



APRIL 1, 2024 - MARCH 31, 2025

ANNUAL REPORT

Our Mission

The mission of Living Systems is to contribute to the knowledge of human behavior from a natural systems perspective and to offer that knowledge through the provision of counselling, training and education to interested members of the community.

Living Systems is a registered society supported by our generous individual donors, members and the following organizations:



NOTE FROM THE PRESIDENT

As the President of the Board of Living Systems Society, it is my pleasure to present this year's President's Report and to recognize the collective achievements and progress we've made over the past year.

This time of year is always a pleasure because we as a Board see all that Living Systems is accomplishing in relation to our Strategic Plan and the vision we have for the coming years. This Annual Report, allows us to appreciate the depth and breadth of Living Systems Society's programs which continue to reach into the community in meaningful ways.

Whether it's our Training program which looks to train professionals in Bowen Family Systems Theory and Therapy or our Educational programs which seek to provide meaningful groups for those in the community, such as: Leila's Family of Origin group for those who want to understand and work at their Family of Origin, Maybo's Bowen 101 course, a "Lunch and Learn" series that focuses on the fundamental concepts of Bowen theory, or Dixie and Katie's podcast, "Elevator Systems," these illustrate that we're doing a lot~!

By being the "leading provider of counselling based on Bowen Family Systems Theory in Canada," Living Systems is bringing a unique perspective to the Lower Mainland, something of value which no other organization in Canada is offering. And, it's positively impacting many individuals and families in the communities we serve.

These accomplishments are the result of the diligent and dedicated efforts of our team, particularly our Executive Director, Katie White, and our Director of Business and Finance, Leila Howard. Their leadership and commitment have been instrumental in fulfilling the vision and mission of Living Systems Society.

Katie's efforts have not only strengthened our vision for the Lower Mainland, but she has also strengthened our relationships within the Bowen Network. Her ongoing involvement with the Bowen Center's Network Program has further solidified our presence and reputation within the broader professional community. She's sought to promote creativity in how organizations like ours in the network can grow, as well as ways to bring Bowen Theory to the general public: Elevator Systems being one example. Maybo Lui's social media efforts continue to increase our visibility among professionals and the general public, and Dave Galloway's engaging blog posts have been well received and serve as an accessible entry point for those interested in Bowen Theory.

Leila's oversight of our financial operations has continued to keep us stable as she's managed the finances along with our Accountant, Peet Nienaber. We continue to be grateful for the support of the BC Gaming Commission which provided another significant grant. Additional grants from the City and District of North Vancouver, along with generous donations, have been greatly appreciated as we seek to fulfill our mission to "contribute to the knowledge of human behaviour from a natural systems perspective through counselling, education training and research."

We've appreciated the conferences this past year and look forward to the upcoming hybrid conference, on "Aging: Individual Challenge or Family Opportunity?" We'll be at a new location spending two days at the University Golf Club at UBC in October. Thanks to our Conference Committee.

Our ongoing success would not be possible without the dedicated individuals who support our organization. I would like to recognize Erica Guliker and Ariel Creighton for their longstanding commitment to Living Systems. We welcomed two new Board Members, Mary Hardinge and Robert Croezen and have appreciated their input.

In conclusion, we continue to be excited about the growth and direction of Living Systems and look forward to what the coming year brings~

Thank you.



MARK SMITH
BOARD PRESIDENT

NOTE FROM THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

This year at our Spring Conference, Dr. Kathleen Smith challenged us to reflect on the people or things in our lives we've stopped being curious about. It was a timely invitation to reflect on. After more than 52 years of existence, Living Systems offers countless opportunities to remain curious—about our past, our present, and our future. I am continually grateful for those who built the foundation of this organization and for those who now help sustain and grow its mission.

Over the past year, we've seen exciting developments, many born from this spirit of curiosity. Our clinical program now operates across three office spaces, two of which are staffed full-time. Together, we served over 300 clients this year. We continue to run three robust training programs, with 18 trainees and residents set to complete them this June. It's always inspiring to see how curiosity around Bowen Theory blossoms among our trainees at this time of year. We've had another successful round of Family of Origin trainings, and our new Introduction to Bowen Theory course has already run twice. Tuesday night clinical meetings remain a cornerstone, bringing together faculty, contractors, and network experts to share insights and research, we have over 30 people at most meetings. One of our most exciting new initiatives has been the Elevator Systems podcast, which has brought Bowen Theory to new audiences around the world and sparked valuable collaborations. With two seasons completed and more in the works, the new video content has helped expand our reach through social media.

April's conference, which focused on the use of Bowen Theory in clinical work, drew a large and engaged audience. And to top off the year, we launched a brand-new website, further enhancing how we connect with our community. Of course, this year also brought challenges. We've experienced a decline in client numbers for some of our counsellors, a few trainees were unable to complete their programs, and we continue to navigate the ongoing question of how best to deliver our offerings. We remain committed to finding the most effective ways to connect with people and share what we do. Our mission continues to ground us: *to make knowledge of human behavior from a natural systems perspective available to the community through counseling, training, education, and research*. I am so thankful for the dedicated faculty, contractors, board members, and volunteers who work tirelessly toward this goal.

Looking ahead, we have an exciting year planned. In October 2025, we'll host our first hybrid conference since the pandemic on the topic of aging at a beautiful location. In November, at the Bowen Center Symposium, we'll officially launch the 4th International Conference on Bowen Theory, which will take place in Vancouver in the summer of 2027. We're also preparing for another vibrant year of training and educational programs designed to inspire curiosity and deepen our work.

Whether it's through reading our blog, listening to the podcast, engaging in conversation at our conference, or participating in a program, we look forward to engaging with you. Writing this letter gives me a chance to reflect on how deeply our mission is being lived out and to express gratitude to the many people who make it all possible. While I can't name everyone, I want to thank all of you who contribute through teaching, supervising, learning, funding, listening, and challenging us to grow. Please turn to pages ##-## to see the many incredible people who support the work of Living Systems. I would like to specifically thank Mark Smith and the board for their guidance, and Leila Howard, who brings knowledge of our history and a strong commitment to our future. I also appreciate all of you who stepped into new roles in teaching and supervision this year and continue to bring forward new ideas. There is much to look forward to. If you'd like to get involved in any of our initiatives, I'd love to hear from you.



KATIE WHITE
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR



BETWEEN APRIL 1, 2024 - MARCH 31, 2025:

300

CLIENTS WERE SERVED IN-PERSON & ONLINE

1808

SESSIONS WERE CONDUCTED

10+

CITIES WHERE CLIENTS LIVE

20

INTERNS AND RESIDENTS WERE TRAINED

In the 2024-2025 fiscal year, with contractors, interns, residents and volunteers across multiple locations, Living Systems supported hundreds of individuals, couples and families in the Lower Mainland.



Living Systems works with individuals, couples, and families to address a wide variety of concerns such as:

- Depression, Anxiety, and Stress
- Marital issues, separation, divorce, parenting, or relationship problems
- Addictions
- Low self-esteem, assertiveness, anger, communication or career issues
- Grief, aging or health issues
- Spiritual or religious concerns

Living Systems uses a sliding fee scale to provide affordable counselling based on a client's gross income, number of dependents, and current circumstances. Services are provided by licensed therapists as well as interns and residents who are part of our clinical training program.



TRAINING & EDUCATION

Living Systems provides various programs to professionals and the public to educate individuals on the concepts and application of Bowen family systems theory. Living Systems also hosts an annual conference to bring leading researchers from various disciplines to Vancouver to explore Bowen family systems theory and other fields of study.

TRAINING PROGRAMS

CLINICAL INTERNSHIP PROGRAM

Instructors: Katherine White, Leila Howard, Jennifer Hassard and Lois Walker

This program is designed to provide a thorough introduction to Bowen family systems theory and therapy and contributes to students becoming competent relationship, family, and clinical counsellors, school counsellors, pastoral counsellors and social workers.

ADVANCED STUDIES PROGRAM

Instructors: Katherine White and David Galloway

The Advanced Studies program deepens the understanding of Bowen Theory and allows participants to gain further clarity in defining the concepts of Bowen Theory and their practical application.

CONTINUING STUDIES PROGRAM

Instructors: Pamela Richmond and David Galloway

The Continuing Studies program ran for a second year in 2024/25, this time with 8 participants who gathered monthly to discuss ideas about human development. This involved exploring contributions from neurobiology to anthropology, and holding these ideas up to how development is conceptualized in BFST. Participants prepared and presented beliefs papers at the midterm and final papers which they presented to the wider Living Systems community. As the year came to an end participants were asked for feedback regarding a focus for next year. There was a resounding interest in bringing theory to clinical practice, and to answer this call the theme for next year will be Triangles. Participants will engage in a deep exploration of dynamic triangles that they experience in their families and clinical practice, coupled with reading from Dr. Bowen, the wider Bowen community, and scientific literature that discusses the significance of the triangle as core relational process.

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Over this past year it has been immensely valuable to me to be able to think with the group as we grappled with ideas forged outside of the Bowen cannon and then brought these ideas back to BFST for contrast and consideration. This meeting of minds and alternative views has made an important contribution to my clinical practice and my ongoing engagement with Bowen Theory.



PAMELA RICHMOND
PROGRAM INSTRUCTOR

EDUCATION PROGRAMS



FAMILY OF ORIGIN WORKSHOP

Instructor: Leila Howard

This introductory family of origin workshop is for people motivated to develop and use their family diagram as part of the process of differentiation of self.

INTRODUCTION TO BOWEN THEORY

Instructor: Maybo Lui

This is a new six-week Lunch & Learn series exploring the core concepts of Bowen Family Systems Theory, and is scheduled to run twice a year. Each session focuses on one or more key concepts, with plenty of opportunities for discussion and reflection to support deeper learning.



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MAYBO LUI

COURSE INSTRUCTOR

It has been a rewarding experience planning a Lunch & Learn series to introduce Bowen theory. It is my goal to make Bowen theory more accessible, and I will continue to think through and explore different ways to present these important and nuanced concepts in a clear and engaging way.



ELEVATOR SYSTEMS PODCAST

In August, 2024, Living Systems premiered a podcast called Elevator Systems that works to present Bowen theory clearly, understandably, and with examples that relate to everyday life. Dixie Vandersluys came up with the idea of using an elevator pitch as a starting point for discussion on ideas and concepts of theory and Katie White agreed to co-host.

Over the past eight months, 2 seasons and 22 episodes of Elevator Systems have been produced. Dixie and Katie are just about to record Season 3 where guests will be discussing how Bowen theory is useful in thinking about relationships across the lifespan. The response to the podcast has been positive, with people listening in at least 8 countries.

Dixie would like to thank Katie for her time and support of the project, Dave Galloway for his technical help, Maybo Lui for promoting the podcast on social media, Dixie's son Luke for creating the intro/outro, and the guests who have decided to try out a "ride in the elevator."

CONFERENCE COMMITTEE

The conference committee has been busy this year planning two conferences. On March 7, 2025, we held an online conference, “The Hidden Patterns of Relationships: Clinical Applications of Family Systems Theory” with keynote speaker Dr. Kathleen Smith and other papers presented by Living Systems speakers Katie White, MA and Dr. Bruce Hiebert. 78 people registered for the conference and reviews had lots of positive feedback.

On October 17-18, 2025, Living Systems is offering a hybrid conference at the University Golf Club on “Aging: Individual Challenge or Family Opportunity?” Amie Post, MA will be the Bowen theory keynote speaker and two local scientists will also be keynote presenters, Dr. Annalijn Conklin from UBC and Dr. Theresa Pauly from SFU. The afternoons will have speakers and interviews with colleagues and faculty from Living Systems about specific areas of aging. We hope it will be a timely and informative conference.

In 2027 Living Systems will be hosting the 5th International Conference on Bowen Theory. A separate committee is being set up for this, and we are looking for volunteers! Please reach out to Katie White or Dixie Vandersluys if you are interested in being a part of this effort.

Finally, thank you to all of the members of the conference committee: Katie White, Leila Howard, Maybo Lui, Dave Galloway, Yvonne McKenna, Corrie Howard, and Denise Kwan (plus Mark Smith for the October conference). We each have our part and I’m pleased with how smoothly and efficiently we accomplish our goals!



DIXIE VANDERSLUYS
CONFERENCE COMMITTEE CHAIR



Living Systems Counselling is the leading provider of affordable counselling, training, and education based on Bowen family systems theory in Canada.

Our counsellors have assisted thousands of individuals and their families. This work helps individuals to function more effectively in relationships and in life.

Our vision is to contribute to the knowledge of human behaviour from a natural systems perspective. Our mission is to make knowledge of human behaviour from a natural systems perspective available to the community. We do this by providing counselling, training, education, and research.

NEW WEBSITE

Last November, the website went live after a complete revision of the site. This allowed us to implement several important features. One is a new look and feel this is also easy to maintain. We can now more effectively feature items on our home page. It also creates a more consistent brand image across the site. The upgrade provided usability features that have been almost mandatory, like cookie management and disability choices for users. This laid the foundations for ongoing, page by page, enhancements to improve our readability and SEO results.

The blog post and podcast series add several hundred page views per month. These items provide content for our social media presence, which creates traffic to our site. Both the blog and podcast are important ways that the public hears about Living Systems and Bowen Theory.

Thank you to Dave Galloway for all his work on the Website and technical maintenance.

Thank you to the dedicated and talented members of our Board of Directors and Faculty Members as well as our wonderful team of Interns, Residents and Contracted Counsellors.

BOARD OF DIRECTORS

- Mark Smith, MSW RSW, Board President
- Erica Guliker, MA, LMC, Secretary
- Ariel Creighton, Member at Large
- Robert Croezen, MSW, Member at Large
- Mary Hardinge, BAPsych, BEd and MEd, Member at Large

FACULTY MEMBERS

- Lois Walker, M.Div, RCC
- Katherine White MSc, RMFT, RCC
- Leila Howard HRMD, MA, RCC
- Devana Weiss, MA, RCC
- Lori-Anne Boutin-Crawford, MDiv, RCC
- Sharon Salomons M. Div, RCC
- David Galloway, Diploma, FEA
- Pamela Richmond, MSW, RSW, RCC
- Sarah Ruggier, MA, RCC
- Maybo Lui, MS, RCC
- Dixie Vandersluys, MA, CCC
- Jennifer Hassard, MSW, MSc, MBA

CLINICAL COUNSELLORS

- Lois Walker M.Div RCC
- Devana Weiss, MA, RCC
- Leila Howard, HRMD, MA, RCC
- Maybo Lui, MS, RCC
- Pamela Richmond, MSW, RSW, RCC
- Sarah Ruggier, MA, RCC

ASSOCIATE CLINICAL COUNSELLORS

- Catriona Remocker, MPH, RCC
- Lori-Anne Boutin-Crawford, MDiv, RCC
- Jennifer Hassard, MSW, MSc, MBA
- Denise Kwan, MSW, RSW
- Dixie Vandersluys, MA, CCC

RESIDENTS & INTERNS

- Deborah DeJong, BA, BEd
- Peter Yawney, BA
- Mimi Ting-Yen Yang, M.Ed
- Silvia Talamonti, RCC
- Denise Kwan, MSW, RSW
- Iryna Pauliukova, MACP RCC
- Adrienne Brown, PMP, B.A
- Rebecca Van Der Hijde, MA, BCBA, MMFT
- Sherri Waldman, MSW
- Pietro Pallotta, MA RCC
- Elena Latushkina, PhD, RCC
- Roberta Brandi Pfrimer, MA RCC
- Pablo Godoy, M.Sc
- Patton, Heather, MSW, RSW
- Miriam Reed NP, MA Candidate
- Annie Macintosh, MA
- Lucky Dhillon, MEd
- Mahe Nau Awan MSW, RSW, PhD

NOTE FROM THE BUSINESS & FINANCE DIRECTOR

Living Systems had a net profit of approximately \$5,782 for our March 31st, 2025, year-end financials. This profit is largely attributed to the net income from our April 17, 2024 and March 7, 2025 conference. This profit will be transferred to the conference fund on our balance sheet and will be utilized to support future conferences.

A big thank you for the generous financial support from our donors, the BC Gaming Commission, the District of North Vancouver, City of North Vancouver, and the Vancouver Foundation.

A summary of the March 31, 2025 Year End Financials will be presented at the AGM on May 29, 2025 along with the Society's Budget for the 2025-2026 fiscal year. We are in a solid financial position to continue to develop and expand our programs in an effort to extend the reach of our services to more people in BC and Canada. We also attract conference participants and students to our programs from other countries.

Thank you to Katie White for her steady leadership, innovative ideas and vision for the organization. Our faculty are a strong group of individuals who contribute to the advancement of Bowen theory in a variety of ways such as teaching, supervision, presentations, clinical work and or volunteering. Thank you to our Interns and Residents for whom we would not be able to offer our lower fee counselling service without them. Lastly, a warm thank you to Mark Smith and the Board for their support, oversight, and commitment to this organization.



LEILA HOWARD

BUSINESS AND FINANCE DIRECTOR

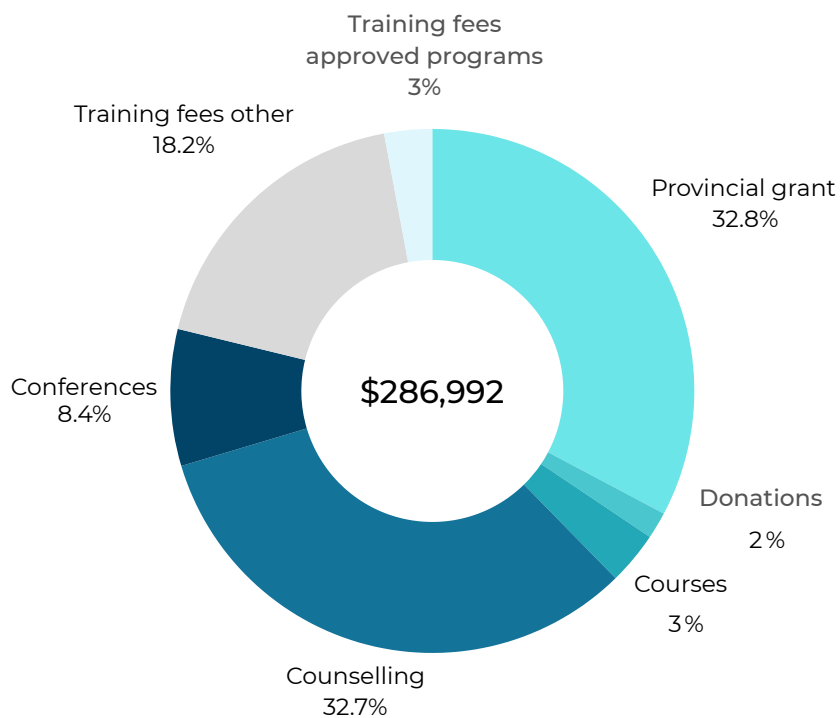
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This fiscal year I have enjoyed the opportunity of representing Bowen theory as a clinical supervisor and instructor. I have reflected on the rigor of what it takes to learn and apply this theory both in one's own family and clinical work. I have observed and appreciated the patience, discipline and curiosity involved in thinking systems.

2024-2025 FINANCIALS

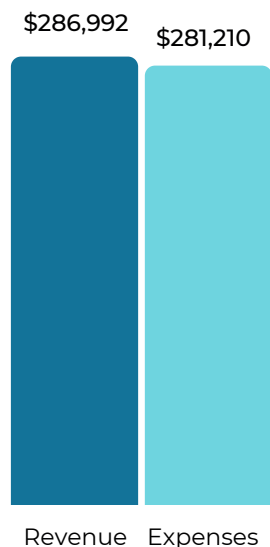
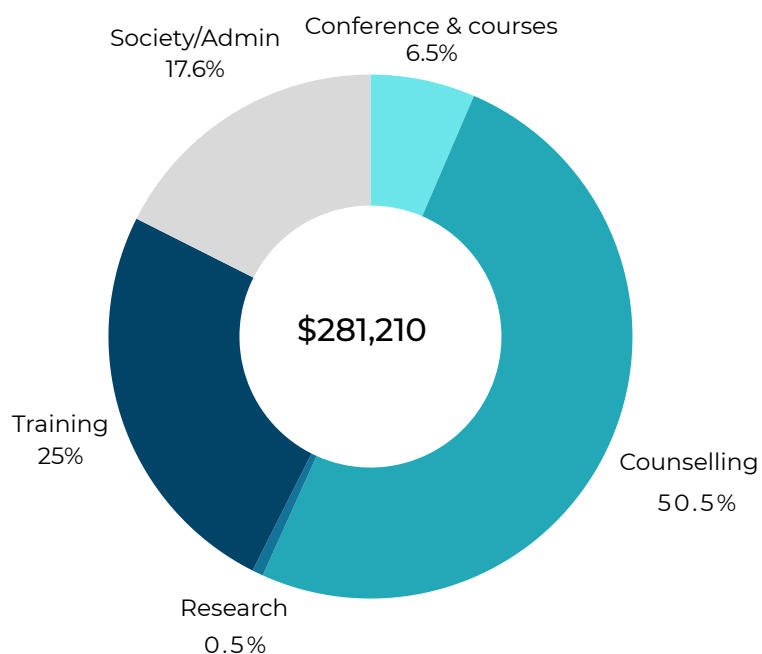
YEAR ENDING MARCH 31, 2025

Total Revenue: \$286,992



This year, Living Systems had a net profit of \$5,782

Total Expenses: \$281,210



ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

Living Systems gratefully acknowledges that our organization operates on the unceded and traditional territories of the Coast Salish people who have cared for these lands and waters for time immemorial. We recognize this acknowledgment is a small part of the bigger ongoing work to foster reconciliation.

As an organization which promotes mental health and wellbeing, we are aware that historic and ongoing overt and systemic racism have impacted the mental health of Indigenous peoples, and we condemn and denounce racism, oppression, and genocidal policies in every form. We also celebrate and acknowledge the dignity, worth, and value of all people. We are immensely grateful for the Indigenous people who have chosen to work with us.

In British Columbia where Living Systems operates, land acknowledgements are increasingly offered in public life to recognize the traditional territory of the Indigenous peoples who called the land home before the arrival of settlers/colonization. We humbly follow the Indigenous practice of recognizing and honoring the relationship of people to space and place. Through acknowledging whose land, we are on, we remind ourselves of the relationships that need repair and our ongoing commitment to reconciliation.

OUR LOCATIONS

North Vancouver:

#133 – 901 3rd Street West, North Vancouver

Downtown Vancouver:

915 – 1125 Howe Street, Vancouver

Burnaby:

200-5050 Kingsway Ave, Burnaby

CONTACT US



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