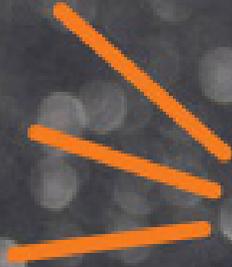


Breaking Free Foundation



# CASE FOR SUPPORT

Why you should give to our organization



**OUR PILLARS + SUCCESSES + GOALS + PLANS**

# OUR STORY

## From an awareness to a purpose

The *Breaking Free Foundation* (BFF) is a registered charity, and the brainchild of seven like-minded people who came together with a common goal to make an impact in the trauma community. We initially came together as a supportive group following the success of the first Victor Walk, which was an initiative created by Calgary Flames alumni, Theo Fleury back in 2013.

BFF was years in the making, after many hours of defining what the need was, and what we wanted our role to be. Some of us are trauma survivors, others are just hard-working supporters who want to make a difference in the community.

The name “Breaking Free Foundation” came to fruition because we felt that was the number one thing we wanted to accomplish, helping people break free from trauma. We recognize that trauma comes in many forms, and its effects are widespread and global. We hope to help others break free from trauma, and our charity will continue to evolve to support the people affected by trauma.

### **WHY THE ELEPHANT?**

We weren't sure for quite some time what kind of symbolism we were going to have attached to the *Breaking Free Foundation*, only that we wanted to keep the orange theme consistent between BFF and the Victor Walk, a colour that thousands of



Canadians have been proudly wearing since the inaugural Victor Walk, and a colour that represents courage as well.

A couple of the board members were in the depths of a conversation about healing and where their journeys had brought them so far, and how interesting it is how everything happens for a reason, the Victor Walk after all, brought them all together. It was in this recognizing of meaning, that they noticed we were all wearing elephants. Initially, this was just deemed synchronicity, but after some further research into the symbolism of elephants, it just made more and more sense.

Elephants have symbolic importance all over the world, from Eastern to Western influences, and there are some main symbolic themes: strength, stability and courage.

These themes really spoke to what we thought BFF should be about.

Elephants are caregivers in nature, and while looking after their own families, tend to other elephants in their community, and they form strong bonds with the elephants they spend time around. This is true of the trauma community we're trying to create.



# OUR MISSION

TO PROVIDE SURVIVORS OF TRAUMATIC LIFE EVENTS WITH THE TREATMENT AND SUPPORT NEEDED TO RECLAIM THEIR LIVES.

# OUR VISION

TO BUILD A HOLISTIC HEALING CENTRE FOR THOSE TOUCHED BY TRAUMA. WE AIM TO BE ACCESSIBLE AND OFFER A VARIETY OF THERAPEUTIC MODALITIES FOR ALL WALKS OF LIFE. TRAUMA AFFECTS US ALL DIFFERENTLY, AND WE NEED DIFFERENT PATHS BUT WE ARE ALL HEADED IN THE SAME DIRECTION — TO HEALING.



HELPING IS HEALING.

# WHY WE'RE HERE

By definition, trauma is a deeply distressing or disturbing experience.

The kinds of experiences that can be deemed traumatic are vast and differ from divorce, illness, natural disasters, abuse, war, torture...the list goes on and on.

Because the markers of trauma are widespread, millions of people around the world have experienced some form of trauma, making it one of the biggest epidemics to date.

## HOW BIG IS THE PROBLEM?

Because we believe that addiction and mental illness are simply side effects of trauma, we have an understanding of just how large a problem unresolved trauma is in Canada. To give you some perspective, here are some numbers:

In any given year, **1 in 5 Canadians experiences a mental illness or**

**addiction** problem. *(Mental Health Commission of Canada)*

*"Not everyone who experiences a traumatic event gets PTSD. Lots of people don't. Risk factors that contribute to the likelihood of developing PTSD include: exposure to childhood trauma, presence of other mental health problems like anxiety or depression, lack of a good support network and having biological relatives with mental health problems." — CBC via National Centre for PTSD*

Canada has the highest prevalence of PTSD out of 24 countries studied by the National Centre for PTSD; **9.2 per cent of Canadians will suffer from PTSD** in their lifetimes.

## WHAT IS THE FINANCIAL IMPACT?

**The economic burden of mental illness in Canada is estimated at \$51 billion per year.**

This includes healthcare costs, lost productivity and reductions in quality of life. *(Mental Health Commission of Canada)*

In any given week, at least **500,000 employed Canadians are unable to work due to mental health** problems. *(Journal of Occupational and Environmental Medicine)*

## WHERE DO WE NEED TO GO?

We hope to move all trauma sufferers from post-traumatic stress, to post-traumatic growth.

***"The story isn't me anymore, it's just a story. It no longer defines me. I think of post-traumatic stress as post-traumatic growth."***  
— **Theo Fleury from 'Conversations with a Rattlesnake'**



**\$51  
BILLION**

**This is the economic burden that  
mental illness in Canada alone is  
estimated at PER YEAR.**

# WHAT WE DO NOW

We aim to make trauma healing accessible to everyone, regardless of economic status. Healing is possible, and the tools and resources to help should be available to everyone.



## TRAUMA THERAPY GRANTS

The main focus of the *Breaking Free Foundation* is to help make trauma healing more accessible for everyone. One of the ways in which we are doing this, is through our Therapy Grant Program.

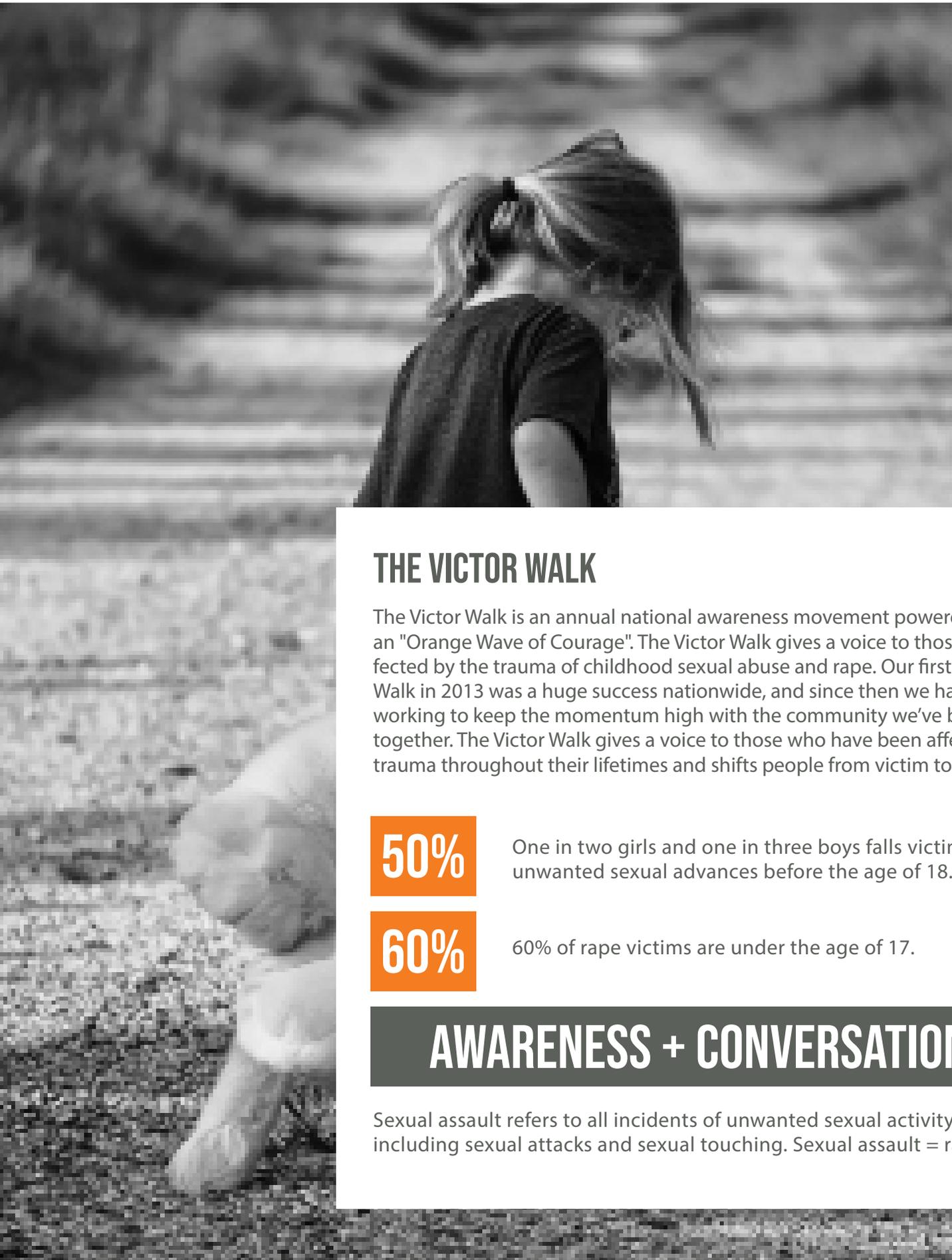
Applicants who are approved, will receive a \$750 grant, paid directly to a vetted, trauma-informed therapist with a psychology designation. We ensure the therapists we work with are accredited and specialize in trauma therapy. By paying them their full rate, we can also support the professionals in this field as well. Candidates can re-apply for a second grant as well.



## FREE MEET-UPS

Our twice-monthly meet-ups are one of our most successful programs and one that we are very proud of. Members of the BFF team lead a group conversation about trauma and healing.

People come to participate actively or simply as a listener, as these are safe spaces to connect with BFF and the trauma and healing community. Participants in the group have seen incredible growth and gain insights from their peers on how to cope, move forward and even thrive in their lives. Post-traumatic growth in action. Our meetings are held in donated spaces: Centre for Wholness & Wellbeing (Calgary meetup) and we host one online.



## THE VICTOR WALK

The Victor Walk is an annual national awareness movement powered by an "Orange Wave of Courage". The Victor Walk gives a voice to those affected by the trauma of childhood sexual abuse and rape. Our first Victor Walk in 2013 was a huge success nationwide, and since then we have been working to keep the momentum high with the community we've built up together. The Victor Walk gives a voice to those who have been affected by trauma throughout their lifetimes and shifts people from victim to VICTOR.

**50%**

One in two girls and one in three boys falls victim to unwanted sexual advances before the age of 18.

**60%**

60% of rape victims are under the age of 17.

## AWARENESS + CONVERSATION

Sexual assault refers to all incidents of unwanted sexual activity, including sexual attacks and sexual touching. Sexual assault = rape.



# TESTIMONIALS FROM THE PEOPLE WE HELP

"To those of us who are just beginning our journey of healing, knowing where and how to start can be an overwhelming and intimidating process. The guidance and direction that the *Breaking Free Foundation* provides is crucial in helping a person take the first step. A step that can easily be abandoned if trying to face it alone." — Anonymous

"I cannot express in words the gratitude I have for the *Breaking Free Foundation*. I have made some really good friends and we support each other between meetings." — Anonymous

"Thanks to *Breaking Free Foundation's* grants I was able to continue to further the healing process with [my therapist]. The grants provided me a critically needed continuity and consistency and allowed me to explore and resolve some major blocks due to trauma that were preventing me

to enjoy life, take action, move forward, decrease stress and anxiety substantially and be a better version of myself." — Anonymous

"My experience with the people who work, volunteer and partner with the *Breaking Free Foundation* has been inspirational, empowering and nurturing. These people are survivors, warriors and Victors who not only care deeply about their fellow Albertans, but understand the difficulty and obstacles of the journey that lies ahead for people just beginning to seek treatment." — Christine

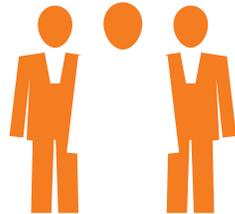
**"If it weren't for the *Breaking Free Foundation*, I probably wouldn't be here." — Roger**

# OUR NUMBERS

VICTOR WALK  
MOVEMENTS  
ACROSS CANADA

39

Since 2016, there have been Victor Walks in Manitoba, Saskatchewan, Ontario, Alberta and British Columbia.



93 MEET-UPS

55 support meetings facilitated for trauma survivors from 2016 to 2022.

THERAPY GRANTS:  
242 RECIPIENTS



From program launch in 2016 to March 2023.

Our ability to give out Therapy Grants is limited only by our funding. We have a waiting list of 180+ Albertans living with PTSD at any given time.

AFFILIATE  
FUNDRAISING

We are eligible recipients for **Donate-A-Car** and **Benevity**.



164

APPROVED AND VETTED THERAPISTS ARE CURRENTLY PART OF THE BREAKING FREE FOUNDATION TRAUMA THERAPY PORTFOLIO.

OUR BUSINESS



We generate income through **donations** only.

We have received three operating grants to date.



We have operated lean from 2019-2023 with only one part-time contractor and all other work being done by volunteer directors.

WE RECEIVED CHARITABLE STATUS IN 2019.

# WHY WE NEED FUNDING

There are millions of Canadians struggling with the lingering effects of trauma. *Breaking Free Foundation* is working hard to make trauma healing accessible to everyone, regardless of economic status. Healing is possible, and the tools and resources to help should be available to everyone. As an organization that receives no government funding, we're reliant on the kindness and generosity of both private and corporate donors like you.

## **The Breaking Free Holistic Healing Centre**

Our vision for our foundation is to bring all of our successful programs under one roof, where Calgarians and Albertans can access them every day of the week. In addition, we want to bring a number of holistic healing modalities into our centre as well. We look at mental healthcare under a unique view, which includes offering:

- EMDR: Eye Movement Desensitization and Reprocessing is an integrative psychotherapy approach
- Meet-ups
- Meditation
- Yoga
- Art therapy
- Naturopathy
- Nutrition
- Neuroscientists
- Equine therapy
- Obstacle/high-ropes courses
- Sweat lodge
- Music therapy

We hope to make the services at the centre free to clients, after an application process. An initial assessment with clients will result in a recommended healing path with our various practitioners. There is no one path to healing, but healing is possible. Many people require multiple avenues for treatment, and that's why we will have a variety of services available. In addition, we would host weekly meet-ups open to anyone through our centre as well.

Examples of how far your contributions go: the average EMDR session is \$300 an hour, equine therapy is \$150 an hour, art supplies are \$50.

A grayscale photograph of a tunnel with a bright light at the far end, creating a strong sense of perspective. The tunnel walls are textured and the ceiling has some structural elements. A large, semi-transparent orange hexagon is overlaid on the lower half of the image, serving as a background for the text.

# \$5M

**Is the estimated amount we need to build a one-of-a-kind holistic trauma healing centre in Calgary, Alberta.**

# WAYS TO CONTRIBUTE

1

## MAKE A DONATION

We are a registered charity (752865311 RR 0001). Donations over \$25 will receive a tax receipt. Donate online: [www.breakingfreefoundation.ca](http://www.breakingfreefoundation.ca)

2

## DONATE A CAR

If you are looking to donate a car, you can turn your vehicle donation into generous dollars to support us. Working on our behalf, Donate a Car Canada will accept your vehicle for donation — running or not.

3

## SPONSOR A SIGNATURE EVENT

Every year, Breaking Free organizes one signature fundraising event, our Golf Tournament. There are many ways for you or your company to take part, from event sponsorship to buying tickets and more.

Supporting a signature event not only allows you and/or your company to give to us in a fun and meaningful way, but it also provides valuable opportunities to raise awareness and position your brand as a community partner.

To learn more, visit: [breakingfreefoundation.ca](http://breakingfreefoundation.ca).

4

## HOST YOUR OWN FUNDRAISER

Have a great idea to host a fundraiser for a cause in your community? Consider making us your charity of choice and put on an event or initiative with the proceeds going to Breaking Free. We always recognize the amazing companies who fundraise for us.

# MORE EASY WAYS TO SUPPORT

## **GIFTS/BEQUESTS**

Leave a donation to *Breaking Free Foundation* in your will.

## **NAME A ROOM AT OUR FUTURE FACILITY**

Purchase the naming rights to a room at our future healing centre as a way to honour a loved one or leave a legacy.

## **GIFTS OF LIFE INSURANCE**

An affordable way to make a larger gift to *Breaking Free Foundation*.

## **NAMING RIGHTS**

Naming rights on healing programs or rooms at the healing centre for gifts over \$10,000. Naming rights on the centre itself for a gift exceeding \$1-million.

## **DONATE SERVICES IN-KIND**

Donate essential services like marketing, accounting or other business functions.

## **CHARITY OF CHOICE**

Make *Breaking Free* your company's charity of choice for any fundraising activities. Or create a corporate donation matching program for your employees who donate to *Breaking Free*.

## **FRIENDSHIP WALL**

Gifts of over \$5,000 will result in your name or company's name being placed on our future "friendship wall" in the healing centre, a place for us to recognize the people who have helped make our vision possible.

**DO YOU HAVE ANOTHER IDEA FOR HOW TO SUPPORT  
BREAKING FREE FOUNDATION? LET'S TALK:  
CONTACT@BREAKINGFREEFOUNDATION.CA**



Breaking Free  
Foundation

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