Focus on Faculty #24
Chris MacKinnon

[Dr. Chris MacKinnon](), a Faculty Lecturer in the Gerald Bronfman Department of Oncology, is the senior palliative care psychologist at the new Royal Victoria Hospital located at the Glen site of the McGill University Health Centre. He is also director of a private psychology practice at the Monkland Professional and Medical Center in N.D.G.

Dr. MacKinnon completed an M.A. and Ph.D. in Counselling Psychology at McGill under the co-supervision of Dr. S. Robin Cohen (McGill) and Dr. Nathan Grant Smith (University of Houston) and was a Frederick Banting and Charles Best Doctoral fellow. Dr. MacKinnon's research focused on developing and pilot testing a novel bereavement group psychotherapy intervention. He continues to be involved in ongoing research studies at McGill, UQAM, and the University of Toronto. Some of his recent published work appears in *Techniques of Grief Therapy, Death Studies, Omega, Plural-ages,* and *Professional Psychology: Research and Practice.*

Much of Dr. MacKinnon's clinical training was supervised by renowned Quebec psychologist Johanne de Montigny. He continues to be passionate about his work as a psychologist in end-of-life care and enjoys supervising, teaching and presenting to both lay and professional audiences on the topics of loss and life transition.

Locally, he is a clinical consultant for the Quebec ALS Society where he facilitates a regular supervision group for their clinical team. This past month he has been developing a new bereavement psychotherapy training program for the Argyle Institute of Human Relations in Westmount that he hopes to launch in the fall of 2017.

Dr. MacKinnon is a member of the executive committees of both the International Congress on Palliative Care and Palliative Care McGill, sits on the Post-Graduate Medical Education Committee, and was recently appointed to the editorial board of the journal, *The Counseling Psychologist*. He also serves as primary writer and reviewer for the Canadian Virtual Hospice, the leading palliative care web-platform. Recently he developed *mygrief.ca*, an online psycho-educational for bereavement.

In the past few years, he has been pioneering a new psychosocial training program for oncology physicians with his colleague Dr. Stefanie Gingras. Run in collaboration with the gynecological-oncology program, this bi-monthly training helps fellows develop skills in psychological assessment, diagnosis, communication, as well as case conceptualization. This training program is one of Dr. MacKinnon's favorite new endeavors.

Apart from these professional ventures, Dr. MacKinnon enjoys his free time playing trains with his 3-year-old son Wyatt.

We asked Dr. MacKinnon to list a few of his articles whose work he is particularly proud or enjoyed the most. This is what he provided:

MacKinnon, C. J., & Ummel, D. (2015). The threat of being less than we are when encountering loss. *Pluriâges, 6*(1), 12-18.

MacKinnon, C. J., Smith, N. G., Henry, M., Milman, E., Chochinov, H. M., Körner, A., Berish, M., Farrace, A., Liarikos, N. & Cohen, S. R. (2015). Reconstructing meaning with others in loss: A feasibility pilot randomized controlled trial of a bereavement group. *Death Studies, 39*(7), 411-421.

MacKinnon, C. J., Milman, E., Smith, N.G., Henry, M., Berish, M., Copeland, L., Körner, A., Chochinov, H. M., & Cohen, S. R. (2013). Means to meaning in cancer-related bereavement: Identifying clinical implications for counseling psychologists. *The Counseling Psychologist, 41*(2), 216-239.