

Uncommon Entrepreneur

Courage to Reveal Secrets so Deep Most Hide in Shame

by Xenia Stanford

When Bea Weatherly was born and grew up in “the little house in the coulee” in small town Alberta, she expected her life would be much like her parents. Finish high school, fall in love, get married, raise children in a loving happy home - most of all that her children would turn out like her and her five siblings. Normal! So dreams don't always turn out exactly how we picture them. Perhaps not even a dream, just an expectation of an ordinary life was what Bea thought was her road ahead. Her Dad always told her to dream big and “Bea, you should write a book.” She had no idea what to write about in such an ordinary life.

She became a teacher like her mother and her older sister. That was an unspoken expectation too. Because Mom and Big Shari-Lee, as her younger sisters called her, both were teachers, she and her younger sister believed it was expected they would become teachers too and they did. Her three brothers all worked in oil and gas technology just as their father did. Bea married and had three children, just as expected.

When exactly her life went off track, she is not really certain. It just came upon her gradually until wham! Some life-changing events derailed the anticipated path and created secrets most of us would regard as shameful. Yet when called courageous, this author, businesswoman, speaker and mother of three, doesn't really see it that way.

“Secrets kill, truth liberates” she says, “When you share your burdens, everyone is empowered.”

It is not that this was part of her upbringing either. The family she came from was loving and happy, but proud. Maybe proud is not the right word according to Bea. Yet, it was sort of protective pride. Circle the wagons pride. They were close-mouthed, private people. What happened at home stayed at home. What a different route Bea has found! One that is open, public and proud – rightfully so – proud for the obstacles she and her children have overcome and what they all realize should be shared so others can learn from their journey. That is why Bea Weatherly is proud to write *A Gift of*

Grace: A Mother's Journey with her Son's Schizophrenia. She tells this secret openly now. Not surprising that other people who rarely spoke of their family's experience with schizophrenia suddenly tell Bea, “Yes, I know what it is like, my son... my brother... my mother... or... has schizophrenia too.” And in sharing there is a sense of relief. A sense of not being alone. Sense that would not be there had Bea not shared her story with them.

How her life went from mundane to what she calls “bizarre” cannot be told in a single breath. It started with baby steps, until she realized what her father must have known the future held in store for her. She felt she had a story to tell. She signed up for a writers' retreat. Her mission statement unveiled this way,

... tonight is the night I have been waiting for. I loved standing just like Ed stands at his self-help meetings and takes his turn to speak: “Hello, my name is Ed and I'm an alcoholic”. Only if the truth be known, he is also, “Hello, my name is Ed and I'm an addict.” “Hello, my name is Ed and I have schizophrenia”. Well, if it were me, I would say and, actually tonight I did stand and state, “Hello, my name is Bea Weatherly and I am an author. I have recognized my worth as a special gift and I am writing about my journey with my child's schizophrenia complicated by addictions, homelessness and a myriad of other issues. I have had issues with myself – I haven't discovered who I am, but I'm on a fast track now for finding out. I am excavating my authentic self – I have had a vision of my greatness - yes, I am not going to fear my success. I have the courage to take the bull by the horns. I am now a mental heavyweight which when defined means I have lifted many fears from my experiences and am not a mental lightweight anymore. I think I have my black belt in mental heavyweight. I am living my truth. I now know what my purpose in



life is! I have empowered my children and my students and now I am reclaiming my power and I am going to teach women to nurture themselves and live their own truth. All we ever need in this life to be happy - all we need to do is look within - I, Bea Weatherly have all the resources to be the powerhouse for other women. I will not be small, so not to make others uncomfortable. That is not good - I will be my truth - I will think, speak, act and achieve peace and harmony.

She was the best mom she could be. She modelled respect, love and generosity. She sees that in her children. Even though her son tripped and fell, felt he was broken, he was able to pull himself up and carry on. He started learning all over again that he is worthy of love, to forgive himself, to love himself...

Bea taught her children that no matter how many stumbles, they can still stand up and be proud. Proud and open. Proud and healing. Proud in teaching the rest of the world the valuable lessons they have learned. Incredibly proud of their mother for standing tall and saying, “Hello, my name is Bea Weatherly. I am a mother, teacher, author. I am here to help you stand proud, no matter what.”

To book Bea to speak to your group or order her book, contact Upside Publishing and Productions, website www.beaweatherly.com, email beaweatherly@shaw.ca, phone 403-366-5490.

**See page 12
for more
information on
Bea's Book**