



Do Feel GOOD

COMMUNITY MEMBERS' PERSPECTIVES ON ACHIEVING
FINANCIAL AND EMOTIONAL WELLNESS THROUGH ACTS
OF KINDNESS AND COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

FEATURING 9 INTERVIEWS!

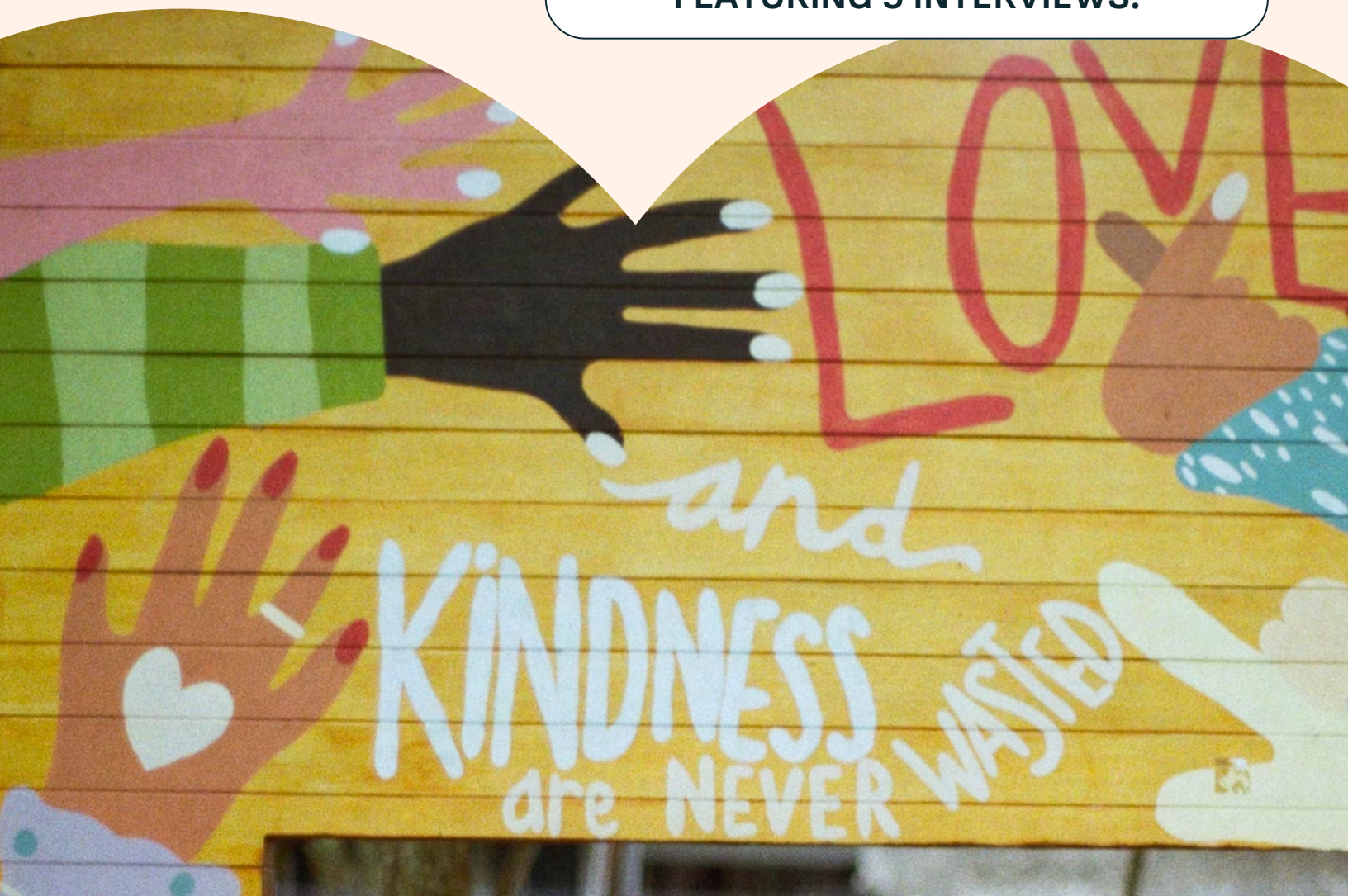




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Y4Y Québec is a non-profit organisation committed to addressing the issues facing English-speaking youth (ages 16–30) across Québec. In addition to its many youth-focused programs and initiatives, Y4Y takes pride in publishing multiple policy documents concerning the situation of English-speaking youth throughout the province, holding outreach events that strengthen community at the local level, bringing information to important stakeholders in government, supporting youth leadership locally, and having fun while doing so!



The Wellness Liaisons project aims to shine a spotlight on holistic wellness in a university context across Québec. Funded by the Public Health Agency of Canada through the Community Health and Social Services Network (CHSSN), this project addresses the gaps in mental health programming that currently rely heavily on traditional therapy/psychotherapy. Three targeted areas of wellness are explored; physical health, emotional health, and financial literacy. Wellness Liaisons hailing from three Québec post-secondary institutions introduce holistic wellness practices by bringing together their community, wellness practitioners, and mental health service providers.



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y4yquebec.org

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Preface

Dear readers,

Welcome to the Do Good, Feel Good Magazine where creativity meets insight and inspiration sparks from every page.

In this issue, we are thrilled to present a collection of featured interviews and stories that reflect financial and emotional wellness through community engagement. Nine community members were asked to share about the following topics:

- Personal experiences with community service and acts of kindness
- The emotional and psychological benefits one has observed or experienced when giving back to the community
- The connections one sees between financial well-being and helping the community
- Insights or recommendations for individuals and organisations looking to promote both community service and emotional wellness

Thank you for being a part of Y4Y's Wellness Liaison community.

Happy reading!

Warm regards,

Bon

Editor-in-Chief, Financial Wellness Liaison for Y4Y Québec



ABOUT THE EDITOR-IN-CHIEF



BON

STUDENT, VOLUNTEER, MENTAL HEALTH FIRST AIDER

Besides being a full-time college student, Bon is a passionate volunteer, avid reader, as well as a dedicated writer who has a deep love for creative writing.

Over the years, Bon has been working with various organisations, and for initiatives dedicated to acts of kindness and community service. As a Financial Wellness Liaison for Y4Y Québec, Bon has had the privilege of witnessing the transformative power of altruism and the sense of fulfilment that comes from helping others. She urges to use her writing as a force for good to share perspectives that will shed a light on relevant matters.

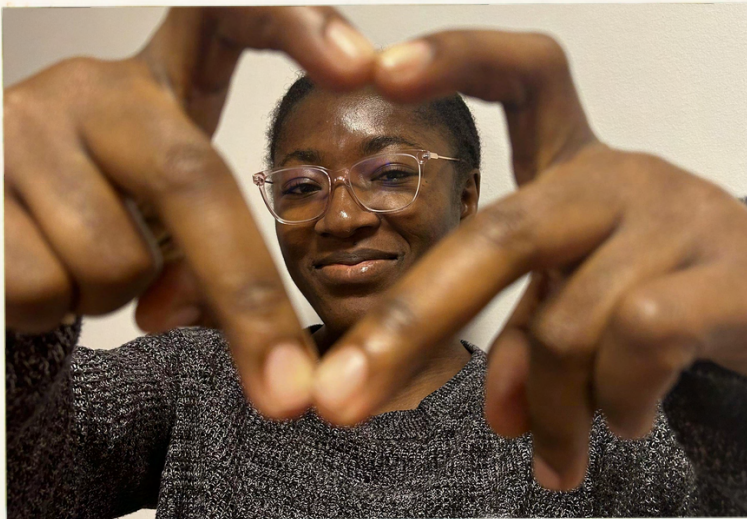
Bon, xoxo

Ruth

is originally from Congo, but grew up in South Africa. She recently moved to Québec City and is now a student at CEGEP Champlain St. Lawrence, a passionate volunteer, and a member of her college's Health & Wellness club. In addition, Ruth is also a caregiver who works in an old age home. In the future, she plans to study at McGill University in the field of Social Work.

Ruth finds herself to be "kind."

Ruth thought this interview was really "fun!"



What inspired you to get into working with the community?

This reminds Ruth of when she was younger and lived in a situation where she was in need of a lot of things. Fortunately, many people came to help her not only for material needs, but for mental health needs as well. This then brings Ruth to question **what could happen to people who didn't have that kind support like she luckily had**. For instance, she says: "Some people even committed suicide because they didn't have anyone to talk to." Therefore, for Ruth, it was important to have people around her, and that's also why **she believes in giving back since she knows all too well what it's like to be in a place where you need somebody**.

Have you noticed any correlation between engaging in charitable activities and an improved sense of personal fulfilment?

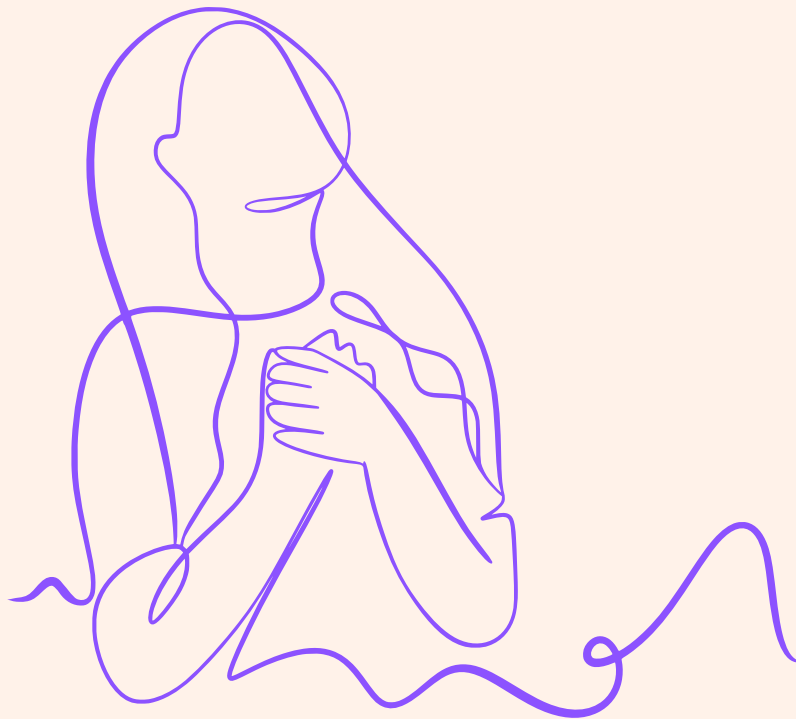
It's an absolute yes. Ruth explains: "I personally find that most of the time people think that in order to feel good, things have to be done for them. However, to me, **there is so much more fulfilment and a greater sense of purpose in helping somebody else.**"

How do you think cultivating a culture of giving back within a community can positively affect the overall emotional health of its members?

As a sociology student, Ruth actually found that **in communities where people don't have a tendency of giving and helping each other, the overall health of people in these communities deteriorates**. She firmly believes that in order for the community to grow, as humans, aka social beings, we need to help each other. "It's just like **everyone brings a brick at a time in order to build a house,**" Ruth adds.

Can you share any personal stories where you witnessed the reciprocal nature of doing good and feeling good?

Ruth was once able to help a girl out while the girl was struggling to print something. The girl got so emotional and touched because Ruth helped her. This surprised Ruth since she didn't think of what she did as a big act, still, when she saw how happy Ruth's action made the girl feel, it made Ruth feel great that she was able to help someone when that person was in need. **Helping someone out is also something that Ruth shared that she will continue doing in her everyday life.**

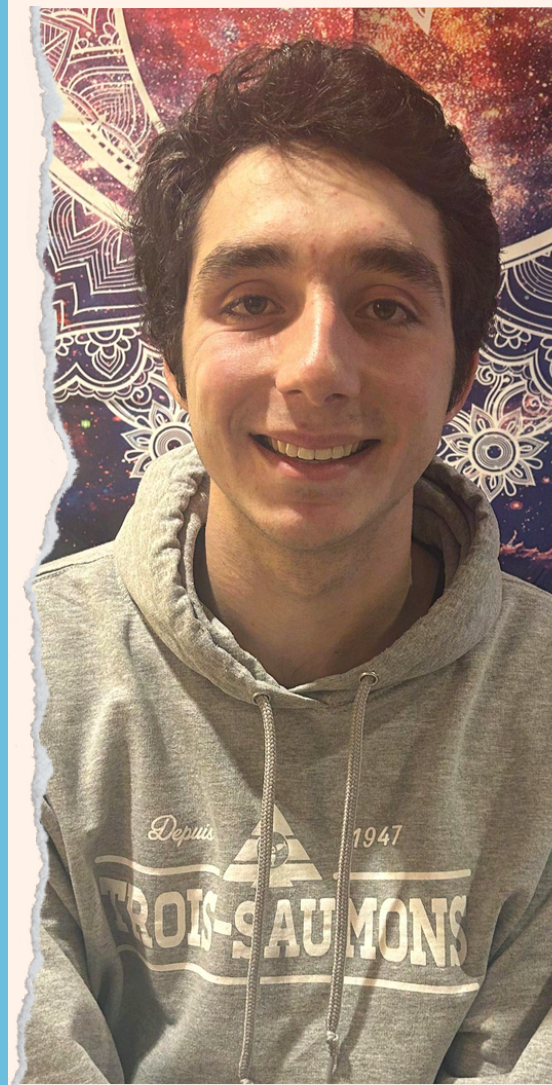


Justin

is currently a Health Science student, a Mental Health First Aider, a peer-tutor, and an athlete at CEGEP Champlain St. Lawrence. Aside from numerous bursaries that he got for his implication for the community, in high school, Justin did “Le Programme d’éducation intermédiaire (PÉI),” which is a program that requires students to complete a certain number of hours of volunteer work in exchange for a learning framework that fosters international sensibility, creativity, critical thinking, and compassion. Justin is also the winner of his CEGEP’s Men Wellness Bursary, the finalist of Force Avenir’s Involved Students Award.

If Justin had to describe himself using one word, it would be “outgoing.”

He found this interview was “important” because he believes that it is important to have this conversation.



What initially inspired you to get involved in community service, and how has that motivation evolved over time?

Due to the nature of his program in high school, Justin was introduced to various volunteer opportunities, and as he got involved with those activities, he started to feel a sense of well-being with what he did. Therefore, he started to volunteer more and more to a point that he exceeded the minimum hours of volunteering that was asked for. Justin justifies this was because **the “pay” that he received through getting involved with the community was priceless since he got to learn so much more about himself.**

Do you see a connection between participating in charitable activities and an improved sense of happiness?

Justin finds that by helping others, he helps himself in certain ways at the same time because he knows that not only do his acts of kindness – whether they are big or small – have an impact on the life of others, but they also make him feel fulfilled. Moreover, he believes that **helping others and working with different communities helps him become more open-minded, sensible, and less judgemental.** These are things that one cannot always learn in their day-to-day job, Justin adds.

How might promoting a culture of giving back enhance the overall emotional health of people?

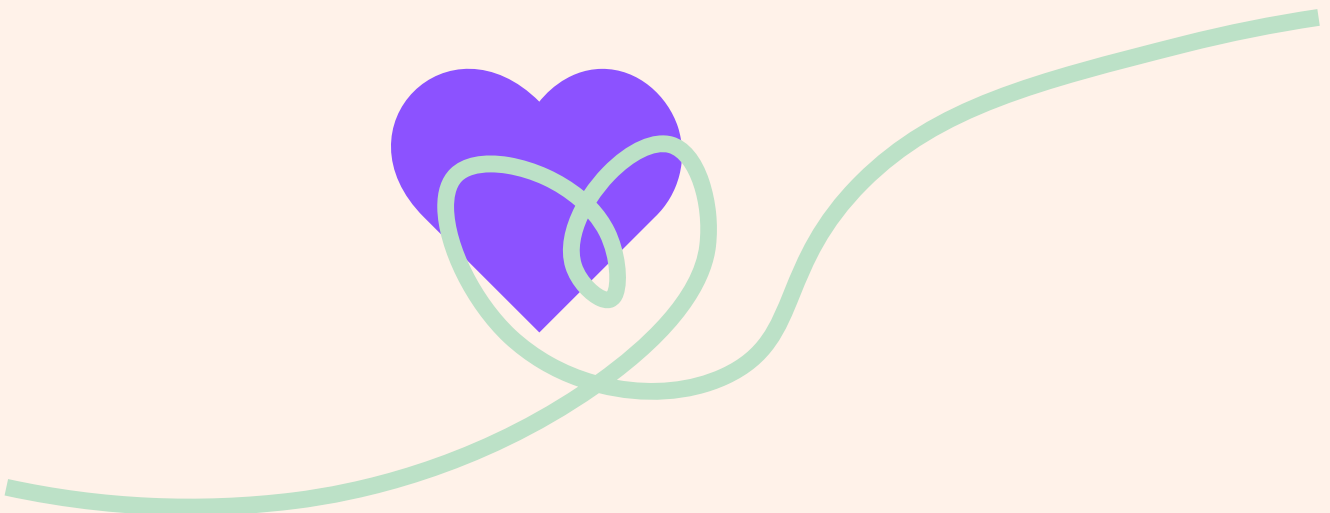
Justin asserts that **giving back can create a sense of belonging for communities and it is easier for people to work or do things together as a community.** He continues that the positive impact of a sense of belonging is also something that many studies have proven.

Are there specific acts of kindness or community service initiatives that you believe have a particularly profound impact on one's well-being?

From Justin's viewpoint, he notices that most things are related to mental health. He brings up **"Bell Let's Talk,"** which provides funding to Canadian mental health initiatives and organisations that support acceptance, action plans, and awareness of mental health issues. He finds that this Bell campaign is touching and has a big impact on many communities.

Have you ever faced challenges or obstacles in your journey of combining community service with personal well-being, and how did you overcome them?

Justin used to drain himself mentally because he was too focused on helping others and forgot about his own well-being. He then **learnt to shift the focus more on himself by doing what he loves** such as running. After that, he realised that **it is profoundly crucial to take good care of oneself before trying to lend one's hand to others.**

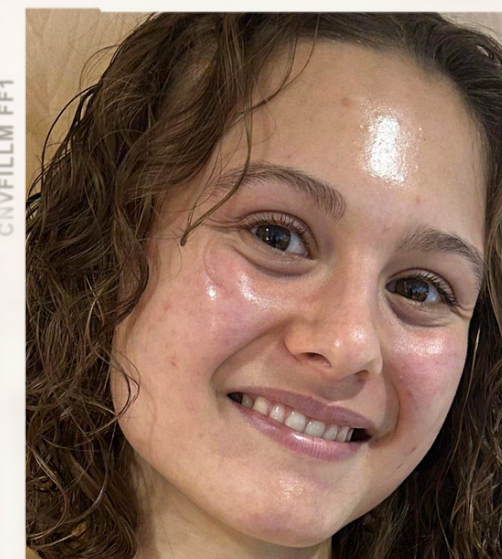


Mainé Dupuis Azizah

is a Social Sciences student in the Psychology profile. She is an athlete, a Mental Health First Aider, and a passionate volunteer who has been engaged in the community since her years in high school. As an athlete, Mainé uses her skill as a force for good, and that resulted in her swimming to create a bursary for her high school. In addition, she plans to go into Psychology in university and continue volunteering since she simply loves it.

“Determined” is what Mainé would use to describe herself.

“The start of a great conversation” is the term that Mainé thought about after this interview.



Can you discuss the potential positive effects on emotional well-being when a community embraces a culture of giving back?

Maïné finds this goes both ways. She justifies: "Of course, the person who receive the help feel great if the volunteering is done in a meaningful way, and with good intentions. In addition to that, **the volunteers will also feel good because they can see the impact that they have directly on the community.** It's incredible that way since it encourages the volunteers, or at least for me to continue moving forward with what I do for others."

Are there particular acts of kindness or community initiatives that, in your view, have a critical effect on personal well-being?

Maïné thinks of **people with mental difficulty and/or intellectual disabilities.** She finds that these marginalised groups of people are often not talked about enough. This stems from her own experience of working with them and Maïné strongly believes that **it is crucial to start including them in conversations in the community.**

How do you navigate the balance between altruism and personal fulfilment when engaging in acts of kindness for the community?

Maïné finds that the best way for her to have a balance between working with the community and her personal life is, for instance, **volunteering solely because she wants to do it.** She learns to **never force herself to do something.** Maïné adds: "It goes back to the idea of doing good, feeling good. **Not just doing something good, but you have to feel good when doing it as well,** that's how it's supposed to work."

Shirley Jobson

has been a Social Worker at CEGEP Champlain St. Lawrence for six years. However, she has been working in this field for more than twenty years. Shirley used to work in mental health at a hospital in Montréal, as well as in alternative therapy clinics with different types of clients.



***Shirley sees herself as “bubbly.”
She found this interview to be “warm.”***

What sparked your initial interest in community service?

Shirley started volunteering when she was just a child since she has always been drawn to helping other people. She then took part in various volunteer opportunities, from serving food at homeless shelters, to reading books to the blind, etc. As Shirley got older, she realised that **the possibility of helping people in all kinds of different ways wasn't just necessarily in formal ways, but it could be in informal ways as well.** As a result, since having a family, Shirley would bring her kids to a lady's house in their neighbourhood, and they would shovel the lady's walkway, or rake her leaves. Thus, Shirley finds that **the opportunities for doing good and feeling good are everywhere one goes.**

Can you share a specific moment or experience from your involvement in community service that left a lasting positive impact on you?

Shirley shares: "One of the recent ones was last year when I, myself, and a group of friends decided to do a Christmas hamper delivery with our children. On that day, I noticed that my son was able to see how happy the people were when he delivered the hamper to them. I then saw that that experience of giving to others truly had an impact on him and changed the way that he saw things." This then reaffirms to Shirley that **it's never too early to develop a sense of helping the community,** or people in need, especially in teenagers, even if they seem really busy and preoccupied with other things.

In your view, what acts of kindness or community service initiatives have a significant impact?

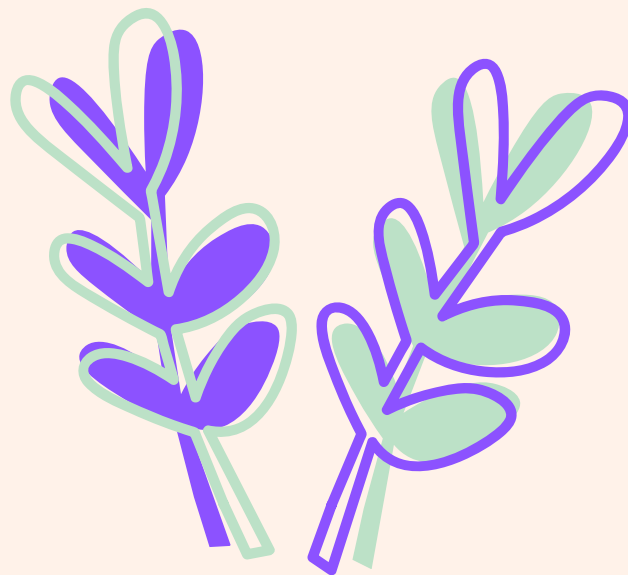
Shirley goes with **small, authentic, and non-judgemental interactions.** It is because she believes that these interactions can lead to meaningful connections and a thoughtful sense of belonging.

In your view, how can the "Do Good, Feel Good" idea influence or intersect with financial well-being, if at all?

Shirley finds that we have become such an individualistic society that we end up hiring people to do whatever we can't do on our own. It gets to a point that we even pay people to do things that we could easily do for each other in a community. Therefore, she believes that **people can certainly do things for others by simply helping one another out, since there are people who have real financial needs and could benefit from the community's support.**

Have you ever faced challenges or obstacles in your journey of combining community service with personal well-being?

Due to the nature of her job as a social worker, Shirley has pretty **good boundary setting skills**. For that reason, if she doesn't have the strength or energy to do something for someone else, then she doesn't do it, and vice versa.



Elise

is currently living in Québec City, but is originally from Ontario. Thus, she finds herself to have a strong connection to the English-speaking community. She majored in Business in university, but she always appreciates the approach of being able to work with the community. This explains why Elise is working as a Volunteer Coordinator with Jeffrey Hale Community Partners. “The pillar of the community” is what some people have called Elise, knowing that she connects to the community through volunteer services. Besides being someone who really likes to help others, she is also a parent, and through her job, Elise often benefits from having strong connections with the community. She has a lot of gratitude for having the chance to work with so many wonderful volunteers, and be part of different organisations.

One word that Elise would use to describe herself is “joyful.”

“Warm” would be the word that Elise uses to describe this interview.



Can you share a story or experience that sparked your dedication to positively influencing your community?

Back in university, despite being really shy, Elise **felt like she needed to step out of her comfort zone**, so she decided to be in her university's student association and then had to make announcements in front of her economics class that had about 500 people. For Elise, that was a great place to get to know the other leaders, and by being on the committee for two years, she believes that she gained a lot of leadership skills as well as confidence in herself.

On top of that, being an English-speaking parent in Québec City definitely contributed to Elise's exploration of the Wellness Centre for English-speaking parents. She was able to meet other parents and get involved as a volunteer at first. However, what made her eventually become a Volunteer Coordinator for this organisation was **the sense of belonging and feeling at home that she has always felt with this community**.

Can you describe a moment or experience from your community service engagement that had a lasting positive influence on you?

For Elise, there is an important program called "WE Drivers," in which volunteers will take and accompany community members to their essential medical appointments. Thus, she was once assigned to drive a gentleman to his medical appointment and they chatted for an hour in the waiting room. They talked about countless things and the conversation they had was so nice and lovely that the gentleman almost forgot he was going to a medical appointment. It then dawned on Elise that **it is not about picking someone up and leaving them at their appointment, but it is about the connection, and the moments that you get to spend with someone talking, listening, and learning more about them that truly makes everything worth it**.

Moreover, she adds, what blows Elise's mind when she gets to volunteer at different places is **when she sees how dedicated and selfless volunteers really are**.

How can instilling a culture of giving back in a community contribute to the emotional well-being of its members?

Elise contends that **a sense of purpose and fulfilment** are some benefits that come from doing something good for others. Also, **by doing good things for the community, one will surely learn from others and more about oneself**, which is a special exchange that Elise values. Moments when community members tell her something that makes her go “Wow, thank you,” are so valuable to Elise’s heart, she shares.

Do you feel there are specific acts of kindness or community service initiatives that can profoundly enhance an individual's well-being?

Elise strongly appreciates **all of Jeffery Hale Community Partners’ volunteer opportunities** ([you can learn more about what they offer on their website at: https://jhpartners.net/](https://jhpartners.net/) if you wish!). Furthermore, Elise wants to emphasise the importance of the **Christmas Hamper Campaign** and how grateful she is to see community members all come together to support people in need. Elise continues to add that she is super honoured to work with many amazing volunteers so as to help improve the quality of life and well-being of others, since she believes that mental health can affect one’s physical health and vice versa.

Could you provide insights or recommendations for individuals or organisations aiming to promote both community service and emotional wellness?

Elise believes that **even one time volunteering here and there is helpful and having that experience of feeling a part of something through volunteering will always be fulfilling**. Thus, Elise suggests that it would be nice of organisations and companies **to organise a volunteer day** once in a while. At the same time, it would be **a great way for employers to support their employees’ passions and personal interests when encouraging them to help out with whatever they are keen on** – a basketball game or a bake sale can be examples, Elise adds.

Tom

is a proud dad, partner, teacher, and lifelong volunteer who always strives to have a fulfilling life by helping others. Being an English-speaker in Québec City, Tom often finds himself not necessarily part of the community, even though he does speak French. This however doesn't stop him from volunteering, helping out in his local community, and participating in the life of the college that he works at. Thus, besides teaching, Tom is also the coordinator of a Fair Trade that supports people in need, and the mentor of the Model United Nations for students at his college. Tom firmly believes that he is so privileged to have been able to travel around the world and to see how different people live, and how they achieve happiness in different ways. This explains why he is intrigued by, and focuses on long-term happiness, not the short-term one, the kind of like eating chocolate *laughs.*

If Tom had to describe himself using one word, it would be "kind," an honest answer that he's been using whenever this question comes up during job interviews.

Tom couldn't narrow down to only one word to describe this interview because he found it "very enjoyable" :)



Can you share a personal story or experience that ignited your commitment to making a positive impact on your community?

Having traveled and realising that the things which many people take for granted are what many others don't even have access to, Tom shares. He goes on to say that he has friends who live in Kathmandu, Nepal, and they have their water delivered every two weeks, which makes them always have to question whether they would have enough water for two weeks. While for Tom and his surroundings, that's clearly something that they don't have to think about. Therefore, for Tom, seeing all of that makes him motivated to help out not just his friends, but everybody who is in need.

Can you share a specific moment from your involvement in the community that is meaningful or memorable to you?

As mentioned earlier, Tom is the mentor of the Model United Nations simulation for a group of students at his college. For him, it's beyond incredible, and a proud moment to see the delegates that he will take to the simulation grow throughout the whole process and in action. **The whole process of helping and encouraging the delegates is just so fulfilling and rewarding** to Tom, he adds.

Can you pinpoint acts of kindness or community initiatives that you believe have had meaningful significance?

One community initiative that Tom finds impactful and always tries to support is the Community Christmas Hamper Campaign. He believes that it's **crucial to support those who struggle with food insecurity, even in our developed society.**

Discuss the potential impact on emotional well-being when a community actively participates in giving back.

Tom thinks that it should come from the heart. For instance, Tom's oldest daughter is required to do some volunteering at her secondary school, but Tom finds it is good that his daughter enjoys what she does, and even does more than what she is asked for. Tom elaborates that volunteering, giving back, or any acts of kindness are so essential to people's well being. He claims that **if you're good to other people, then that will come back to you eventually**. Moreover, for Tom, **if there's one lesson we all need to learn in school, it should be about the importance of simple acts of kindness**. He emphasises the strong correlation between doing good and feeling good because **studies have demonstrated that if one is a part of a community, that person's life expectancy is expected to be longer**, and they tend to be happier because their emotional health is more stable.

Have you faced obstacles in blending community service with personal well-being, and if so, how did you address them?

For Tom, it's often **a matter of time**. But then, **he reminds himself that he should find the time to do what his heart desires**. As a result, despite having a full teaching load, coordinating his fair trade kiosk, and looking after the students of the UN simulation, Tom never fails to tell himself that: "No, I **need to find time** [to help out the community, people in need, or just to do things I enjoy]." Tom also finds that it often has to do with people's reflexes and he does think that needs to stop. He implies that **we should stop being so busy and really try to make time for valuable things in our own life**. Tom says that because he believes that it's so rewarding to see that he can do not only good things for himself, but for his community as well.



****His prized possessions!***

Tom shares that it's not about the selling of the chocolate, but education; making young adults realise that they all need to think a little bit more about where the treats that they enjoy everyday come from, who makes them, and that we can have a positive impact through the choices that we make.

***To learn more about:**

- Suppliers that he uses:
<https://www.distributionsolidaire.org/copie-de-qui-sommes-nous>
<https://theobromachocolat.com/fr/a-propos-de-nous/>
- Microfinancing platform for investment to those in need:
www.kiva.org

C.L.

Besides being a full-time college student, C.L. also works in a hospital as a worker who transfers patients from their rooms to the exam rooms. That is additionally a great way for her to feel like she contributes to the wellness of others in a small way. C.L. always tries to brighten the patients' days by having conversations with them even though they aren't necessarily in their best conditions. In addition, at college, C.L. is part of the Health & Wellness club that helps promote wellness around the school through its activities. In her highschool, C.L. got multiple prizes based on her implication throughout the community. She was also part of a gardening club that promotes activities for people to de-stress themselves in difficult and challenging times.



C.L. described herself using the word "bubbly" because she always finds herself in a good mood and tries to make people laugh and smile. She thinks she has contagious energy that resonates with everyone.

C.L. thought this interview was "insightful" because she has never seen this kind of "conversation" before. She believes the messages that are shared in this magazine will be great to encourage people to spread love and kindness.

What initially inspired you to get into working with the community?

Both of C.L.'s parents work in the health industry, an industry with the goal of helping others in the community. This therefore inspired C.L. to help other people through the various activities mentioned on the previous page, which also explains why she currently works in a hospital. "Like father, like daughter!"

Can you share an experience from your involvement in community service that is memorable?

During the pandemic, C.L. volunteered to help make food baskets for families who were struggling. For instance, at that time, she helped a specific family which consisted of a single mom with two children. What was so memorable about that family was when C.L. gave them a food basket, they were super excited and thankful for C.L. and what she had given them. That was **the moment that C.L. realised that she really wanted to continue doing things that make others feel better.**

In what ways do you believe encouraging a community to give back can positively influence the emotional health of its people?

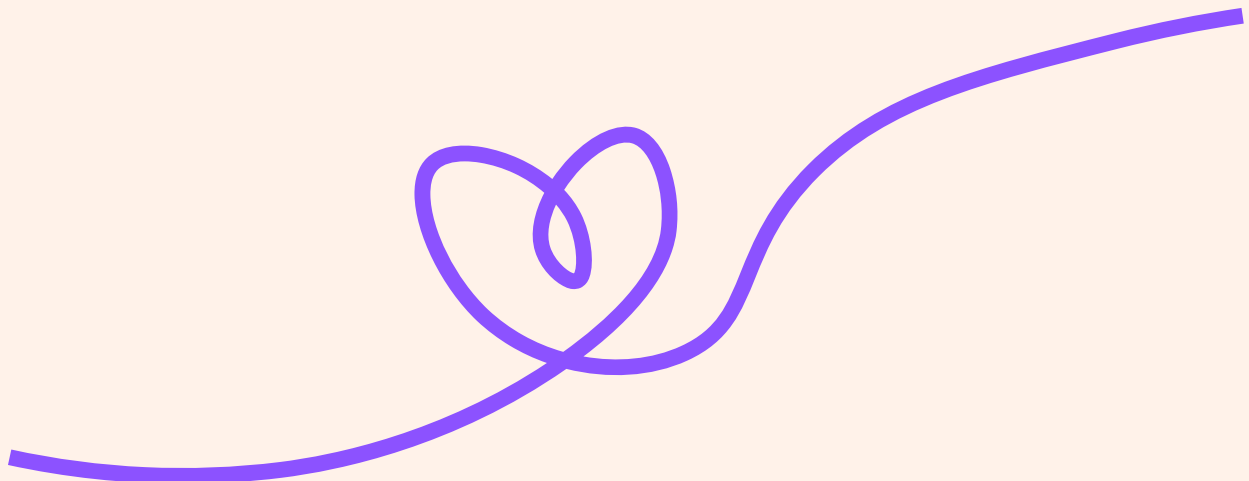
For C.L., **it is important to promote community values to make people realise that they are all a part of a big community.** Small acts of kindness that everyone can do such as helping a senior citizen crossing the street do not solely contribute to the emotional health of the receiver, but also makes the one who helps others themselves feel good. Moreover, **when community values are spread, people will always remember that when they struggle, they can just come back and rely on the people around them.**

Have you encountered challenges while integrating community service with personal well-being?

C.L. understands that she can't always help others without making sure to put herself first. She is someone who loves to help others to a point that it can be seen as "people pleasing;" therefore, with that in mind, C.L. often reminds herself to **do things that not only are beneficial for others, but also make her feel good while doing them.** It's all about balance, baby!

Can you identify specific acts of kindness or community service initiatives that you think significantly influence one's well-being?

Since inflation has become felt, families have tremendously struggled more. Thus, C.L. firmly believes that initiatives such as **food shelters, baskets, drives, and hamper campaigns** should be promoted widely as these are some of the best possible acts that can promote wellness and kindness.



Susanna Tang

is originally from Ontario, but moved to Québec 7 years ago. She is currently working as a Project Coordinator at Voice of English Québec, which is an organisation that supports the English-speaking community in Québec City. She is in love with badminton, writing, and podcasting. Susanna is also a huge Canadian hockey fan!

*A Special Fact: One main project that Susanna is responsible for is “My Québec City Podcast” and she additionally works with Francophone organisations to increase employment accessibility for English-speakers.



If Susanna had to see herself as a symbol, it would be a “heart.” The pink color, fluffiness, and softness of the heart always make her feel warm.

According to Susanna, this interview appeared as a beautiful flower that grows from a seed to full bloom.

What initially inspired you to get involved in community service?

Susanna firstly wants to emphasise **the importance of people giving others the opportunity to shine**. What she means by that is when somebody believes in someone else and gives that person the confidence to also believe in themselves to do something. This is crucial to Susanna since in high school, she was also given an opportunity to organise a Youth Conference along with some other peers. Despite being a shy teenager at that time, Susanna was surprised to be picked out to be part of such a prominent project, and because of that, **she felt that her voice mattered and that she has something to offer**.

Can you share a specific moment or experience from your involvement in community service that left a lasting impact on you?

Having volunteered in numerous activities, the one experience that truly made an impact in Susanna's life has to be her **volunteering as a tutor**. According to Susanna, what was so special about that was **the one-on-one interaction that she had with her tutee**. She got to know the person, then adapted to the person's way of thinking, learning, and above all, she was able to see her tutee's growth. For Susanna, **it's incredibly wonderful to build such a special connection with a person, and to see the person's development through time is pretty rewarding as well**.

In your view, how can the "Do Good, Feel Good" idea influence or intersect with well-being?

Susanna affirms that **by volunteering or doing something good for the community, one will develop so many valuable skills that are certainly needed in the workplace**. Some of them that Susanna personally developed on her journey are: marketing, communication, planning, and teamwork. As a result, these skills can lead to jobs, and that was what actually happened to Susanna. She elaborates that **networking is also an amazing outcome of volunteering, and volunteer experience is just as important as job experience in one's resume**. Furthermore, **self-affirming** when it comes to volunteering is a valuable asset that will give people an opportunity to live by their values, and to improve their self-esteem. Most importantly, in Susanna's view, **success will follow wellness, and one of the best ways to pursue wellness is by lending a hand to the community**.

Are there particular acts of kindness that, in your opinion, deeply impact one's overall well-being?

The impact of **small gestures that people do every day** is something that impresses Susanna all the time. One anecdote that she shares is about a little boy who smiles at her and says “Je suis content de te revoir” (which translates to “I am happy to see you again”) whenever they see each other on the bus. That moment always makes her day and works as **an inspiring reminder for her to continue spreading kindness no matter where she goes, what she does, or who she is with.**

How do you navigate the balance between altruism and personal fulfilment when engaging in acts of kindness for the community?

For Susanna, whether it is altruism or heavy workloads, these can all keep people from taking care of themselves from time to time. Thus, **time management** can be quite challenging, but more than that, over-committing yourself to others and forgetting about yourself can be dangerous. Therefore, **learning to be aware of your own well-being and to do things for yourself are always essential.** Just like Susanna, having a full time job, working, volunteering for the community, and still having some time to play badminton with her pals!

Could you provide insights or recommendations for individuals or organisations aiming to promote both community service and emotional wellness?

Volunteering is the key to everything, Susanna jokingly states. Indeed, for individuals, **it's crucial to put yourself out there since there are countless things that are offered, from low to high engagement,** based on your interest as well, Susanna suggests. She continues, **emphasising the great reasons to volunteer for organisations, and continuing to do everything with love and selflessness,** are more than appreciated.



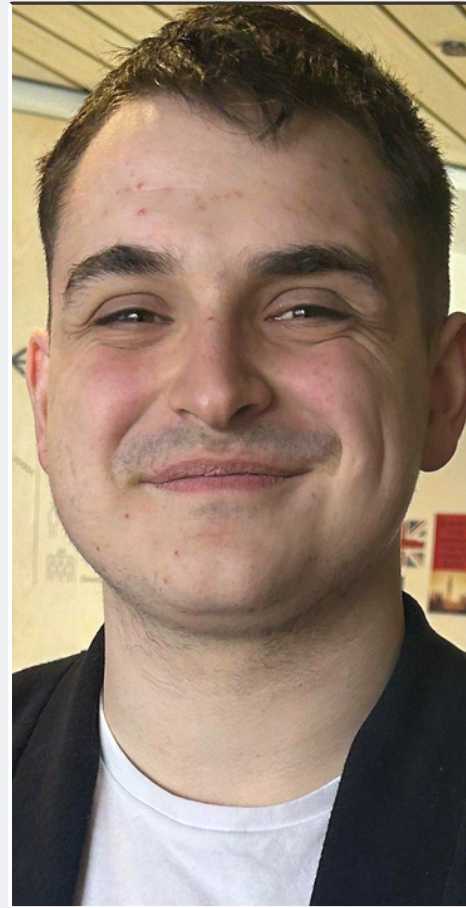
Charles-Émile Sills

is a Social Sciences graduate from CEGEP Champlain St. Lawrence. Other than working in a clothing store, Charles-Émile works in research as a Youth Research Advisor. He finds himself to be a hot pot of many projects since he participates in lots of projects of varying sizes at his college. This explains why Charles-Émile received an award of continuous involvement in student wellness at his CEGEP for the 2022-23 school year.

Charles-Émile sees himself as chocolate because of its complexity and sweetness that resonates with him. He adds:

“Chocolate’s multidimensionality is just like me and one of my greatest qualities since I am interested in everything, and like to learn about everything.”

Charles-Émile visualised this interview as a book since it is full of thoughts and ideas that are worth sharing.



How did you first become interested in community service, and how has your motivation shifted over time?

Charles-Émile goes back to when he was eight years old and reminisces about how shy and lonely he was at that time. However, he **used his loneliness as a force for good and started volunteering** at kindergarten classes. He cleaned up tables, helped kids get dressed, etc. For Charles-Émile, **it's the small actions that have evolved continuously through time and became a part of him**. This explains why in high school, he was part of a project in collaboration with Desjardins that helped students with their financial habits. Moreover, **the defining moment for Charles-Émile has to be when he officially joined the Health & Wellness club in his CEGEP**. He shares: "Being a member of this club allows me to join various projects that truly bring value to the college community, and one of them that I am extremely proud of, and often refer to as 'my baby,' is the Men's Health Day."

Do you see any link between involvement in charitable activities and an increased sense of personal satisfaction?

For Charles-Émile, whenever he partakes in any events or projects, **it's more than rewarding to see everything coming together just like all the pieces of the puzzle assembled**. Another thing that he loves about being involved in community activities is **one always learns something new that may not be so evident, but still impactful**. Charles-Émile continues: "Big projects can surely teach you project management and event planning, but **even just by helping someone, you learn something. You will learn about different people that you meet**. It feels good and is always great that way."

From your perspective, how might encouraging acts of kindness contribute to creating a more supportive and connected community?

Leading by example is so crucial to Charles-Émile. He believes that when one helps another and inspires somebody else to help others just in the same way, it can create a small, tight knit circle, just like a domino effect. This is impactful as Charles-Émile shares: "**When one person gets to get involved, the next person gets involved, and then it just continues on and on to a point where no one is left behind. That's how we have a more connected community.**"

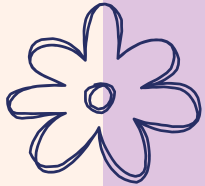
Do you feel there are specific acts of kindness or community service initiatives that are profoundly critical?

Charles-Émile brings up **The Centre de Prévention du Suicide du Québec**, a non-profit community organisation that offers professional and specialised services to promote prevention and intervention. As someone who struggled with mental health, Charles-Émile finds this to be a wonderful resource and support, which **allows him to help himself to be well first in order for him to then help others.**

Can you share any personal stories or anecdotes where you witnessed the reciprocal nature of doing good and feeling good, either in yourself or others?

The major one for Charles-Émile at the moment is an initiative that has been brought to the community by the St. Lawrence Inclusion Task Force team. It's called the **"Storytelling Project,"** in which Charles-Émile is also working on as the active project leader. The purpose of this initiative is to encourage people to tell their stories. The aim of this stems from the belief that **if people see the world through someone else's lenses, they will start to become more open, supportive of others, and less judgemental.** He adds: "It's truly insightful to read all the stories that we have received, ranging from people suffering with their own difficult journey, childhood depression, sexual assault, etc. All of those examples keep your eyes open; they make you think and see the world differently. And hopefully, we want the student community at St. Lawrence, and even people in the community, to see this project in full action, and know that **it's vital to put yourself in someone's shoes sometimes.**"





Closure

As we conclude the Do Good, Feel Good Magazine, we extend our heartfelt gratitude to you, our readers, for joining us on this exploration of financial and emotional wellness through community engagement.

It has been a journey of discovery, reflection, and inspiration—a journey made richer by your presence.

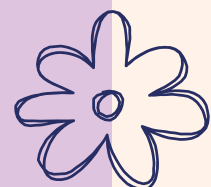
We hope the featured interviews and stories within these pages have ignited your curiosity, sparked meaningful conversations, and provided valuable insights.

Let's make kindness a way of life!

Best regards,

Bon

Editor-in-Chief, Financial Wellness Liaison for
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