and execution plan. The Committee solicited and received Board approval for a comprehensive plan spanning Facebook, Instagram, Twitter, and LinkedIn. These changes will roll out in Fall and Winter 2021.

For brevity let's focus on the changes to our Facebook presence, which will occur in the coming weeks. We will shift from our current page (which is visible by any Facebook user) to a private, members-only page.

Projected benefits:

- Enables confidential, members-only discussion online
- Enables posting of videos of meeting presentations as well as those by 3rd-party presenters for viewing by our entire membership base
- May encourage otherwise inactive Changes members to give back to the community in a new way

Website

We have heard from many members with suggestions about improving our website, www.cpsn.org. Due to budget and volunteer time constraints, we are currently planning a complete overhaul of our website in 2022 but will make incremental improvements and fixes as needed until then.

We could really use your help

If you'd like to volunteer to assist in any of these exciting initiatives, please send an email to office@cpsn.org.

3 Questions with Changes Board Treasurer, Robert Huberth

Robert, you are not a typical Changes parent in the sense of having a star child and attending meetings. How did you get involved with Changes?

We have very dear old friends, Rick and Anne Ped; our kids all grew up together, and the challenges with their daughter got them involved with Changes. They invited us to attend the Auction with them starting back in 2015. We had fun and attended [the auction] for the next 4 years... I started asking Rick increasingly more about Changes, how it was run, how they were doing, what business practices did they have in place, etc. He

suggested I interview for a board position. I did and they decided to bring me on in 2019 as their first At-Large member who did not have a Star Child. I am finishing my first 3-year term this December of which I have been overseeing Treasurer duties.

What skills do you bring to the table?

I have been involved with Not-For-Profits since high school. I started out with Key Club, where we did volunteer work in the community. I then was a volunteer for King County Explorer Search and Rescue for 15 years. After that I sat on various boards for non-profits including the University YMCA, Thornton Creek Middle School and a local [martial arts] dojo, the last two as Treasurer. My formal background includes a degree in Business (Finance and Business Economics) from the UW, as well as being a principal business owner of a professional photographic studio and lab catering to the design and graphics industry. After getting my degree I worked in tech for a number of businesses including 12 years with Microsoft in a variety of analyst roles.



What do you hope to accomplish during your tenure?

Several things were on the list out of the gate. We needed to sort out our bookkeeper, needless to say it was not consistent. We are now working with Julie Porter Business Systems. She is a great partner for us as well as being very knowledgeable with QuickBooks. She is my go-to with any questions I might have. She also oversees and handles our taxes for us.

We also needed to do a deep dive into how we were accounting for expenses and donations and make things more consistent from an accounting perspective. We have accomplished both things. We can now report out with accuracy how our chapter donations are being attributed.

Going forward, as Changes continues to prosper, we want to set ourselves up for the real long term. We are finally at a place where we can afford to take a small amount of money and invest it. This will lay the foundation for Changes to continue to grow into the future financially.

The last thing I am working on is a training manual for the next Treasurer so that all duties are laid out simply and straightforwardly and can be accessed as needed.

Changes: How are we structured and how does the organization work?

We are a non-profit governed by bylaws.

Changes is a registered 501(c)3 non-profit in the state of Washington. Our bylaws govern our overall operation and may only be modified by majority vote of the Board of Directors. The last time they were modified was March 2017. In summary, our bylaws specify the following:

- Board structure, responsibility, and term limits
- Minimum of 7, maximum of 12 board members
- Must be unpaid volunteers (legitimate expense reimbursement OK)
- Term of board membership is 3 years, with a maximum of 2 consecutive terms.
- Annual membership meeting and structure

Transparency of finances: The financial records of Changes Parent Support Network are public

Our Program Representatives from each chapter provide two-way communication between that chapter and the board, as well as cross-chapter communication.

Stephanie Allen is the Program Representative Liaison to the Board.

There are many other volunteer roles, and we welcome (and expect!) your participation when you are out of crisis.

Some examples are:

- **Committee member:** All of our committees welcome domain-specific expertise and/or a passion for a given initiative. You do not need to be a board member to participate.
- **Presentation Coordinator:** creates the "calendar" of presenters to your chapter's

information and shall be made available upon request. We typically communicate our financial situation in summary form through normal member communications, and in detail during the annual membership meeting and in the year-end report.

Establishment of committees as needed for the operation of the organizations. Current committees include:

Finance Committee (chairperson is Treasurer, Robert Huberth) – oversees our financial health, prepares required financial records

Communications and Marketing Committee (chairperson Bill Mannion, Creative Director Cindy Suzumura): creates the content and materials we need to communicate to our members and publicize Changes to partners, prospective new members, and the public.

Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Committee (co-chairpersons Katie Joannes, Annie Stockton, and Martha Hurwitz): Responsible for ensuring that Changes is truly welcoming and accessible to all as well as driving outreach beyond the immediate communities from which our existing Chapters have evolved.

Program Review Committee (chairperson Kathleen Coletta): Caretakers of the format, structure, and general content of our chapter meetings.

Fundraising Committee (chairperson Kathleen Coletta): Oversees org-wide social and fundraising events such as the annual picnic, our auction, and ad hoc events.

Outreach Committee (chairperson Bill Mannion): Drives outbound solicitations to prospective new parents, partnerships with like-minded organizations, and generation of referrals from professionals that serve our adult members or their children.

As of 2019, we no longer employ an Executive Director.

This means that the only paid employee is our administrator, Tracey Alexander, who works approximately 20 hours per week. All other positions within Changes are strictly volunteer.

meetings

- **Orientation Leader:** helps new members in your chapter understand Changes and what they can expect; appoints 6-week mentor for each new member
- **Large Group Facilitator:** leads the chapter meeting
- **Small Group Facilitator:** leads the process for small group during the chapter meetings, one facilitator per small group.
- **4-week Mentor:** Acts as a “guide” to a new Changes member, with primary responsibility to ensure that the new member knows what resources and tools are available to them.
- **Secretary:** Documents the chapter meeting for future reference.
- **Treasurer:** during in-person meetings, collects and counts and deposits the donations received
- **Membership Information Manager (MIM):** Maintains the database for that chapter’s members. Generates the monthly membership list.
- **Setup and Closing Manager:** Coordinates with the host facility for in-person meetings. Responsible for setting up the room in a manner suitable for the chapter meeting as well as returning the room to the original format indicated by the host facility.
- **Librarian:** Oversees the chapter’s resource materials, including books, DVD’s and other content as appropriate.
- **Greeter:** For in-person meetings, receives new attendees and introduces them to the Orientation Leader.

What’s the best way for me to make a suggestion or provide feedback to Changes?

Complete a suggestion form, which is available in the members section of our website and give it to one of your Chapter Program reps, who will present all received suggestions at the Program Reps Quarterly meeting. If the issue is not resolved then the Rep Liaison forwards it for discussion/decision by the Board of Directors.

Here is a direct link to the suggestion form:

http://cpsn.org/wp-content/uploads/2015/07/2015_SuggestionForm.pdf

Fred Meyer Rewards Program

So many Changes members and others have connected their Fred Meyer Rewards cards to benefit Changes when they make purchases, that it has become a nice stream of funding for Changes.



If you are a Fred Meyer shopper, get a rewards card, link Changes as your choice for nonprofit donations—Changes gets a check from Fred Meyer each quarter at no expense to you. If you need more information or help enrolling, please contact the Changes office at office@cpsn.org

Sign in and enroll your Fred Meyer card to donate to Changes at <https://www.fredmeyer.com/o/store-services/community-rewards>

Support Changes as You Shop

Amazon will donate 0.5% of the price of your eligible **Amazon Smile** purchases to **Changes Parent Support Network** when you shop at smile.amazon.com

- Same prices and selection.
- No cost to you.
- Use your current Amazon account OR create a free account with an email and password.
- Amazon Smile eligible purchases will be noted on the product detail page.



Amazon Smile purchases provide funds for Changes program and services. For more information, visit smile.amazon.com/about

2021 Events Calendar



2nd Monday every month:
Board meeting

Canceled due to Covid-19:
Annual Changes Picnic
Auction and Social Event

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