

## **Transcript for Lunchable Learning 25 - Better Together- Partners in Learning**

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**Hosts: Leva Lee and Helena Prins**

**Guest: Steven Bishop and Shannon Cox**

<https://lunchablelearning.opened.ca/2022/04/26/guests-steven-bishop-and-shannon-cox/>

[SPEAKER]

The Better Together playlist is an attempt to represent some of the wild range of events we have been experiencing since the beginning of this global pandemic. And specifically to affirm our humanity and willingness to tackle challenges together. The playlist is collaborative. Songs have been submitted by many people involved into planning and manifestation of the Better Together conference. The lyrics and moods invoked address the spectrum of human aspirations, feelings, ideas, and conditions from the sublime to the whimsical. Be happy. Be from irony, to speaking truth to power. From longing to reunion, and from acknowledgment of suffering. To visions of peace. During these two years plus a separation. We have had births, deaths, marriages, migration from climate and conflict, and an explosion of connecting with others online. We're offering this playlist as a musical means of reflecting on what it means to be together in so many senses of the term. So it's better.

[LEVA]

Welcome to virtual learning. Hello everyone. My name is Leva Lee with BCcampus, and I'm happy to be welcoming you from where I'm situated on the traditional and unceded lands of the hən̓q̓əmi̓ñəŋ and Skwxwú7mesh speaking peoples. I'm here today hosting Lunchable Learning with my colleague, Helena Prins, and supported by our tech producer, Harper Friedman. Helena, I'm so happy to be back together with you for me and our last four shows of the year.

[HELENA]

Absolutely. I'm excited to be here too. And for our usual listeners, today is quite special. Not only will we, will we be on air for almost an hour. We're also live at Douglas College to the Better Together conference. At the top of the show you listen to a teaser for the event put together by the Douglas College conference planning team. And today some of them are here with us.

[LEVA]

Yes, we are so pleased to welcome Shannon Cox and Steven Bishop from Douglas College. Shannon and Steven. Please take a moment to introduce yourself and tell us a bit about the Better Together conference.

[SHANNON]

Hi Leva. Hi Helena. Thank you so much for having us and don't forget to say a big hello because we are broadcasting in our main atrium area. So we want to make sure that you say hello to all your friends here at Douglas College. And today, we are pleased to be joining you from the Qayqayt First Nation and that Kwikwetlem First Nations, which are the campuses where our campuses are located. And we are pleased to be able to do our work, to learn to play on these unceded and traditional lands, these First Nations and all Coast Salish people's. My name is Shannon, as you mentioned, and I am an instructor, faculty in commerce in Business Administration. And I'm also the representative for facilitating faculty online. And this is at college-wide committee that has come together and in support of peers during the

pandemic. And it's been our pleasure to partner with the learning designers and Academic Technology Services. So Steven Bishop and I have been working together over the last year and I want to take a minute to tell you about the Better Together conference. This is a themed learning week and how we have come together as a committee. And that's where the idea started anyway, I think. Right, Steven, we just started talking about, wouldn't it be fantastic to try and pull together all of the innovative ideas that have happened during the pandemic. And that's really kind of where it started off. Steven, I think I might just handed over you to talk a little bit more about our innovative process.

[STEVEN]

Sure. Thank you, Shannon. My name is Steven Bishop and I have been here for close to 13 years in different different roles. And I still do teacher in a CE program in Science and Tech program. But my main role here is as a learning designer with academic technology services, along with my colleagues Hope Miller and Jacob Goldowitz And we're also part of this facilitating faculty online working group that Tim Palmer manager is and many others are, are quite involved. And I think Shannon, that an original idea you and I had was that we ought to have a brunch, like a college wide brunch. Because somewhere we created a Microsoft Team that's called breakfast with champions or the Breakfast Club or something like that. Yeah. And then as we started talking it up to different people, there was so much enthusiasm for having a get together. And people just started bringing more and more ideas. And I remember there was kind of a tipping point when it seemed like, well, we can't do this all. But we sort of health. And yesterday I was just writing down a list of all the people involved that I could think of. And I came up with a list of a 100 names and yeah,

[SHANNON]

a 100?

[STEVEN]

Yeah, 100 and there's been like, you know, some people have had a small contribution they've made and other people have been doing way, way more than their job description. But I just want to say some of the categories and I might even be missing some. So I mean, I'm sure I'm missing some but. And it has been a real community effort for sure. And I've been saying this for years and other people have noticed too. But Douglas College is a very Goldilocks environment. It's not so big that you don't tend to meet and get to know a lot of people. And you do get to meet and know a lot of people. And it's not so small that, that there, there is a lot of scope for things to happen and innovative things to happen. So senior management, communications and marketing, all the faculties represented by their Deans and their AO's that contributed the training group. The many staff of course, which is a huge category, student affairs and services. Douglas Foundation, Douglas Student Union, CEIT, which is the Center for Education, Information Technology and an ATS academic technology services within that organization. The FIFO group already mentioned Indigenous Students Services, Library and Learning Center, building service workers, student panelists, internal presenters and guest speakers. And there are different students and other people that have contributed one way or another as well. So just really, it's been really fun and we're really excited to look at the first event which will be launching shortly.

[HELENA]

What a collaboration. So many people involved. I have to say, I do you think you have a good idea about the brunch too. So maybe we can still plan and follow a brunch. And I think the topic better together is so relevant and timely. Don't you think Leva?

[LEVA]

Yeah, it's a funny time of transition, isn't it? Where we're both excited to be meeting face-to-face again, but not entirely ready. It's like we need to learn or re-learn how to be together again. So yeah, that brunch thing I could get on to that. I was listened to brainy round interview of Priya Parker, who's the author of *The Art of gathering and the new rules of gathering*. And Priya was saying how this is the perfect juncture right now. To pause for a rethink of the why and the how we meet. To ask us if we're doing the best Are we doing it in the best way to meet our purpose? What have we learned in these past two years? So I say bravo to Douglas College for taking the time to do this kind of thinking and learning at the conference this week.

[HELENA]

Yes, thank you, and Steven It's a radio show we promise our listeners some music. So let's take something from the better together playlist what's our first sound today?

[STEVEN]

I'm not sure what version we have queued up. but I think the song "With a Little Help from my Friends" is a is a pretty apt pick.

[HELENA]

Fantastic, let's enjoy "With a Little Help from My Friends" from the Beatles. Dr. Hi. Now else?

[LEVA]

Yes, pulling together an event, especially during a pandemic is no easy feat. Great to have friends to help. So Shannon, Tell us about some of the goals, challenges and well maybe happy surprises in doing this.

[SHANNON]

I would love to thank you. The goal I think really was that, if we can keep up with that brunch analogy, was to have the opportunity to come back together, right? We, we know about physical distancing, but it created a lot of socialized isolation during the pandemic. And I had the privilege of tuning in and talking to some of my peers and about how they were connecting online with their students. And they are doing amazing things. And they have no idea how wonderful they are, they have no idea because we're not connecting, right? Yeah. And so it was this idea of being able to bring this back together and to celebrate that persistence, that innovation and that care and concern that happened did that in the, in the teaching and in the community overall. So I think that was our big goal. As you know, right in the pandemic time. Remote teaching was emergency, urgent transition. But it also gave us the opportunity to try new things and that's, that just sped everything up. All right, We started using tools, using software, trying techniques, bringing things together, mashing ideas. Some of it worked, some of it didn't, but how far we came along in that side. And so let's have, let's create a forum to share that. Let's start having that conversation. Because bringing the people together, the conversations that happen are amazing. Well, you two already know that because you are already doing it, bringing people together here on your, on your show. So thank you for letting us talk a little bit about this and for, and for all of these great topics. I think that, that was sort of our scope. And the surprise. The great surprise was how well the idea caught on, we wanted this to be this across the college, we wanted it to create an opportunity for people to bring things that were important to them from their areas. And they hopped on. Wanted to talk about lived experience, right? What do people live through? So give voice to that. Some of those how to pieces, like, how did you actually do that? Do we have a tech cafe? I said at work

people are really sharing kind of that whole nuts and bolts of how they do things, right? What did they figure out? What have they tried? And, and also some more, some of our speakers are talking to those bigger pieces, right. And we're going to tell you a little bit more about those speakers. That's kind of values that, that resting point now that we have the chance to kind of stop, rest, reflect. Where do we want to go ahead? So talking about what's next for us here in the land of Education.

[LEVA]

Any challenges we do wanna mention or happy surprises?

[SHANNON]

I think that, like any kind of a grass roots rolling that was the fantastic surprises that people came on board, you know, trying to, to all of a sudden plan a little bit of workshop turned into this whole week of learning. So I'll say, you know that grass roots with we're not really sure where the money's going to come from and who really is going to get on board was new. It was maybe a challenge. And, and we have been delightfully surprised because we have from all across the college at all levels, we have support and we have folks turning out to participate, to be involved and to lead in all corners during the week.

[LEVA]

What a lovely, inspiring story, Shannon, thanks for sharing that. It's all about emerge and say just how just came up with and what a lovely surprise. So thanks for sharing that. I think it's time for songs. So would you like to choose the next song Shannon?

[SHANNON]

I would, I would love to, well we haven't had a lot of it lately. You know, here in the West Coast, but I would like to pick "Walking on Sunshine". from Katrina and the Waves.

[LEVA]

Let's listen to that.

[HELENA]

That was nice and uplifting. Thanks for that pick Shannon and I'm here in Vancouver Island in Victoria and it's a little bit grey and dreary today. So I really enjoy hearing about the sunshine at least. Now Steven, we're going to turn around to you a little bit and I would like for you to take us into the schedule. Let's dive a bit deeper. What's going to be offered this week? What's your plans?

[STEVEN]

Yes. Well, starting very shortly Beth Cougler Blom will be on campus and we have a mixture of on-campus and online advance, and some are being streamed online as well. And we're using both campuses so on Thursday we will be out of Coquitlam in the morning. So Beth, I think is well known to BCcampus people with the liberating structures work that she does and we're really excited about that. Then, tomorrow we have an opening from the college president, Kathy Denton. And then we have the guest speaker Ross Laird, who I think a lot of a lot of us know, a BC author, renaissance man, counselor, educator. And he will be, he'll be talking to us about when he says the title of his talk is, he always comes up with very poetic titles. "Tumbled smooth by the rapids", "rediscovering and reconnecting in the wake of turbulence".

[HELENA]

That sounds actually very interesting and I think I have a clip from Temple, your manager of Academic Technology Services, about this session. Shall we listen to that clip? Let's hear it please

[SPEAKER]

I'm so thrilled to welcome Ross Laird to the Better Together conference. His presentation tumbled smoothed by the Rapids, is a chance for us to reflect on what's been going on over the last two years, to pause and to acknowledge and to unravel the stress response that we've embodied for so long. We're thrilled to have him at the conference and we hope that you join us.

[LEVA]

Yeah. And we're also as well. I'm excited to tear about our friend and gifted facilitator, Beth Cougler Blom is on your schedules. So let's hear about her session from Hope Miller, Learning Designer at Douglas.

[HOPE]

Well, we're thrilled to have Beth Cougler Blom join us on May 2nd, Monday, May 2nd, she's coming to Douglas to do a collaborative workshop with faculty and staff here. Beth's background, she's an experienced facilitator, an instructional designer, whom we've been aware of for years through BC Campus. Her background in liberating structures, which is a system for facilitating groups of people. Be it at a meeting, a retreat, a conference, workshops, or in-class activities will help us set the stage for Better Together this week. Really thrilled to have her here and hope you'll be coming to Douglas on May 2nd.

[HELENA]

Right now the people are in for a good time. I saw on Instagram next week she was testing all her markers because she's going to be in-person using the flip charts again and she was so excited. And Steven, are the other sessions you would also like to highlight for our listeners?

[STEVEN]

Yes. Also on Tuesday tomorrow, Dylan Leroy who is a counselor at Douglas College will be leading a session that's titled "gratitude as a practice to manage uncertainty and foster well-being". And that will include a mindfulness, meditation, sitting, or activity. And then on May, on May 4th. And I think we have a clip for this. So I won't say much but the author Cia Verschelden who's written books on "Bandwidth Recovery" and bandwidth in the sense of when people are already stretched and especially people that are marginalized for one reason or another. And then they have to face more calls for flexibility or adaptability. And how to, and how to reclaim that cognitive capacity. I'm really excited about the strategic initiative that has to do with climate action and with sustainability. And Douglas College is going after the AASHE STARS certification and STARS is sustainability tracking and reporting systems. I think that's what it stands for. So we have some panelists that include the head of facilities talking about the stars process and also the new campus we're building. We have Brian Chapel, the Dean in Science and Tech that we'll be talking about the colleges effort to increase the curriculum for around sustainability and climate at the college. But we also have an instructor speaking about how she's already doing work along those lines. A representative from Douglas Student Union and a student from the peak program whose I'm going to talk about how she's getting her education in different places. And then the Teaching with Technology Cafe, I think we have a clip from Jacob about that, so I won't say much about that. So I've already made two clips maybe you want to play those?

[HELENA]

Yes, let's start with the Tech Cafe on Wednesday. And here's a clip by Jacob Goldowitz. He's a learning designer at Douglas College. [JACOB] So on the afternoon of Wednesday this week we're hosting a technology fair. It's in a world cafe style, and we're going back to 2019. We're not screen-sharing to talk about technology. We're actually going to sit around physical table, talk about things like, how do you do a guest lecture in your classroom with Zoom? How do you work with a new learning management system? And all sorts of other topics that have to do with technology and teaching. And we're really excited for this event.

[LEVA]

While imagine actually sitting on a table in person when instead of in front of a computer with Zoom. So that sounds like it'll be a great success. So and fun. So talking about fun, let's play another song. I think it's time from another, for another pick from your fun and fantastic playlist. So I get to pick now yay, I chose this song because I think it captures the joy of togetherness. Let's listen to you "Happy Together". A song from the 1967 by the American rock band The Turtles, so "Happy Together".

[HELENA]

Happy Tuesday! I love it. I love it. And Shannon, earlier you mentioned when you introduced yourself You are the rep for the FFO. Now at BCcampus, I coordinate the FLO, which stands for Facilitating Learning Online. And I'm kind of curious to hear a little bit more about this. FFO in your schedules.

[SHANNON]

Facilitating Faculty Online is a lot like Facilitating Learning Online. And I think that it started out really around bringing a group of instructors together to support their peers on that. How do you like, how do I do this and how do I do that? And one of my colleagues, Kathy Mills, she's actually created videos, short one-minute videos. How do I do this? Then? How do I do that? And they're fantastic. Nathan Hall is the chair of that committee and he's created a blog, again piled full of that kind of technical piece. And that's sort of where the conversation starts across the campus, a lot of small conversations. And it blossomed into those bigger questions in terms of how do we, how do we put the course together online and support our students when they can get here, when they can't get here. And even online, assuming that all students have access to fantastic Wi-Fi and full-time use of the computer equipment at home, right? Isn't that the same assumption for everybody? And we quickly realized that. So this, the committee has really brought together a lot of ideas around teaching and learning and from those "how-tos", to those bigger questions. And again, the chair is Nathan Hall and I think we have a little clip where he just talks about the community from his point of view. Let's hear what Nathan wants to say about the Facilitating Faculty Online group.

[NATHAN]

At the start of the pandemic, there was a group of people who were brought together to support faculty, as we were moving our classes online. This group entailed faculty members from each of the different faculties across Douglas College and places from like the library, the training group, students services, accessibility services, all these different areas. And they were brought together to try and support not just faculty as they moved online, but in supporting students through that as well. And so the idea of the Facilitating Faculty Online group was that we would get together every couple of weeks and we would share things that we were having questions about we were hearing from faculty and then it would go out and it would then help those, each of those faculty members to be able to move their

courses online and address some of the things that they're having. The really the purpose behind FFO was to support faculty through this pandemic time. But as we've moved, starting to move out of the pandemic, we wanted to have something that would acknowledge all the work that these faculty members have been doing and others have been doing. Throughout this entire time and celebrate the fact that they were managed to accomplish a lot over those past two years. And acknowledge that we are better together. Faculty students, administrators support, working together as partners to support education and growth at Douglas College.

[LEVA]

That's, that's so great to hear Nathan speak about not just the learning and sharing, but the celebrating. It's so important to be celebrating too that there's so much has been done and learned over the last little while as well. So Steven, I wanted to ask you. You have a couple of other events that you might want to highlight. And I think we have a couple of clips lined up. So maybe you would like to introduce that? think it's the fifth and sixth clip I think that we had from you.

[STEVEN]

Yes. I think that's Patty Hambler, the Director of Student Affairs and Services. And she recommended and brought Cia Verschelden that I mentioned before in the show, Patty will speak about her in that clip. That's on Wednesday. And then also we have on Friday two Elders. Sandra Greene is a Haida Elder and June Bernard is a Cree Elder Will becoming to the aboriginal gathering place at Douglas College leading a workshop on indigenous ways of knowing and being. So I think that Patty will explain in more details about both those accounts.

[PATTY]

On Wednesday we're hosting Cia Verschelden. She's the author of Bandwidth Recovery, helping students reclaim cognitive resources lost to poverty, racism and social marginalization. Cia Verschelden is a Special Projects Advisor for integration of academic and student affairs at the Association of American Colleges and Universities. And she recently retired as the Vice President of Academic and Student Affairs at Malcolm X College in Chicago. So Cia is going to give a three hour workshop called "Bandwidth Tax of Uncertainty", helping students reclaimed cognitive capacity post COVID and beyond student affairs and services. She's really excited to host this session as part of our work to engage the college community in conversations about student mental wellness as well as equity and inclusion in the classroom. I first had the opportunity to work with Cia at a BCcampus event in 2020 back when we were doing everything online. So I'm excited to have her come back and actually get to engage with us in person this time.

[SHANNON]

So on Friday, two of our college Elders, Sandra Greene, who is a Haida Elder, and June Bernard [...] who's a Cree Elder are joining us to facilitate a session that's going to include storytelling, knowledge, sharing, drumming and singing. And the focus of this session is exploring indigenous ways of knowing and being. So we're excited to have them join us to share various ways of thinking in different perspectives.

[HELENA]

You really have an amazing lineup, the breadth and depth of topics. I'm thoroughly impressed. I also heard that Rajiv is presenting this week and he was a guest on the radio show last week talking about micro-credentials. So Shannon, can you tell us a bit about the upcoming session with Rajiv?

[SHANNON]

Well this is a session about Open Education Resources. And to Lena, I think you can probably step in here and tell us a little bit more about, about that work because BCcampus has been a pioneer around that, around that topic for sure. And so we're really excited to have Rajiv and who will be joined by Robin De Rosa. And both of them have a great following in terms of that Open Education Resources, that leadership that they've shown there and, and, and their strategies that they're bringing. But I'm going to hand it over to you. You could talk about them a little bit more than I can. And Phil is in there before the clip.

[HELENA]

Yes. Now, today we're focusing on this carnage and others mentioned the work of BCcampus, but we could always have another radio show to cover that topic. And let's listen to Debra Flewelling and I hope I pronounced that correctly. Say that again Leva.

[LEVA]

Flewelling. Oh, there you go. Let's listen to what she had to say about the upcoming session with Dr. Rajiv. and Robin.

[DEBRA]

I'm really looking forward to the Open Education event on May 5th. in our Better Together week. We will have both Robin De Rosa and Rajiv Jhangiani. Two of the most amazing Champions of Open Education. They're expanding the conversation beyond the cost savings for students to explore how open education has shaped a hopeful and humane ambition for the future of higher education.

[HELENA]

Wonderful. Now we will definitely put this link to your event and scheduling has shown us who can attend this event.

[SHANNON]

We have a large following for open educational resources here in Canada. And I actually, I have to commend my colleague Debra Flewelling, who has been a big champion right here at Douglas College on open educational resources. So this is one of our spots that is open to everyone interested in this topic. So we're happy to invite to those interested to this event on Thursday.

[HELENA]

Fantastic. Thank you Shannon. So I get to pick the next song and full disclosure, I have not heard of this song before I saw this playlist and I may have picked it because of the name itself, it's a song, It's the sound it makes when you say Tubthumping. Never heard it. It's by Chumbawamba. So everyone enjoy and if you feel like dancing, do so.

[LEVA]

Wow. Such an interesting and eclectic mix reshare of songs and that message of getting knocked down and getting back up again and so appropriate for the time that we're in right now. So also a fantastic lineup of sessions and learning for the week. So I'm wondering, Shannon, Steven, is it too early to ask about our next steps? Your next steps on Better Together 2.0. Maybe. I don't know. Steven, staring out into space. No, no, no.



[STEVEN]

One of our next steps is to and we've asked different people to help collect artifacts from this. And Gretchen Gertz with the Douglas Open Repository is called "Door". I always wonder what the second O is for, maybe online. But anyway, the Douglas Open Repository, we'll put some sort of a package together. So we hope to that would be one next step that would happen soon. And also there were many people that came forward in the beginning. And internally we're offering different sessions that they could facilitate. And for one reason or another, you know, timing or like too complicated to set up something like that. He said, Well, you should have your own session, we'll do it later. So there might be some follow-on events. And people in our FFO group have talked about doing something like this every year. So, so we'll see. We have a session called "Next Steps" and "Paths Forward" or "Lessons Learned" and "Paths Forward" with some senior admin people, but they're not specifically talking about this.

[HELENA]

Well, I'm sure whatever you plan next will be fun and meaningful. And there's always that brunch idea right? that you can go back to. So we would like to dedicate the next song to our own fabulous tech producer, Harper Friedman, who's using fast fingers today to get all the clips and all the music lined up. And it's just such a pleasure working with Harper. And that's why we picked this one from your playlist. We picked Ike & Tina Turner's "Working Together". Thanks Harper for having our back. And also Shannon and Steven, enjoy this because it's been fun working with you so far too.

[LEVA]

Fantastic, I hope people were dancing in the foyer because I know I would be if I was there at Douglas College! So thankful to have had the opportunity to be part of your "Better Together" conference. Shannon and Steven, thank you for the invitation and all the best for a great week. So Steven, you get the chance to pick the last song of the show.

[STEVEN]

Well, Tina Turner's hard to follow up with, but I think I found someone that could do that. And I wonder, do I have time for a very short anecdote that relates back to the "Tubthumping" song, which was at one time considered as our possible final ending. Okay. So when I was a little kid, I almost drowned once. And because they used to swim with my eyes close. And so one lesson is try to keep your eyes open and your mouth closed. But that's a whole other story. Anyway, I was rescued and brought back to the shore and knocked the water out of my lungs and mouth and whatever and a lifeguard said, Okay, you have to go back in. Because if you don't, you'll be afraid of water and afraid of swimming for the rest of your life. So I did go back in and I'm not afraid of the water, afraid of swimming, but I think there's an analogy there to being knocked down and getting back up or almost surrounding him. Covid in lockdown and remote everything. And and this is this is audacious to put a conference together the way, the way that's been done. And so that's amazing. And that's, that's all I'll say about that.

[HELENA]

That's wonderful Steven, thank you for sharing that

[STEVEN]

Yeah, thank you. This song is "While We Wait" by Dominique Fils-Aime, a Canadian singer. And it's sublime. It doesn't start off sounding like that. It starts off like a little doo-wop, co-dependent love song. But I think if you stick, stick with it all the way to the end and listen to the lyrics very carefully. You'll hear some inspiration, of changing the world.

[HELENA]

Thank you, Steven, and Shannon. You've been thoughtful even in the songs you've selected. I have no doubt that this week is going to be meaningful for everyone. So that's the rest from us. Thanks for joining us on "Lunchable Learning" on this Monday, let's walk the walk and strive to be better together. Thanks everyone. Enjoy while we wait.