

OUT FOR CHANGE

ELIZABETH FRY TORONTO

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Consider Us

Elizabeth Fry toronto

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The Netflix series Orange is the New Black (OITNB) has popularized Piper Kerman's 2010 memoir

Orange Is the New Black: My Year in a Women's Prison. Piper served 13 months in a minimum security women's prison for drug trafficking and money laundering. While the memoir and Netflix series details the depravity and hopelessness of prison, it highlights the individual struggles of the women inside. While the characters' back stories may appear distant to our experience, their motivations are ordinary- acceptance, regret, belonging, love, loyalty, shame and perseverance.

OITNB is lifting the veil and revealing the realities of prison life. It reveals that prisons further marginalize inmates, do little for

rehabilitation, waste taxpayer money and provide no solutions for the real problems of poverty, violence, homelessness, addictions and unemployment.

We applaud and thank Piper Kerman for inspiring the conversation. On April 20th, 2015, you will have a chance to applaud Piper Kerman yourself.



Elizabeth Fry Toronto is excited to be co-sponsoring a night with Piper Kerman at Roy Thomson Hall, through Unique Lives & Experiences. Please like us on FaceBook and check our website to learn more about the event as the date approaches. ■

Our Mission

To support women who are, have been, or are at risk of being in conflict with the law.

Our Vision

A society that ensures all women have the dignity and capacity to make informed choices about their lives and avoid conflict with the law.

Our Values

We are committed to:

- **Agency** – to be instrumental in our lives and the lives of others
- **Dignity** – to ensure each person is regarded as worthy, honoured and esteemed
- **Diversity** – to respect and celebrate human difference
- **Innovation** – to create change that makes things better
- **Resilience** – to recover from and adjust to change and challenge

So Few Women...

- Only 5.4% of the total number of federal prison inmates in Canada are women.
- Out of 538 dangerous offender designations, four are women.
- Out of 722 long-term supervision orders, 12 are women.
- In 2013, less than 600 women were incarcerated.

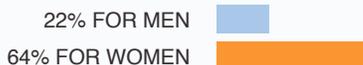
While the numbers are relatively small compared to men and compared to the number of women incarcerated in the US, the marginalization and experience is a crisis for each individual woman and her family.

The rates of trauma, abuse, addiction and mental health issues are drastically high among women who are in conflict with the law: The story of female incarceration is essentially the story of trauma and abuse. Please note the percentage of emotional and adjustment factors among women and men inmates.

Moderate Alcohol Abuse



Moderate Substance Abuse



Depression



Trauma/Abuse



Previous Suicide Attempts



(Sources <http://www.csc-scc.gc.ca/research/forum/e061/e061f-eng.shtml> and <http://www.publicsafety.gc.ca/cnt/rsrscs/pblctns/crrctns-cndtnl-rls-2013/crrctns-cndtnl-rls-2013-eng.pdf>) ■

Her Life has Changed Forever

It is hard to miss the consequence of the Jian Ghomeshi story. Every day another woman is telling her story of violence, harassment and silence. Here is a story we hear every day.

In 1994, the “mandatory charging policy” came into effect: this guideline requires the police to lay criminal charges against an abusive partner in all cases of abuse where reasonable grounds exist. Mandatory charging policies have led to an increase in dual arrests; in which police find reasonable grounds to charge both the abuser and the victim.

Some women remain in a relationship in which their partner is violent to them. They try hard to stay in the relationship particularly if there are children, for their economic survival, their immigration sponsorship, and because they are capable of holding hope that the partner they love can change.

Then one time, the partner escalates the violence when she is at the end of her rope and fights back. This seems to affront the partner’s sense of control and the partner calls the police and alleges the woman has committed assault. Or the woman herself contacts police indicating her actions as self defense while her own wounds may not be visible on this occasion. Police have a mandate to charge if there is any evidence of assault. They no longer have to look at the history of police involvement with this family and determine the primary aggressor, even if the partner alleging assault has been convicted of assaulting the woman now being accused.

Assault, domestic or otherwise, is a violent crime, so she must endure arrest, fingerprinting and give a DNA sample, all of which will keep her in the criminal justice data system for life.

In court, she learns that she may not be entitled to legal aid because her combined family income is too high. She works with a harried, overworked duty counsel who may urge her to plead guilty and take probation as the easiest and fastest solution.

She pleads guilty and may find herself required to participate in one of the province’s Partner Assault Response (PAR) Programs, a 12-week group education and counseling program. The PAR program at Elizabeth Fry Toronto focuses on building strengths and strategies for an improved life, however the mark remains in the criminal record. A criminal record closes doors for her in many of life’s corridors, such as career, volunteering in the community, travel, staying in Canada or even children’s custody issues. Her life has changed forever. ■

St. George’s Society of Toronto (next page)

(from left to right)
Michèle D. McCarthy,
(President St. George’s Society), Gemma Napoli
(E.D. Elizabeth Fry Toronto),
Iren Tajbakhsh
(Manager Community Programs
Elizabeth Fry Toronto)



What's Happening at Elizabeth Fry



Girls Circle

Elizabeth Fry Toronto is now working with young women ages 13-24. This is a first for us. With a three-year grant from Health Canada, we are implementing the trademarked Girls Circle program. Girls Circle is designed to foster self-esteem, help

girls maintain authentic connection with peers and adult women in their community, counter trends toward self doubt and allow for genuine self-expression through verbal sharing and creative activity. The program addresses substance use and runs weekly for 8-12 weeks in communities across Toronto.

The Girls Circle program is particularly relevant now in light of the recent report from the Canadian Institute for Health Information (CIHI) stating that self-harm among Canadian girls is up 110%. Girls, five times more than boys, use self harm and physical pain to deal with emotional and mental distress. The report underscores the reality that more and more girls are in extreme despair and lack the support and coping skills to address the onslaught of daily pressures.

If you want to learn more about our new Girls Circle program, contact **Rehana Tejpar, Program Co-ordinator at 416 924-3708 ext. 224** or girlscircle@efrytoronto.org

Women's Book Club

The Phyllis Haslam Residence, our halfway house, is the first community site to offer the **Book Clubs for Inmates** program. While the program is normally offered in penitentiaries, it is now being piloted with us to expand to halfway houses. Since October, women living in our residence have been meeting once a week in the evenings to read, discuss, laugh and write their way to improved literacy, communication skills, and self-esteem. The book club exposes the women to inspiring heroines and offers hope and encouragement for a life beyond incarceration and experience with the criminal justice system.



To learn more about the program, check out www.bookclubsforinmates.com

St. George's Society of Toronto

On April 23, 1834, at the British Coffee House on the corner of York and Wellington Streets, a group of British citizens gathered to celebrate the Feast of St. George. Inspired by the generosity of England's patron saint, these individuals founded the St. George's Society of Toronto and became the first charitable organization in Toronto. Their early mission of helping immigrants settle in Toronto has continued to help at-risk communities and individuals.

We are most thankful for their financial gift to our Healing from Abuse program which provides one-on-one and group counseling for women seeking healing from trauma and abuse.

In addition to sharing a mission of helping, St. George's Society of Toronto and Elizabeth Fry Toronto share the reverence of a British agent of change.

Yes! I would like to support



Elizabeth Fry toronto
Hope. Strength. Justice.

PLEASE CHOOSE ONE:

Here is my **monthly gift** to provide stable, ongoing funding:

\$15 \$25 \$35

Other \$

OR

I am renewing my support with a **one-time gift** in the amount of:

\$50 \$75 \$100

Other \$

OR

You can make a safe and secure donation on-line at www.efrytoronto.org/make-a-donation

I authorize Elizabeth Fry Toronto to process my gift through my:

Cheque (attached)

VISA **Mastercard** **AMEX**

Pre-authorized Debit
(Attach VOID cheque.)

Note: Available for monthly gift only.

.....
Name (please print)

.....
Card No.

.....
Expiry Date

.....
Signature

.....
Today's Date

I understand that monthly gifts will be processed at the beginning of each month and I may change or cancel at any time.

This gift is **in honour of**
or **in memory of**

Elizabeth Fry Toronto members support our mission, vision and values and have voting rights at our AGM.

I would like to renew or purchase a membership

Individual Membership - \$10.00

Group Membership - \$50.00
Organization Name:

.....
(Membership fee is not eligible for an income tax receipt.)

I would like to receive the Out for Change newsletter

Please send by

mail or e-mail address:

.....
 Elizabeth Fry Toronto sometimes publishes the names of donors. Please check if you wish to remain anonymous.

I would like to include Elizabeth Fry Toronto in my will. Please send me information.

Elizabeth Fry Toronto respects your privacy and protects your personal information. From time to time we trade our mailing list with other reputable and like-minded charities. This allows us to find new donors to support our work. However, if you prefer not to have your name traded, please check this box

The Rotary Club of Toronto- Women's Initiative Committee



We are so grateful to the Rotary Club of Toronto Women's Initiative Committee for their grant contribution to our Healing from Abuse program. The committee is responsible for identifying hidden and neglected issues that confront women in our city. They identify those issues related to health, poverty, women's services and education and assess how the Rotary Club of Toronto can make a difference.

With the grant, we refurbished the group counselling room creating a warm and comfortable space in which clients talk, listen and heal together. We purchased a range of resources including videos, workbooks and most importantly take-home books for our clients. While we can provide support and comfort to clients when they are with us, a book that promotes self-love can lift one's spirits in those moments of sadness and isolation.

In addition, the grant is supporting the effort to ensure all our practices are trauma-informed beginning from when women make their first phone call to us to entering the building to participating in groups through trauma training for all staff. This is particularly relevant because more than 85% of women who have been incarcerated have experienced physical or sexual abuse. ■



Consider Us

In addition to spending time with family, the holiday season is a time to reflect on what we have, what we appreciate and what we want to change. While you are considering resolutions for 2015, we are asking you to think about the idea of a planned gift.

A planned gift or charitable bequest is one that is promised now and realized sometime in the future. Over the past years, Elizabeth Fry Toronto has received generous donations from supporters who believe in the work we do. They have remembered us in their wills, insurance policies by the way of an annuity, or in the form of tangible property.

Due to day-to-day fiscal demands, sometimes it is difficult to deliver on one's charitable ambitions. Making provisions for donations in your will allows you to realize your philanthropic objectives while maximizing tax and financial benefits.

There are different kinds of bequests. For each, you must use very specific language to indicate the precise direction of your assets and to successfully carry out your wishes.

If your will is on your mind, then consider a charitable bequest to continue helping marginalized women break free from the cycle of incarceration, poverty and homelessness. We encourage you to seek the services of a qualified and experienced estate lawyer to ensure that a gift is set up in the most appropriate way. ■