



CHRIS STRINGER

## COMMUNITY PERSONALITY

# Living in the present

In 2018, Lorinda Strang received the West Vancouver Chamber of Commerce Business Leadership Award for her work as Executive Director of the Orchard Recovery Center on Bowen Island.

The Orchard Recovery Center is an internationally accredited and licensed private addiction treatment facility located on Bowen Island.

"The Orchard's clients are provided an exceptional opportunity to reclaim their lives," Lorinda explains. "The goal is for them to leave feeling emotionally strong, personally accountable and enthused about lifelong recovery. We put the heart and science into addiction recovery."

Lorinda grew up in Dundarave in the '60s and '70s, attending Irwin Park and Hillside schools. Her favourite places included Dundarave beach, the Ambleside pool, Brunswick Bowling Alley, and the movie theatres. So how did this mother of three find herself helping develop, co-owning and leading a recovery centre for drug and alcohol addiction?

Well, Lorinda herself has been in recovery from alcohol addiction for 32 years. A series of circumstances in her young life led to her seeking the comfort of alcohol. Her mother's broken marriage when she was three was followed by living with an alcohol-dependent stepfather and finally the loss of her brother to an accidental drug overdose.

Lorinda's inner strength, along with strong positive family role models, have enabled her to live a full life as a wife, a mother and a business leader. Her mother

and grandmother were both strong, independent, single mothers, who opened and operated antique stores in various locations in Vancouver. Her mother ran her own store on Bowen Island until retirement. Lorinda reveals that she is following in her grandmother's footsteps; she was 39 years sober when she passed away.

She acknowledges her birth father, too, as a role model. They re-united when she was 21. She discovered later that he was Whitey, the little boy in the infamous "Wait for me Daddy" photograph from WWII.

The origin of the Orchard Recovery Centre dates back to 2001 when Lorinda and her husband, Gavin, were living on Bowen Island, raising a family and building businesses that included a restaurant, performing arts theatre, and a fitness centre.

Lorinda had been in recovery for 10 years when Gavin, ever the entrepreneur, discovered that Canadians, looking for a holistic addiction recovery experience, had to travel to the US. He planned to combine the businesses on their acreage to develop a centre that would offer the ideal space and environment for professionals to provide recovery services. There was lodging, food, a fitness

centre, gathering facilities and beautifully peaceful Bowen Island, close enough for access but far away enough for anonymity. Gavin, the creator and Lorinda, now the operator, opened the Orchard in 2002 and the business grew quickly as word spread about the idyllic facility and the quality team of professionals providing recovery services right here in Canada.

Over time Gavin moved on to more entrepreneurial endeavours and Lorinda continued her leadership commitment to the Orchard. "Today the business has expanded to an exceptional team of fifty employees and contractors providing their services in an environment that provides a feeling of safety and peace for our clients," says Lorinda, with a sense of gratitude and pride.

"Personally, the rewards of living in sobriety are immeasurable. In every corner of my life, I meet someone seeking advice for a friend or a family member who is being impacted by drugs or alcohol. By being open about life in recovery it has helped me overcome much of my social anxiety and has provided me the opportunity to be there for others who are going through similar struggles."



Lorinda and Orchard General Manager, Joanna Journet receiving Chamber of Commerce Business Leadership Award.

When asked for the code she lives by, Lorinda Strang offers a simple answer, "Live in the present moment." 🍷

For more information, visit [orchardrecovery.com](http://orchardrecovery.com).



"Wait for me Daddy!" 1942. Whitey, the little boy, is Lorinda's father.



Staff picnic, Crippen Park, Bowen Island.

Photos provided