REAL PEOPLE & REAL PROBLEMS

“Kim Muscroft-McDonnel of real consulting offers hope to people dealing with a myriad of problems and conflicts.”

Many people in modern life feel stressed and overwhelmed by situations they face. These situations often include: conflicts in family, marriage/relationships, problems at work, financial stress, health issues, addictions, and grief due to painful losses.

Kim Muscroft-McDonnel has been helping people with these types of challenges for over twenty-five years. Born and raised in British Columbia, Kim moved to Dundee, Scotland in her early twenties. While raising four children, she returned to school to obtain her Bachelor’s Degree in Community Education, specializing in assisting individuals and community groups to problem-solve and develop coping skills. She supplemented her degree with counselling training to assist her in working with youth, which, prior to her degree, she had been doing for several years. She worked in a program that was the first of its kind in Scotland. Kim worked with young people, often street kids, who experienced many kinds of issues such as violence, drug and alcohol abuse, family and school difficulties and conflict with the Criminal Justice System. Kim later worked with families who were victims of crime and this helped her to see both sides of the fence. There was high unemployment in that area of Scotland and a great deal of poverty, so the problems people faced were very challenging. At this time, Kim began training in mediation in order to further aid the people she was working with.
After 20 years of living in Scotland, Kim moved back to Canada in 1999 and began work facilitating mediation in Calgary with young offenders and victims of crime. She created the Crime-Impact Program to assist youth in understanding the victim perspective, how to repair harm, and how to help change their lives. In 2001, Kim relocated to High River and, in 2002, set up her own private practice in counselling and mediation. As a Registered Family Mediator (with Alberta Family Mediation Society and specializing in family) Kim continues her education on an annual basis, taking advanced courses in mediation and counselling to help hone her skills. Kim is also registered with FSCD (Family Supports of Children with Disabilities) and provides therapy and counselling to children, while assisting parents and supervising aides. She also recently became certified as a Life Skills Coach with the Confederation of Coaches in Canada.

Earlier in her practice, Kim found the majority of her clients were women and teens but is now seeing an increase in couples and families who are trying to rebuild their relationships. Kim also works with couples who are either going through a separation or contemplating a divorce. With divorce in Alberta, the courts are mandating that couples go to mediation first to find a way through things before it ends up in court. Sometimes Kim will get people who have huge legal fees and still no settlement, which makes it difficult. Kim does her best to provide mediation and counselling for people to discuss their needs, make sense of things, and have a clearer focus so they can make sound decisions and reduce costs.

Kim explains that even once divorce is settled, parents may experience issues and conflict with their children. Common examples include one partner remarrying, leaving the child(ren) upset, a child threatening to go live with the other parent, and many other cases. Issues left over from the divorce often arise and for years to come people have to learn how to cope and deal with them. These issues are not exclusive to the nuclear family - they can also occur in the blended family context, causing tremendous anxiety and stress as a result.

Kim finds helping individuals, couples, and families in rebuilding their relationships and marriages very rewarding. This may include assisting couples to communicate better and resolve their conflicts, parents to re-connect with their children, extended family to re-connect with one another and supporting individuals experiencing family/domestic violence to redefine and rebuild their lives. Individuals may suffer from depression, grief or trauma through many challenging experiences they face.

**real consulting**

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These issues often include divorce, bereavement, workplace issues (which present a huge problem for both employer and employee) and many others. By providing emotional and practical skill sets, Kim helps support all parties through mediation and counselling. Emotional (Anger) Management and Life Skills Coaching courses are provided through her business continuously, as well as many other community workshops all facilitated by Kim.

Kim’s vision is to provide the High River and the wider rural communities with a “grass-roots” counselling and mediation service; one that is affordable for individuals, couples, families and businesses who are in need of help. While providing skilled, empathic and confidential counselling and mediation, Kim also strives for a service that is “user-friendly.” In other words, a comfortable and non-threatening environment for those who may have never partaken in counselling or mediation; trust and credibility are absolutely vital. To further increase accessibility for her clients, Kim’s services are flexible and include evenings and weekends.

One thing which is clearly evident with Kim is the compassion and concern she has for her clients. She believes everyone faces problems in life, from time to time, and that each person deserves respect, confidentiality, and hope; her business, real consulting, is helping to make a difference in those people’s lives.