



# Commence '17

DISCOVERING THE GOOD LIFE

**February 1-2, 2017**

An Annual Conference hosted by Community Living Ontario's Student Links  
Sheraton Toronto North 9005 Leslie St, Richmond Hill, ON L4B 1B2



## DISCOVERING THE GOOD LIFE

**P**hilosophers, theologians, neuroscientists, positive psychologists, and everyday people have committed themselves to two simple but profound questions: What is the good life? And how do I get it? These are particularly relevant questions to students with disabilities leaving high school, and anticipating what life will hold for them. Two internationally renowned teachers, Michael Kendrick and Bruce Anderson will put their minds to this universal but also individual question. Michael Kendrick will provide guidance for answering: How do we support our fellow citizens with intellectual disabilities to imagine better, to risk, and to take advantage of opportunity? How do we support them to discern interests, to speak freely, make decisions, and invite friends and allies to a fulfilling, meaningful and engaged life? How do you do this in your life? We'll need you: students, friends, service workers, managers and

leaders to discuss, imagine, and provide invigorating answers for this age old, and ever present question.

Often we have developed interesting plans and visions only to see ourselves fail in application. How do we develop the virtues, strength, and commitment to our envisioned good lives? How do we strengthen our resolve before barriers of exclusion, or an impoverished spirit? How might we develop individual and cultural resilience and hope? How do we commit to the belief that people have callings, gifts, and deep identities that ought to be honoured and shared? Bruce Anderson will shine a light on how gifts, hope and resilience can provide us with a foundation for discovering the good life.

The sessions will be interactive and will draw upon local people and their stories for inspiration. There will be plenty of inspiration, imaginings and gifts that you can bring back to your communities. Don't miss out.

## FEBRUARY 1ST

 **8:30 REGISTRATION AND BREAKFAST**  
**9:00 WELCOMING REMARKS**

### **9:15 - 12:00 MICHAEL KENDRICK:** ***DEVELOPING A VISION OF THE GOOD LIFE***

Michael Kendrick is an independent international consultant in human services and community work. His interests, involvements and writings have included leadership, service quality, the creation of safeguards for vulnerable persons, social integration, change, innovation, evaluation, alternatives to bureaucracy, personalized approaches to supporting people, and reform in the human service field. In this work he has occupied a variety of roles including being the Assistant Commissioner for Program Development with the Massachusetts government, the Director for the Institute for Leadership and Community Development and the Director of the Safeguards Project. He is very active as a public speaker and trainer as well as an evaluator, consultant, and advisor to advocates, governments, agencies and community groups. He regularly teaches at various universities and also writes extensively.

In this session Michael will discuss the importance of discerning people's deep identities, or callings. Michael will take a look at how we go about envisioning better, and raising our expectations for the Good Life. How do we get a taste for life, use our intuition, and explore the places, people, and activities that make for an engaged, meaningful and flourishing life? What are the social roles that can ground our preferences, passions and callings? How can those positive and personally satisfying social roles be sustained?



### **1:00 - 4:30 MICHAEL KENDRICK:** ***STRENGTHENING THE VISION***

In this session Michael will talk about designing both support for the vision, and ways forward so that the vision will be actualized. Who are the allies that need to be recruited? How do we strengthen our resolve? How do we come to decision? How can families provide support and be supported by each other? What about 'natural supporters'? How do we find and mobilize highly individualized resources? Michael will remind us to keep our eyes on the possibilities as we keep our eyes on the prize. We have seen considerable transformations in services and individuals in only a couple of generations. There are many possibilities ahead.

## FEBRUARY 2ND

 **8:30 BREAKFAST**  
**9:00 OPENING REMARKS**

### **9:15- 2:30 BRUCE ANDERSON:** ***FINDING OUR GIFTS IN THE GOOD LIFE***

Bruce is the author of *The Teacher's Gift: Using Your Core Gift to Inspire and Heal*, and two audio CDs: *Hope at Work: Creating Positive, Resilient Organizations* and *Our Door Is Open: Creating Welcoming Cultures in Helping Organizations*. He is a faculty/fellow of the Asset Based Community Development group at Northwestern University. Bruce started Community Activators with his wife, Gina. Community Activators is focused on three community development ideas. First, refining the distinctions between skills and gifts and developing tools that clarify and further the giving of gifts. Second, looking for opportunities to help people learn more about how to create and sustain welcoming groups, whether that's in a church, classroom, social service agency or other community place. Third, blending the explosion of neuroscience and optimism research with the practices of ancient community ritual, and building a usable model for creating and sustaining a hopeful group of any kind.

Individual gifts and callings are at the root of understanding and developing personal fulfillment. In this interactive session Bruce will guide participants through an exercise that will help to identify ones core gifts. When people can identify their core gifts they become able to offer, with ease and 'flow', the gifts only they can give.



### **2:45 - 4:15 BRUCE ANDERSON:** ***CULTIVATING HOPE AND RESILIENCE IN THE GOOD LIFE***



In this session Bruce will talk about cultivating hope and resilience in individuals and groups. Any vision requires ongoing commitment and vigilance. Hope helps us maintain that vision. How do we create this culture of hope, and resilience? What rituals will support us on the way? The road ahead is long, but along the way there is much hope and strength to gather.





**CONFERENCE REGISTRATION FEE: \$290**  
includes breakfast and lunch both days.  
Don't miss our early bird rate.

**Registration before  
December 1st is only \$ 270!**

**Accommodations:** great rates have been organized for registrants at two hotels both adjacent to the conference room. You can stay warm, you won't even have to leave the hotel! When booking you need to advise them you are requesting Community Living Ontario's rate.

**SHERATON - \$142 A NIGHT**  
**BEST WESTERN - \$108 A NIGHT**  
For further information you can contact:

**JOEL MACINTYRE** 1-800-278-8025 ext 236  
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**LINDA WHITE** 1-800-278-8025 ext 239  
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Registration will be available online Oct 1st at  
**WWW.COMMUNITYLIVINGONTARIO.CA**

For assistance with registration, and inquiries about subsidies please contact

amina@communitylivingontario.ca.

Limited subsidies are available for families.