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# Aroha Entities

<http://aroha1.blogspot.ca/>

Saturday, 24 November 2012

## Welcome!

Introducing Aroha

People concerned with disabilities may feel down-hearted and powerless, especially in Ontario, after being encouraged to hope for a real transformation of developmental services during the past ten years. Huge amounts of energy have been contributed in thought and discussion by people and families who live with a disability and their allies.

We hoped that people who have been vulnerable and dependent might at last have some choice and control over their lives. But the process of actually implementing real change can get bogged down in procedures that don't seem to fit the earlier ideas. Waiting lists are longer than ever. People and families may feel confused and hopeless.

As well as petitioning and responding to Government, there are some creative things we can do for which we may not need permission or funds from governments or agencies. One is to widen and strengthen circles of friends or personal support networks in ways that will make life better now and also sustain good lives into the future.

Some Ontario pioneers have created legal entities as the formal cores of circles of friends or personal support networks. In Ontario we call these Aroha entities. They are equivalent to Microboards in parts of Western Canada and to "self-directed support corporations" in some United States jurisdictions.

To encourage people with their families and friends to consider how an Aroha can be useful, we offer ways to interact with others who are interested. We offer electronic networking over the coming winter months. A larger event about Aroha and other creative supports may be offered next spring.

Here we introduce the AROHA Listserv and the AROHA blog. People who are interested can sign up for the AROHA Listserv, through which you will be alerted to new material on the AROHA blog as well as announcements of events and resources. If you are interested in being connected through the Listserv, please send a message Elizabeth Bloomfield at [ebloomfi@uoguelph.ca](mailto:ebloomfi@uoguelph.ca). On the Listserv we protect your identity unless you choose to use your real name and share your situation.

### How to Use the AROHA Blog

On this AROHA blog you can reach specific section by clicking on the live links of the headings (right). You may simply browse and read information.

Or you could add comments and questions. Such messages may stimulate others to comment and prompt us to add to or adapt the information.

This is how to comment:

- Underneath each post, click on where it says 'comments'. (It might say 'No comments' or '1 comment', etc. depending on how many people have already commented).
- Enter your comment in the space provided. You have the option of making a comment to the original post, or replying to another comment that has been posted in response to the original post.



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- Underneath your comment, you will be asked to select a profile. Choose any of the options. If you don't have any of the mentioned accounts, you can just choose 'name/url' and it will give you an option to enter your name (you can make up a nick name if you prefer or use your real name. It also gives you the option to add your own website if you want to.)
  - Or you can just comment as an anonymous person if you wish.
  - When you click 'publish', you will be asked to verify numbers and/or words. After you do this, your comment will be posted once reviewed by the moderator.

If you need to ask a more individual question or wish specific advice you could email Elizabeth Bloomfield at ebloomfi@uoguelph.ca

### How Aroha Works For Me

The Aroha blog includes stories of people who have found Aroha helpful. The man around whom Ontario's first Aroha was formed has expressed his profound joy and hope in both art and poetry. In this painting, he wanted to show how his life and that of his family are strengthened by knowing of the host of friends who care about him. His synaesthesia enables him to see his friends with coloured auras.

"In my mind I see my friends circling around me in support. I feel I might not fall between the cracks if I have my Aroha in the days ahead when my parents cannot be in my life. My Aroha will keep the intentions and values we determined together. It is wise to have a plan and start it while your parents are alive. Friends not strangers will support me when the crisis comes in the future. I will be upset ... but I will have a life in place...."

**This is the poem he composed to go with the painting at the head of this Home page:**

### What Colour is Friendship?

My friends come in different colours.  
I see their colours like rings around them.  
Halos of violet and indigo, forest green, sea foam, and red;  
Even my dogs have their auras of orange and gold.

My friends come in different shapes and sizes:tall and short and round and straight.  
Metaphorically their personality might be one shape  
and their outside appearance another.  
But they are all the same in one important way:  
they have caring in their hearts.

My friends are like a rainbow in my life  
that whirls around me like a spiral stairway.  
It feels like a circle of colour and connection to me.  
You may not see it but it is all very real to me.  
AB, 21 Dec 2011

Posted by [Andrew](#) at 10:30 1 comment:

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***Note: The information in this document was taken from the home page for the Aroha Entities blog site which was established by the Bloomfield family to help inform individuals with disabilities, families and friends about the concept of an AROHA and what it can mean for sustaining a good life now and into the future. We encourage you to take a look at this site. You can link to specific topics or questions that you may have. There is a great deal more on the site. It is very user friendly and very informative!***

. . . . . A note from the Individualized Funding Coalition for Ontario in preparation for the April 25, 2013 event called: ***What is Aroha? How can it sustain a good life, now and into the future?***

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