

30th Anniversary



Walmsley Watercooler Newsletter

Special Edition

April 2024

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"The good life is a process, not a state of being. It is a direction not a destination."

- Carl R. Rogers

It is with gratitude that we release this special edition of our Walmsley Watercooler Newsletter. In Celebration of our 30th Anniversary we wanted to take you back to a time when this was our regular newsletter format. Truth be told it has some appeal, so let us know what you think.

To start off our celebrations we felt it was fitting to begin by giving thanks. We may be able to take credit for providing the services; however, we would not be able to have stayed in the business this long without having so many great relationships develop over the years.

As an employer enrolled in our EFAP we have a big shout out of thanks for all that you do in supporting mental health to your organization and staff! We think you may not hear it as often as you should, so thank you for being supportive and generous for your people.

Our counsellors are another large part of our success. There have been some great relationships built over the years: new counsellors joining our EFAP and seasoned ones leaving for retirement. We have had many years of positive feedback from clients and stories of success. All of our counsellors have worked seamlessly with us as we have grown, adapted to new technologies, and embraced new standards in providing client service.

We thank the employees that use our services, for the feedback they have given us over the years to share what works and what doesn't, which has allowed us to create a program that suits your needs and hopefully helps you succeed in maintaining a healthy mentality in all you do.

At the end of the day, providing great service is not without its difficulties. We learn from every mistake we make, and your feedback helps us improve our services each and every day. Our relationships with you have allowed us to create a service that leads to healthy workplaces, families and communities.

- from all of us here at Walmsley EFAP

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A Conversation Between Garth & Rob:

Robert: Tell me about how Walmsley first started and how it has grown as a company.

Garth: Walmsley EFAP started as a response to the lack of a good quality EFAP service in the Prince George region. Because it was primarily an industrial area, employers were concerned about safety and retention when their employees were affected by mental health issues. We found that putting the client first as our business model meant that our services were not only highly regarded but also enthusiastically received. One contract turned into two, then four. Word of mouth about positive experiences spreads quickly.

Robert: Absolutely it does. How did you manage to secure other contracts outside of Northern B.C.?

Garth: It wasn't easy. My family moved to Victoria, where there is less industrial work, which made up the bulk of the initial contracts in the North. Victoria was a completely different landscape and culture, but I knew that adhering to the values of Walmsley EFAP, putting people first, would be successful anywhere we went. I focused on smaller organizations whose values aligned with the company's, and sat down and met with them in person. Talking like this, human to human, is so much more effective than a phone call could ever be.

Robert: What have you had to change about Walmsley EFAP over the years?

Garth: There have been a lot of changes in the EFAP industry, especially now that seeking mental health help has become much less stigmatized over the years. We've expanded our network to over 200 counselors, and it is still growing! That is something I never thought would happen. And of course when COVID hit, we had to change our entire service method delivery, but we ended up having a lot more people seeking help virtually, which we are seeing continue even though the worst of the pandemic is over.

Robert: What kind of struggles have you encountered over the last 30 years running an EFAP company?

Garth: One of the biggest challenges is the uncertainty. There is a lot of competition out there, companies merge and contracts can end. There have been a couple of really touch and go moments, but we've persisted through those difficult times by staying true to who we are as a company, and people really see that. It sets us apart in the industry, and will continue to do so. I'm confident in that.

Upcoming Awareness Campaigns 2024:

March

Nutrition Month

8th—International Women's Day

15th—World Sleep Day

20th—International Day of Happiness

April

2nd – World Autism Awareness Day

7th – World Health Day

22nd – Earth Day

28th – World Day for Safety and Health at Work

May

Mental Health Awareness Month

15th – International Day of Families

17th – International Day Against Homophobia, Biphobia, and Transphobia

June

Men's Health Month

National PTSD Awareness Month

7th – 14th Multiracial Heritage Week

21st – International Day of Yoga



For the Funny Bone...

Q: Why did the counsellor bring a Walkman to the session?

A: He hoped that as the client 'played' through their mixed tapes of feelings that something would 'click'!

Q: How did a 90's counsellor change a light bulb?

A: They didn't, they just helped the bulb explore its feelings about being burnt out.

"My counsellor says that I have revenge issues, we'll see about that, won't we?"

Food for Thought

Cozy Banana Bread Recipe

3 eggs

½ cup butter

1 cup sugar

1 cups whole wheat flour

1 cup white flour

1 tsp vanilla extract

1 tsp baking soda

1 tsp baking powder

½ tsp salt

3 ripe bananas

¼ cup flax meal - optional

Preheat the oven to 350. Start by creaming the butter, sugar and eggs together. Once mixed, add the bananas and vanilla. Continue mixing until it is smooth. In a separate bowl mix the flour, baking soda, baking powder, salt. Make a well in the dry ingredients and add the wet mixture. Mix well. Pour batter into a greased bread pan and bake for 30 mins, or until a toothpick comes out clean. Allow to cool on a rack for 15 minutes. Slice and serve.

Robert: Where do you see the company in the next 30 years?

Garth: That's a tough question! If you asked me that in 1994 I don't know if I would have said that we'll spread across Canada, have a network hundreds of counsellors strong, and offer counselling so effortlessly over the computer. I think in the next 30 years, getting support for mental health will be even more widely accepted, which is always a good thing. I don't doubt that people will be continuing to see their counsellors virtually, but in the next 3 decades, maybe it will all be over virtual reality! A virtual office and chairs, maybe. I know people will also still want in person sessions, I don't think that will go anywhere. It can be tough to replicate that experience, even with technology.

Robert: So we won't be replaced by A.I. anytime soon?

Garth: No, there's something human about the counselling process that just can't be replicated by a computer program. Technology will always supplement, but never replace it.

Robert: How will Walmsley be celebrating this 30th anniversary?

Garth: We have some special activities planned over 2024, but we'll continue to do what we've always done well; connecting with people and offering the best services we can. It can be tempting to rest on your laurels when you've been around this long, but we want to be around for at least another 30 years. We're celebrating by acknowledging both the employers and counsellors who have been with us for many years. We will celebrate those relationships and the importance of in-person contact in all our work, but especially with the clients we serve. That's why I started this company, and I don't see that changing.

Garth Walmsley is President and CEO of Walmsley EFAP, Robert Baker became a principal owner in September 2022.



20th Anniversary: Garth Walmsley, front row, centre

The world 30 years ago... highlights from 1994

- Jean Chrétien was Prime Minister during the 35th Canadian Parliament.
- The Netscape browser was launched, and computer “cookies” first appeared.
- Forrest Gump was the most popular film
- The BC Lions win their third Grey Cup by defeating the Baltimore Stallions 26 to 23 in the 82nd Grey Cup played at BC Place Stadium in Vancouver. Vancouver's own Lui Passaglia is awarded the game's Most Valuable Canadian.



What's changed over 30 years

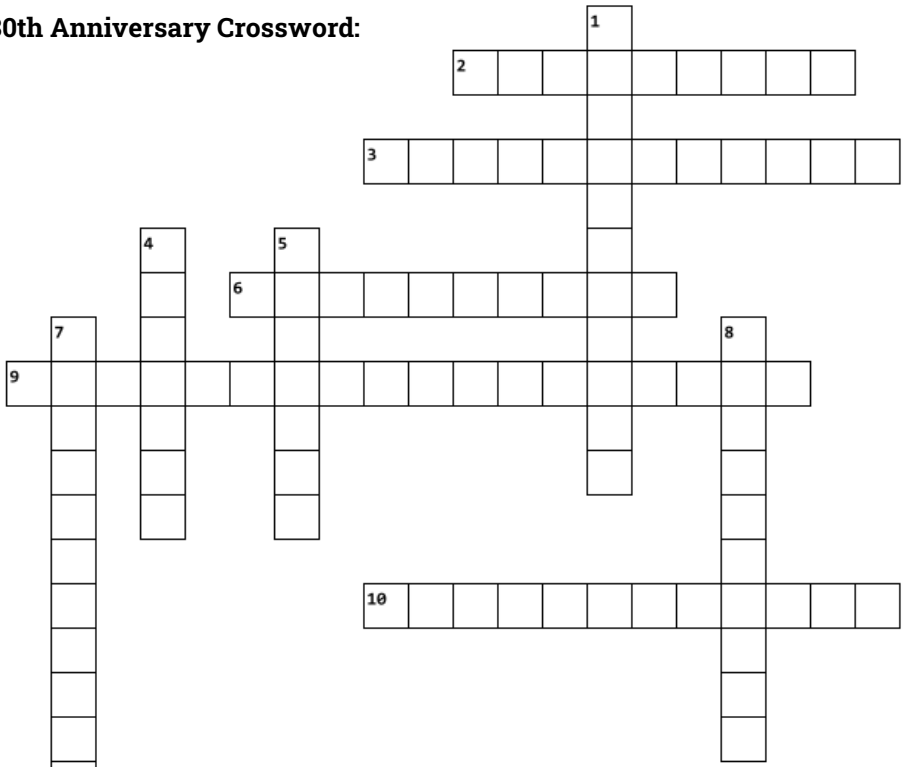
1990's therapy tools: A comfy couch and a notepad.

2023 therapy tools: A virtual reality headset, mood-tracking apps, and an AI assistant named Sarah!

We didn't have this in 1994!



30th Anniversary Crossword:



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|---|--|
| <p>Across</p> <p>2. Question asked by counsellors and 90's pop stars.</p> <p>3. City where Garth worked in an addictions outpatient agency.</p> <p>6. Garth has been doing a lot of this lately.</p> <p>9. Something technology can not replace.</p> <p>10. Walmsley EFAP values this.</p> | <p>Down</p> <p>1. The main focus of Walmsley EFAP.</p> <p>4. This can happen to workers, management, and light bulbs.</p> <p>5. The river paddled down during a team activity.</p> <p>7. This is becoming less stigmatized.</p> <p>8. Something lost in paperwork focused agencies.</p> |
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What is an EFAP?

Maybe you've heard a coworker mention the EFAP service, but weren't really sure what they were talking about. Perhaps you've even had it recommended to you by someone you know, but never followed through. For those of you who are unfamiliar with the EFAP, it stands for Employee and Family Assistance Program. Most companies have one, and if you're reading this, chances are Walmsley is yours. We offer counselling services to help you with whatever it is you're dealing with, from stress and anxiety to life transitions and parenting. It is a free, short-term service that can help you through a difficult time in your life, and point you in a direction that is healthier and more manageable. If you live with family members, they will be able to access services as well. It is also confidential; your employer will not know you are seeking support unless you tell them. Sessions are offered in person or virtually, meaning you could visit a local counsellor in their office, or be connected by video or phone with one across the province if you'd prefer.

It's easy to set up, just call 1-800-481-5511 or visit our website at www.walmsley.ca to fill out an online form or chat online with one of our intake specialists.