



# MEDIA RELEASE

## FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Monday 1st June 2009

### **Cross Canada Runner near completion of epic journey**

**Hope, BC.** Wayne Cho, currently running across Canada from east to west, is nearing the end of his personally funded odyssey for mental health awareness. He is currently in Hope, BC and will complete the Atlantic to Pacific journey at the Trans-Canada Highway's Mile Zero (Jct Douglas St & Dallas Road, Victoria, BC) on **11th June at 11:00am PDT**.

Cho's goal is to get Canadians to **Speak Up about Mental Health**. To this end, he runs wearing a t-shirt proclaiming "I have anxiety" which symbolizes his strong belief in talking openly about mental health. Additionally, the support vehicle carries a large banner promoting the website [www.crosscanadarun.com](http://www.crosscanadarun.com) and the words "Speak Up for Mental Health".

As Cho was unable to secure any corporate sponsorship, he emptied his savings account, sold all his RSP investments, and has had to take out personal loans to complete the run and encourage all Canadians to speak up about mental health. He estimates the run has cost in excess of \$60,000 thus far, including vehicle, food and fuel costs.

Over 60 days of Cho's run were solo, without a driver or support crew. He achieved this by running up to 40km per day, then hitchhiking back to his vehicle, or waiting at a fish plant until the shift finished, then securing a ride with a worker.

Canadian winters can be harsh, and Cho didn't shy away from running in severe winter temperatures. He has run in temperatures as low as -40°C, and would then sleep in the barely-heated RV that night. In order to minimise expenses, Cho often showered in community centres, stadiums, laundromats and truck stops.

According to the World Federation for Mental Health<sup>1</sup>, mental illnesses affect around one in four people. Anecdotally, Cho reports that the number is likely to be significantly higher, as practically every person he has spoken to along this journey is either affected themselves, or has an immediate family member or close friend who is. Cho himself has been affected by General

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Anxiety Disorder since childhood but his condition went undiagnosed until age 31. He took up long distance running which helps to significantly reduce his anxiety symptoms.

Throughout his journey, Cho has stopped at schools, hospitals, mental health organisations, service clubs and running clubs to share his message with hundreds of everyday Canadians.

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### **About Wayne Cho**

Wayne Cho is a 35 year old psychology graduate from Toronto, ON. Born in China, Cho has lived in Toronto for the past 21 years. He has been affected by symptoms of Generalised Anxiety Disorder since childhood. He previously worked in a technical support role for a financial company in Toronto.

### **About Cross Canada Run for Anxiety & Depression**

Beginning with a traditional dipping of the feet into the Atlantic Ocean at Cape Spear, NL on 23rd May 2008, the Cross Canada Run for Anxiety & Depression has spanned around 8,000km across the Canadian provinces, seeking to raise awareness for anxiety and depression, and helping to erase the stigma associated with these and other mental illnesses. The run will end in Victoria BC at 11am PDT 11th June 2009. More information can be found at [www.crosscanadarun.com](http://www.crosscanadarun.com)

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If you'd like more information, or to schedule an interview with Wayne Cho, please contact Jay Anderson, Tour Manager by phone - **604 556-1564** or by email - [jay.anderson@crosscanadarun.com](mailto:jay.anderson@crosscanadarun.com)