

The Face Behind Interpersonal Wellness Services Inc.



WHO IS JOYCE ODIDISON?

Joyce Odidison is the face behind Interpersonal Wellness Services Inc. but behind her is a story that our readers deserve to hear in this first issue of Faces of Workplace Wellness. Here is what most people know about Joyce Odidison.

Joyce Odidison is the Founder and President of Interpersonal Wellness Services Inc. (IWS Inc.) for 24 years. Joyce is a thought leader and the world's foremost expert on Interpersonal Wellness Competency Mindset Teaching™. Joyce is a Conflict Analyst, certified coach, and certified training and development professional. She is an author of six books, a speaker, corporate trainer, and Founder of the Global Workplace Wellness Summit, and What's Happening at Work podcast. Joyce also hosts a LinkedIn Live show called Office Hours and is a frequent TV guest expert who has been featured in print and online magazines around the world.

We later learned that I was born with only one fully functioning kidney. One of my kidneys retained the waste and was slowly leaking toxins into my body, which put a lot of stress and strain on my immune system. Despite this, I was a happy, adventurous, precocious, and vocal child, who loved reading and learning.

Growing up in a poor family meant we had to help with the chores and there were many times we couldn't afford more than the basics. "We reared our chicken; cattle for beef, eating the food we grew. As a child, we helped our mom on the farm collecting coconut, and tending sweet potatoes, or bananas, which was often our breakfast on school days.

"I always dreamt of getting a post-secondary education to build a better life for myself and my family. My dream of higher education came through an invitation from my aunt to come to Canada".

At age 19, I immigrated to Canada with an intention to pursue a university education as there were no universities on the island at that time. I came to Canada with a little duffle bag, as that was all my parents could afford to help me acquire. I still remember my trip from the Winnipeg airport to my new home where I was to live with my aunt. The terrain looked extremely flat compared to the hilly mountainous landscape of Dominica, where you were always either going up or down a hill.

After some time, and mounds of paperwork and immigration procedures, I was finally able to start university. I had already undergone a left nephrectomy to remove the toxic kidney at age 21. By age 27 I had already undergone 6 surgeries. The battle of inflammation and digestive issues from years of undiagnosed allergies had done some damage to my gut but one thing stayed constant, I remained a firm believer in learning and development.

I was excited to pursue my education. I enrolled at the University of Winnipeg, where I eventually met my husband Misan. Misan and I got married and I later graduated with a bachelor's degree in Sociology and Conflict Resolution.

I remember that we had a young family and I felt that I should have my own business. I surprised my husband one evening by announcing that I wanted to start my own business. Being a supportive partner, we discussed what I wanted to do and how I imagined I could go about it. At the time I was working in a job with no prospects for advancement. My boss had already told me that I would need to move on to advance my career. With the memories of my grandmother who was a consummate entrepreneur, I began the journey of figuring it out.

I was able to convince some organizations to offer me volunteer opportunities and later paid work, but I really found my niche in divorce mediation until it became too disappointing to see the hurt and frustrations couples caused each other. The work in this area led to my first book: *The Pre-mediation Model* still being sold today. This made me thirsty to

do more and I switched my focus to corporate training development and conflict management.

In 2003, I graduated with Master's degree in Conflict Analysis and Management. This gave me the foundation to build my career as a Conflict Analyst helping organizations navigate systemic and interpersonal conflicts to create resilient relational well-being workplaces. It was through this work that I started looking at the intersection between interpersonal relations and well-being.

My work has been very fulfilling, engaging, and surprising. In 2010 when I rebranded my consulting practice to Interpersonal Wellness Services Inc., most of my clients stopped calling me. When I reached out, they asked, "what is this wellness thing, we don't understand". It presented many opportunities to share about the intersection between interpersonal interactions and psychological safety and well-being at work.

I use my signature model the WIS® Method to teach wellness competency teaching and training in organizations. I love interacting with leaders and their employees. I love being able to let leaders know how employees are experiencing their decisions and how they can modify a message to reduce conflict and challenges, especially in periods of change and transition.

At IWS, we run Coach Velocity School of Coaching for leaders and professionals seeking transformational coach training or certification. We also run the Global Workplace Wellness Summit to share the comprehensive and inclusive wellness competency teaching; and we run the DEIW certificate that explores the interpersonal relational well-being aspect of Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion.

I am currently publishing my 6th book "*WIS Method: The Wellness Competency Mindset Coaching Framework*" and the launch of *Faces of Workplace Wellness magazine*. Each year, we work to expand the reach of the Global Workplace Wellness Summit.

WHAT IS THE GLOBAL WORKPLACE WELLNESS SUMMIT?

The Global Workplace Summit (#GWWS) is the signature event held by IWS Inc. that brings together experts and practitioners in the field of workplace health and wellness, and performance to share best practices to improve wellness at work in the Western world and developing countries. I created the Summit because I felt there was a void in the market to focus on inclusive wellness issues in workplaces on a global level. I look forward to hosting you at the 4th Global Workplace Wellness Virtual Summit, November 8 – 10, 2021.

WHAT IS INTERPERSONAL WELLNESS SERVICES INC.?

Interpersonal Wellness Services Inc. is a female-led, black-owned organization based in Winnipeg, Manitoba, Canada. IWS is an organizational development training and coaching firm, known for introducing the most comprehensive wellness model on the market. The interpersonal Wellness Improvement System® (WIS® Method) has been used to serve clients globally. IWS works with organizations going through difficulties to enhance interpersonal communication and relational well-being. The firm has worked with private and public sectors, non-profit, and post-secondary institutions to rebuild smarter resilient workplaces with a whole person well-being focus. Contact us at www.interpersonalwellness.com

I am ever grateful to my team, committee members and advisory board members who are partnering with me to run the Summit and helping to ensure all my ideas come to fruition.