

New healing centre aims to build community and support among women practitioners

By Joshua Drakes

A new healing centre is set to open in Orangeville on April 1, with a focus on collaboration, autonomy and personal transformation.

The River Healing Centre, founded by co-owners Carley Johnson and Dawn Rebel, is designed as a collective space where women practitioners can come together to offer services, share resources, and reduce the pressures of running independent businesses.

The model allows practitioners to work in a shared space through a membership-style system, helping eliminate the overhead costs typically associated with solo operations. Many of the current members are graduates of Johnson's year-long healer mentorship program.

Johnson said that the goal is empowerment and mutual support.

"We want to bring women together," she said. "We want to bring women together to give them permission to be who they are. We want to bring healers together. Because having a healing business is really difficult by yourself."

Currently, the centre includes eight practitioners, with more in the onboarding process. Offerings range from yoga and Reiki to education, spellwork and, eventually, psychotherapy and other wellness-aligned services.

Programming will follow a dynamic, rotating schedule rather than a fixed calendar, with the intent of offering new and engaging experiences each month.

"Our schedule starts April 1, and what we're looking for is having the schedule look different every month," Johnson said. "We want it to be dynamic, and we want it to be creative. So when the public looks at our calendar, they find something that pulls at them."

"Our goal is to be able to offer a whole bunch of different offerings, so that it hits the hearts of everyone, and then everyone starts to remember who they are through the things that are offered here," said Johnson.

At the core of the centre is a specific philosophy of healing, one that emphasizes awareness and gradual change rather than quick fixes.

"Our main goal is transformation, but transformation in the way that feels right for you," she said. "The first step to healing is awareness. What is this belief? Why is this here? The only way to change those beliefs is to change behaviour."

"Healing is like a rebuilding or a refining of skills that you have to fit more of who you are. Healing happens in layers; it's not overnight, and that's what we help with."

This approach encourages individuals to recognize patterns such as perfectionism or emotional numbing, and to experiment with small, manageable behavioural changes over time. Emotions are framed as experiences to be acknowledged rather than suppressed.

The approach will seek to challenge societal norms that encourage the suppression of feelings.

"We live in a society that wants us to bury our problems, not address them," Johnson said. "Especially not showing anybody. When you start to actually feel what's going on inside of you, then the healing can truly begin."

Johnson and Rebel hope the Centre will have a broader impact on the community, supporting improved mental wellness in

Orangeville and beyond.

?If we can create goodness here, we can help build that through the community,? Johnson said. ?Everybody who leaves this place feels that they're operating in a higher frequency, because then when they go into the community, operating from a higher frequency, it ripples outward. That's our goal.?

As the River Healing Centre prepares to open its doors, its founders are aiming to create more than just a shared workspace ? they are working to establish a supportive environment where both practitioners and clients can grow, connect and explore healing in a way that feels personal and sustainable.

To learn more, go to The River Healing Center's website at www.theriverhealingcenter.ca.