

BELONGING MATTERS CONVERSATIONS

Our Priority Challenge #2 > How To Thrive In Neighborhood Adversity (Session #3)

Roddan Lodge, Oasis | WESN

Tuesday, March 25th 2025



“Here, everyone’s exposed to more violence, more stuff than most neighborhoods in Vancouver.”

Conversation Participant

Adversity We Are Exposed To:

- X Drug use & overdose deaths
- X Random violence
- X Yelling & volatile people
- X Garbage & germs
- X Homelessness & people that look like they might be dead or injured

“Thriving in our neighbourhood amidst adversity means learning to focus on what is in our control”

Our Neighbourhood consists of:

- ✓ Our apartments & me
- ✓ Roddan Lodge Building & tenants
- ✓ The DTES & community members

Ways I can create conditions to thrive in my apartment:

- ✓ Clean, declutter, and get rid of things I don’t need
- ✓ Read a book
- ✓ Do things I like such as baking or cooking
- ✓ Deep breathing exercises
- ✓ Listen to music
- ✓ Call a friend or relative
- ✓ Pick up a hobby
- ✓ Take a shower or bath
- ✓ Have a nap
- ✓ Set an ambiance (fake candles, decorate)
- ✓ Use my treadmill
- ✓ Maintain a long-term mindset: “we will get better eventually”
- ✓ Be aware of signs I may need to reach out for help.

TIPS & STRATEGIES TO THRIVE IN OUR NEIGHBOURHOOD

Explore and engage with the community

- ✓ Get to know the neighborhood better
- ✓ Make connections with organizations outside of RL
- ✓ Learn about available resources
- ✓ Participate in events like “Hope & Shadows” (disposable camera event)
- ✓ Consider there may be others trying to thrive in the neighbourhood and be open to new friendships
- ✓ Connect with cultural organizations important to you in the neighbourhood

Go to safe and uplifting places:

- ✓ Waterfront
- ✓ Library
- ✓ A show
- ✓ A coffee shop
- ✓ Dog park
- ✓ Railtown & beach
- ✓ Gastown
- ✓ Commercial Drive

Helping others brings joy to ourselves & others:

- ✓ Volunteer work → find ways to contribute
- ✓ Practice “giving flow” → the joy of bringing others joy

Thriving In Our Neighbourhood Means Taking a Break:

- ✓ Learn to compartmentalize
- ✓ Leave and get out of the neighbourhood for a change of scenery by going to other places in the city
- ✓ Have a coffee in a different neighbourhood (eg. Commercial Drive, gastown)
- ✓ Go to nature and feed birds
- ✓ Things I want to do like CD shopping, going to the library, take the bus or skytrain anywhere
- ✓ Think positive thoughts
- ✓ Don’t engage with the trauma & adversity in the neighbourhood

“You almost get anesthetized to the lifestyles of homelessness, drugs. You’re desensitized; you don’t care as much, you keep walking past people that are almost dying.”

Signs I need to reach out for help:

- X Prolonged anxiety or depression
- X I haven’t gone out in a while
- X Self-neglect (not sleeping, eating, etc..)
- X Negative thoughts just loop around in my head

Ways to deal with anxiety:

- ✓ Find a distraction (movie, music, tv)
- ✓ Meditate
- ✓ Exercise & move my body
- ✓ Talk to a friend

Cultivating a positive mindset is key to surviving / thriving in adversity:

- ✓ Confident self-talk: “I can do this”
- ✓ Trust your gut and listen to your body
- ✓ Pray to God
- ✓ Remember everyone deserves respect

Build a network of trusted professionals that work for me:

- ✓ Massage therapist
- ✓ Meditation, yoga
- ✓ Doctor

“I think positive so that I don’t let my fear take me away or stop me.”

Conversation Participant

Tenant Led Programs, we want to start:

- ✓ Walking program
- ✓ Party / fiesta/ karaoke nights / drumming
- ✓ Games night
- ✓ Y at Home exercise /wellness programs
- ✓ Host more community meals

Ways I resolve conflict within Roddan Lodge, I:

- ✓ Try to be aware of my trigger and that of others
- ✓ Learn to self soothe when triggered (take a deep breath, self-talk, pray, meditate, listen to music, cook)
- ✓ See the problem as a misunderstanding and seek to understand
- ✓ Apologize, explain my reasoning/ experience
- ✓ Smile
- ✓ Don’t hold grudges & don’t take what’s said personally
- ✓ Remind myself that we can’t solve other people’s problems
- ✓ Don’t judge
- ✓ Don’t assume or try to interpret what others experiences are
- ✓ Respect everyone’s journey, personalities and past traumas as their experiences

Ways we, as a community can create a thriving Roddan Lodge Community:

- ✓ Have community meals (waffle party, socials, karaoke, coffee socials)
- ✓ Make alliances and friendships with neighbors
- ✓ Invite community organizations to make presentations with what services and programs we can access in our neighbourhood

“Try to remember everyone here wants a better community, we aren’t here to fight and clash; we are here to help each other”

Conversations Participant

Tips & Strategies on how to be a good neighbour at RL:

- ✓ Be kind to others through noticing what people like and making small gestures
- ✓ Ask, “how are you,” “are you okay?” “Is there anything I can do?”
- ✓ Show respect to others
- ✓ Bring soup to a neighbour that is sick
- ✓ Give food
- ✓ Respect others