

# **Shannon Moroney**

**Author & Public Speaker at National Speakers Bureau & Global Speakers Agency; Random House Canada, Simon & Schuster USA/UK/Australia**

Toronto, ON, CA

Shannon Moroney: Speaker, Author, Advocate

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## **Biography**

In 2005, Shannon Moroney was a teacher, guidance counsellor and happy newlywed when a police officer arrived at her door to tell her that her husband was in custody having confessed to the kidnapping and brutal sexual assault of two women in their community. Thrust upon a terrifying journey of grief, loss, confusion and stigma, Shannon witnessed first-hand the vast ripple-effect of violence and gaps in the justice and correctional systems for victims, offenders, families and communities. After her husband pled guilty, was sentenced to life in prison, and they finalized their divorce, Shannon became an advocate for change--healing herself as she helped others. She earned a Masters degree in Child Welfare with an emphasis on trauma and restorative justice, became a certified restorative justice facilitator, began a public speaking career, and then wrote her memoir. *Through the Glass* became an instant national bestseller upon its release in 2011 and was published worldwide in 2012. It has been nominated for several awards including the Governor General's Literary Award for Non-Fiction, was a Canada Reads Top 40, and is currently #1 on the reading list at the international Empathy Library. Her work and story have been widely featured by media outlets around the world and her interview for CBC radio's *The Current* was named in the top ten of the program's ten years on air. Passionate about restorative justice, Shannon has spoken internationally on the topic, provided written testimony to the Senate of Canada on Crime Bill C-10, and contributed to the public consultation for Canada's Victims Bill of Rights. She is also a volunteer with Leave Out Violence and a member of the International Forgiveness Project. In 2015, Shannon wrote, narrated and co-produced a documentary called "In Harm's Way" for CBC Radio's *The Current*, which features the voices and stories of some of her readers--friends and family members of offenders--and gives insight to the issues they face. Since 2008, Shannon has been engaging audiences all over the world. Using vivid photographs and artwork to illustrate her journey, Shannon tells her story and guides the audience to think about the big, universal themes: justice, forgiveness, and resilience. Shannon inspires triumph over trauma for people and communities. Those who hear her never forget her story. Shannon lives in Toronto where she is remarried and the mother of twins. Visit her at [www.shannonmoroney.com](http://www.shannonmoroney.com)

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## **Availability**

Keynote, Panelist, Workshop, Author Appearance

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## **Industry Expertise**

Judiciary, Corrections, Women, Alternative Dispute Resolution, Mental Health Care, Writing and Editing, Health and Wellness, Public Safety

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## Areas of Expertise

Resilience, Writing to Heal, Families of Offenders, Crime and Justice, Stigma, Trauma, Ptsd Recovery, Criminal Law, Criminal and Social Justice Policy, Forgiveness/Reconciliation, Restorative Justice, Violence, Prison Reform

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## Affiliations

Writers' Union of Canada, The Forgiveness Project, Leave Out Violence (LOVE), The Banff Centre, Doubleday Canada (Penguin Random House), Simon & Schuster USA & UK

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## Sample Talks

### **THROUGH THE GLASS: One Woman's Pursuit of Justice, Forgiveness and Healing**

In October 2005, Shannon Moroney was a successful professional, proud homeowner, active volunteer and happy newlywed. A knock at her door shattered the life she knew: it was a police officer, there to deliver the shocking news that her husband, Jason, was in custody after confessing to the brutal sexual assault and kidnapping of two women in their town. Hear Shannon tell the story of her husband's arrest, trial, sentencing, and the insights she gained about justice, healing and the relationship between the two as she struggled to triumph over tragedy. Openly sharing her experiences, reading selected pieces from her book and using photos and artwork to illustrate her journey, Shannon will lead the audience through an unforgettable ordeal and inspires hope even in the most desperate moments of the human condition.

### **WRITING WHAT HURTS: Recounting without Reliving**

Geared toward seasoned and novice writers as well as literature lovers, this presentation offers wisdom and advice on caring for oneself and one's manuscript while writing about trauma and difficult times. Shannon shares her own writing journey and discusses the private and public experience of opening her heart and memory, providing the audience with practical tools. Whether the goal is to publish, to document a journey, or to find personal healing, participants will come away with tools and resources to guide the process. Recounting doesn't have to mean reliving.

### **RESILIENCE INSIDE OUT: How people and communities can overcome trauma and build peace**

Is resilience something you're born with or something you can develop? What makes a person, community or society elastic and able to overcome life's challenges, big and small? Sharing her own personal journey to recover from the trauma of her husband's violent crimes, and her extensive knowledge of the peace building process worldwide, Shannon Moroney engages the audience in a bigger understanding of what "being elastic" is all about and offers practical advice for building resilience in yourself and your family, workplace, school, community and society.

### **The "F" Word: The Power of Forgiveness (workshop/retreat)**

Part of being human is getting hurt. Sometimes we hurt others; sometimes others hurt us. We even hurt ourselves. Holding onto this hurt and allowing it to dictate the course of our lives can have negative long-term consequences. Forgiveness can change the shape of our journeys. It can release anger, fear, judgement and resentment, and open the door to peace and a positive future. The "F" Word is an experiential workshop conducted in a circle format to enable all participants to share equally in an exploration of what forgiveness may or may not represent for them. A series of exercises and story telling offers a rich and thoughtful perspective designed to connect the individual to his or her own story. This workshop can be adapted to groups of different sizes and compositions, from youth to divorcees to mental health professionals to prison inmates. An expanded version is also available for day and weekend retreats. Participants are invited to explore some common misconceptions about forgiveness, the benefits and potential drawbacks of forgiveness, the role of apology, self-forgiveness and situations without the potential for dialogue or remorse.

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### **Education**

#### **Trent University**

BA Honours International Development Studies

#### **OISE - University of Toronto**

B. Ed. Education

#### **Queen's University**

Specialist Certificate in Guidance and Career Education Counselling

#### **University of East Anglia, Norwich, England**

MA (Hons) International Child Welfare

#### **The Banff Centre**

Social Innovation Leadership Certificate Social Innovation

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### **Testimonials**

#### **Judah Outshoorn**

"Shannon's work consistently inspires students to think more critically about their world, and to reflect more deeply about their own values. I have used Shannon's book as a text in a number of courses and would highly recommend it to others."

#### **Brenda Morrison**

"With courage and compassion Shannon Moroney draws us into the hidden world of those navigating our justice system - victims, offenders, family and friends. Shannon's compelling story, Through the Glass, has something to offer us all - personally and professionally. Her story allow us to see the possibility of a justice system that draws on our instinct for compassion, over our instinct for retribution. Against the odds, Shannon navigates a journey of hope for all of us."

### **Gerard Bellefeuille**

?Shannon Moroney?s book *Through the Glass* is a useful resource for my students who are engaged in thinking about the importance of good assessment practices. It guides students in sorting through ethical and boundary issues, provides a powerful insightful look into Canada?s correctional and justice system, and the relational practice of forgiveness and empathy.?

### **Howard Zehr**

?What an incredible story, and what a gifted story teller Shannon is. Once you pick up this book, you won?t be able to put it down. Moreover, it is likely to challenge some firmly-held assumptions about sexual offending and about who is included among its victims.??

### **Jean-Paul Boudreau**

?Shannon's book is a tour de force, heartfelt and passionate, with a journey that rivets from the first powerful opening sentence to the last. It is a journey that takes the reader through betrayal, violence and trauma; but more important, it is a journey of compassion and healing, of love and hope.?

### **Anthony Doob**

?This beautifully written book is a ?must read? for anyone interested in obtaining a full understanding of the manner in which crime affects us all.?

### **Kirkus Reviews**

?A young woman's page-turning account of how she faced the trauma that came in the aftermath of sadistic sex crimes perpetrated by her husband.?

### **Rabble Reviews**

"A well crafted journey through the nightmare of Canada's courts that painfully illustrates how many victims of crimes are never truly accounted for in the trial process."

### **Waterloo Chronicle**

?Gripping and eye-opening. . . . A heart-wrenching story?written with great clarity?of grief, confusion, judgment, and loss.?

### **Edmonton Journal**

?A level-headed but passionate look at the journey on which [Moroney] was thrust after her husband?s crime.?

### **Timothy Appleby**

"A disturbing, lavishly written account . . . [Moroney] emerges as a credible advocate of what is termed 'restorative justice,' which stresses healing and reconciliation between offender and victim rather than just punishment."

**Vancouver Sun**

"Through the Glass could easily have been the story of how Moroney's life fell apart ? and indeed, it did. But this is no 'poor-me' tale. It's equal parts a how-to manual for anyone touched by crime, an indictment of the criminal justice system, an endorsement of the practice of restorative justice, a thank-you note to the friends and family who supported Moroney and, ultimately, an answer to those who wanted her to explain."

**Winnipeg Free Press**

"An engaging, compassionate story of a woman's quest for hope in the wake of trauma and violence.?"

**The Peterborough Examiner**

"This is a well-written, emotion-filled book with many unanswered questions for society to deal with...it is a book that everyone should read."

**The London Free Press**

"If you are going to read one book this year, let it be this one. You will never again forget, or take lightly, ALL the innocent victims of crimes."

**The National Post**

"A remarkable story? of love and betrayal, of a horribly broken man's hidden brutality and his ex-wife's boundless capacity to forgive.?"

**Anne Kingston**

"A compelling documentation of a flawed penal system [and] a nuanced look at the humanity of a violent criminal. Most of all, it's a meditation on forgiveness.?"

**Sister Helen Prejean, CSJ**

"A vivid, heartbreaking and eye-opening journey through the justice system that gives voice to the forgotten victims of crime?the families and friends of people who offend. Honest and timely, it is a must-read for the millions of Americans coping with the crimes and incarceration of a loved one, and for all those who want to understand their complex journey.?"

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