

PREFACE



I consider myself very fortunate to have been part of the process of putting together *Hearts Linked by Courage – People Supporting People*. It has been heartwarming to see the quality and diversity of the submissions we received.

During the COVID-19 pandemic of 2020–21, for many, life became fraught with despair, resignation, and even hopelessness. It seems a fitting time to keep hope alive and inspire each other by sharing stories of resilience that most can identify with or draw strength from.

While still coping with their own lives and trying to make the best of it, the story contributors willingly share their own journey, hoping that it will encourage the reader and nurture a greater sense of community.

Hearts Linked by Courage is designed to create a bond between the reader and the writer. It teaches and enlightens us. And reminds the reader that they are not alone. We can all come out of life's darkness and chart

HEARTS LINKED BY COURAGE

a course from rock bottom, resignation, or self-isolation to renewal and true wellbeing.

This book is an expression of several journeys; some may be familiar and will resonate with us. As unique as the stories are, we can also see a common thread that flows from each of the writers that is our shared vulnerability and humanity.

The human experience has its ups, downs, and unexpected twists and turns which affects us all. How we react or cope with these incidences differ from person to person. One commonality that my co-contributors and I have is the desire to live life on our own terms. We have found the innate strength to do this when faced with life's issues, both good and bad. Our resolve manifests in various ways as can be seen from the diversity of the contributions. One thing that stands out, however, is that we all want to live our best lives while being some sort of guiding light for others.

And so it is.

—Kate Anderson,
Program Assistant
HIV/AIDS Support Services
CAYR Community Connections