

CCPA Counselling,
Psychotherapy
and Private
Practice

Volume 6
Spring 2014

Editorial Team:

Wendy Ryan

S. Phurn Ball

Jill Noftall

Corrine Hendricken-Eldershaw

Maxine MacMillan

REMARKS FROM THE PRESIDENT OF PRIVATE PRACTITIONER'S CHAPTER

Author: Corrine Hendricken-Eldershaw



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Greetings,

As I write this message it is snowing in downtown Morell, PEI. Did I mention it is March 30, 2014? On a positive note it is a beautiful snowfall and I do know we will see SPRING.

We have an exciting newsletter for you. This would not be possible without your generous submissions. Within this issue we have two book reviews: Ecotherapy and Real Happiness as well as articles including Private Practitioners in Ontario, Forgiveness Conversations, the Practice of Heartfulness, Psychotherapy and Spirituality.

We will continue our Newsletter each year. We invite your article or book review, between 500 and 1200 words in length. The deadline for receipt of your submission will be December 01 each year. Your submissions can be sent to Wendy Ryan at wendyryan.ottawa@gmail.com

Training opportunities have continued for private practitioners and CCPA members. Our webinars began in 2012 under the leadership of Lucy MacDonald and have continued under the leadership of Roberta Neault (see past and present listings p.8).

Our CCPA Conference in beautiful Victoria begins May 7, 2014. Our Annual General Meeting is scheduled for May 9 at Noon at the Blue Crab (advance registration mandatory). We are also hosting a one hour session titled "**Private Practitioners Reflecting on Self and Practice: The Questions You Would Like to Ask But ...?**" (Note time: May 9 just before our AGM) This is an opportunity for our members to receive an update on relevant topics and to network with colleagues primarily.

Please know that we encourage your applications for the CCPA Legislative Support Fund which is a grant opportunity to support work towards counsellor regulation and third party billing in your province. Your CCPA PP Chapter financially supports this fund. Please visit our website to learn more:

<http://www.ccpa-accp.ca/en/chapters/details/?ID=11>

I would like to close by expressing my appreciation to our CCPA Private Practitioner Team: Lorne Flavelle, Past President and Treasurer; Jill Nofall, Secretary; Newsletter Team: Wendy Ryan, Phurn Ball, Jill Nofall, Corrine and Maxine MacMillan; Directors at Large: Lilli Janzen and our Board Liaison Tracy Duffy. Thank you for another great year and Newsletter!

Sincerely,

Corrine Hendricken-Eldershaw, M.Ed, CCC
President, CCPA Private Practitioners Chapter

PRIVATE PRACTITIONERS CHAPTER EXECUTIVE

Position	Name
President	<u>Corrine Hendricken-Eldershaw</u>
Past President	<u>Lorne Flavelle</u>
Chapter Newsletter Editor	<u>Wendy Ryan</u> , <u>Phurn Ball</u> , <u>Jill Noftall</u> , <u>Corrine Hendricken-Eldershaw</u> , Maxine MacMillan
Treasurer	<u>Lorne Flavelle</u>
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Board Liaisons	Tracy Duffy

Legislative Support Fund

We remain passionate about the importance of Counsellor Regulation and third party billing. To this end, we encourage your applications for the CCPA Legislative Support Fund which is a grant opportunity to support work towards counsellor regulation and third party billing in your province

Please visit our website to learn more:

<http://www.ccpa-accp.ca/en/theprofession/legislativesupportfund/>

E-Newsletter – Articles and Book Reviews Needed

It is that time of year again!

The Private Practitioners Chapter Board of Directors are inviting counsellors, psychotherapists, and students to send Newsletter items our way! Our next publication is Spring of 2015.

We are inviting your article or book review, between 500 and 1200 words in length. The deadline for receipt of your submission is December 01, 2014.

Please send all submissions to Wendy Ryan at
wendyryan.ottawa@gmail.com

IMPORTANT NEWS AND EVENTS

CCPA invites you to join us in Victoria, BC from May 7- 9, 2014



CCPA 2014 Annual Conference
Congrès annuel 2014 de l'ACCP

May 7-9 mai, 2014

Victoria Convention Center

Victoria, British Columbia/Colombie-Britannique

www.ccpa-accp.ca/conference

This year's CCPA Conference will be held in beautiful Victoria, British Columbia at the Victoria Convention Centre. A block of hotel rooms will be held at the Fairmont Empress Hotel at a discounted rate for delegates.

New this year, CCPA will be partnering with the International Association for Counselling (IAC) to host the IAC Conference 2014, taking place May 3-7, 2014 in Victoria, BC. Delegates can receive a discounted rate when registering for both conferences.

For more information regarding the IAC Conference, visit:
<http://ccpa-accp.ca/iacconference/>.

Information on future conferences can be found at:
<http://www.ccpa-accp.ca/conference/future.php>.

Join your CCPA Colleagues on Facebook:
<https://www.facebook.com/CCPA.ACCP>



CANADIAN COUNSELLING AND
PSYCHOTHERAPY ASSOCIATION

L'ASSOCIATION CANADIENNE DE
COUNSELING ET DE PSYCHOTHÉRAPIE

FORGIVENESS CONVERSATIONS IN SMALL GROUPS

AUTHOR: Daniel Klassen, PhD

“Regard, without ill will, despite an offense.” - Webster

It was during the third session of our *Forgiveness Conversations in Small Groups* that it became clear that Kelley valued her relationship with Todd and would like to forgive him. She felt that Todd seemed to genuinely regret his bad behavior and wanted to repair the relationship. As much as Kelley would like to forgive him she could not get past the feeling that to forgive him meant that she would have to give him something he did not deserve. That was really offensive to her. If anything felt fair it was that Todd owed her big time and therefore forgiving him would totally ignore justice. No one could reasonably disagree with her.

So we did a little investigation of the word “forgive” to see what its beginnings were. Since “give” is the root word of “forgive” it would seem that Kelley’s assumption was correct and in the process of forgiving you would need to give the offender something. But why would the offended person want to give the perpetrator anything? Under those circumstances the offended person is much more likely to want to take something, to take at least as much as was taken, and also to take something that was justifiably owed. Now that made sense. And this was Kelley’s dilemma.

And Kelley was not alone in this. We discovered that one of the most common impediments to forgiving is the belief that the offended person must “reach out” to the offender who hurt them. So the myth is alive and well; that in forgiving the offended one serves the offender with a gift, a gift that is undeserved.

However, was this the original intention of the word? As with many common words in our vocabulary, the connotations evolve over time.

The meaning of “give” in the original definition of the word, was not intended to convey giving something to someone, much less that the offended person was to give the perpetrator anything. The meaning of “give” was more consistent with the way in which we would use the word in “give in” or “give up” on something. Such as when we would not “give in” to our need for revenge and “give up” on our hope of making things right with resentment as the driving force. As in, to “give up” our desire or power to punish.

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FORGIVENESS CONVERSATIONS IN SMALL GROUPS

CONTINUED

Daniel Klassen, PhD

The prefix “for” in forgive is an abbreviation of “before” and refers to the Old English “fore” as a starting place or the place of beginning.

So then, putting the two parts of the word together the meaning of forgive may be understood in this fashion: before we react to the offense and offender and while we are thinking about a plan of action, we are to “give up” on our first instinct, which is our need to get even and settle the score with some form of retaliation. To forgive means that when offended, we are to abandon and withhold the impulse which our instincts are presenting. We are justified in our anger and entitled to our resentment but forgiveness cannot flow out of our need for revenge and we cannot make things right with anger and resentment being the driving force.

When first used, “forgive” did not have the offender as its focus, as for instance we find in our criminal and civil courts. The focal point of thought and choice was not the offender but the offended. The forgiver must have a clear view of the choices that must be made in response to the offense. The indication seems to be that when forgiving we need to give up on our immediate instinctual directives and not give way to their suggestions and refuse to act out of our anger as we withhold justified resentment; resentment to which we are entitled along with our entitled need for just retaliation.

We are entitled to a just outcome but justice will not come through our immediate need for pay back. Justice will come from a different starting place other than resentment and anger. Therefore there is the need to lay aside and abandon resentment. As Antwone Fisher wrote in his screenplay, “Regard without ill, despite an offense.” This he said, was Webster’s definition of forgiveness.

To forgive does not mean that we ignore the offender and the offense. It means that once we have discovered and named the offender and defined the offense and described the debt we must turn our attention to what we need to do in response. When we are through examining what was done to us and are done with crying for revenge and are on the path of grieving the loss, we are at the beginning of what we need to do. And what we need to do is fight for our integrity while withholding resentment and cancel the debt the offender owes; a debt which the offender can’t pay.

Conclusion on Page 7

FORGIVENESS CONVERSATIONS IN SMALL GROUPS

CONCLUSION

Daniel Klassen, PhD

On being a part of this conversation Kelley realized that while she was still not ready to forgive and let the debt go, she understood that her concern was logical but the alternative was losing the relationship and that was something she did not think was fair either. Forgiving meant that it may not feel fair but neither was it fair that she live in resentment and subsequently throw away a relationship that she believed had great potential and could be repaired.

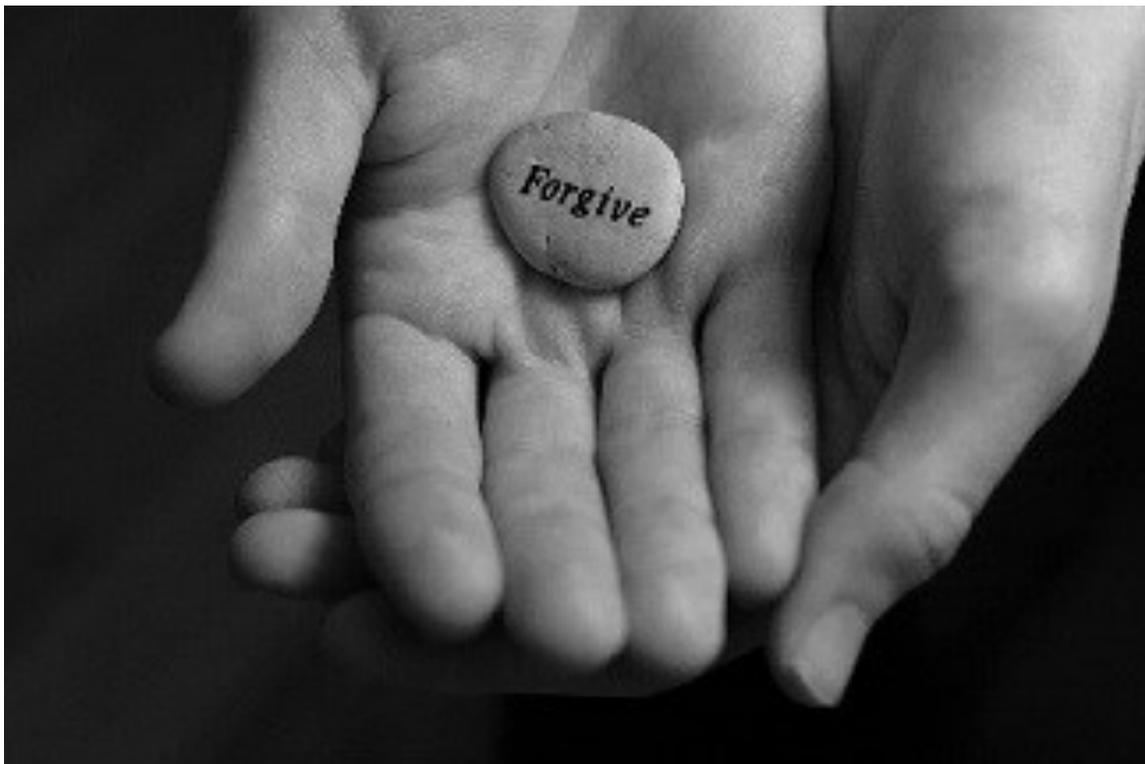
When we are wronged we can find our way back to the pathway of fairness and justice, but justice cannot be taken by force. Justice does not come by only taking back what was taken away. Justice comes when we give up on our demand to retrieve what was taken. That's forgiveness. Kelley had the hope that her relationship with Todd could be repaired in this venue.

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Webinars Offered in 2014 for Private Practitioners

Please contact memberservices@ccpa-accp.ca if you are interested in obtaining the recorded version of these webinars.

Accessing EAPs - You want to work for an EAP company...
April 29, 2014 12:00 pm - 1:00 pm EST

Dual relationships: "If you can't avoid them!..."
May 27, 2014 12:00 pm - 1:00 pm EST

Legal aspects of "Forms". Do my forms meet the test of ethics, information",
"I didn't go to grad school to become a secretary!", etc.
June 10, 2014 12:00 pm - 1:00 pm EST

Previous Webinars Offered for Private Practitioners in 2013-2014

Please contact memberservices@ccpa-accp.ca if you are interested in obtaining the recorded version of these webinars.

For the PDF version of the slides that were presented during **Roberta Neault's** presentations, visit:
<http://www.ccpa-accp.ca/en/chapters/privatepractitioners/#lsf>

- ◆ Living a Sustainable Life: Managing Time, Setting Priorities, and Reducing Stress.
- ◆ Look Before You Leap: Becoming a Successful Self-Employed Consultant.
- ◆ Creating a Strategic Online Presence: Tips for Effective Websites and Social Media Engagement.
- ◆ Managing Challenging Clients.
- ◆ What does it take - is it possible - to build a successful practice?

BOOK REVIEW by: Wendy Ryan, PhD
www.waterfrontwellness.ca



Salzberg, S. (2011). *Real Happiness: The Power of Meditation* New York: Workman Publishing

This is an excellent book, full of wisdom and practical exercises that can be used to help you and your clients increase inner peace and happiness. The book is a very good introduction for those that don't know anything about meditation but also offers insights to those who are already practicing. A CD including 9 guided meditations is included with the book.

Salzberg's book begins with an explanation of what meditation is and isn't. She describes the three key skills of concentration, mindfulness, and compassion (lovingkindness). Then, she presents scientific studies that show the benefits of meditation. This is enough to convince the reader that reading the rest of the book and following Salzberg's 4-week program will be worthwhile.

Salzberg goes on to present guidance on how to start meditating. Practical advice on choosing a place, what to wear, choosing a time, and details about posture are very useful for a beginner. In week one, Salzberg focuses on improving concentration by focusing on the breath. Week 2 adds Body Scan, Walking Meditation, Body Sensation Meditation, and other meditations rooted in everyday experiences (e.g. drinking tea). In week 3, she adds dealing with thoughts and feelings. And, in week 4 she focuses on Lovingkindness meditation.

The book is written in a casual, easy to read manner. Boxes entitled "Nuts and Bolts" contain concise summaries of what is taught in each week. Shaded boxes entitled "Try This" provide practical exercises for the reader to try. Each chapter also ends with some "Frequently Asked Questions" and a "Takeaway". Throughout the book, Salzberg also indicates when the reader should listen to a track on the CD. Her style of writing is easy to follow and helps keep the reader engaged.

Continued on Page 11

This book provided a great review for me of the different ways to meditate and reminded me of some important concepts from Buddhism. Some of my personal “takeaways” that I plan to share with my clients include:

- We’re all alike in wanting to be happy and in our vulnerability to pain and unpredictable, continual change.
- Meditation involves training our attention so that we can be more aware of the here and now. It can help us open our attention to all of human experience and all parts of ourselves.
- Scientific research has shown that regular meditation can protect against memory loss and cognitive deficits, as well as help those dealing with chronic pain, insomnia, immune deficiencies, ADHD, anxiety, depression, and obsessive-compulsive disorder. The more you practice, the greater the benefit.
- Focus on your breath. Your breath is always there, like a faithful friend.
- Just be aware, without adding judgement or self-criticism.
- Thoughts aren’t facts or acts. They’re just thoughts. Part of the mental landscape. Just watch them go by.
- Every sensation, every emotion is changing all of the time.
- Nothing endures but change.
- The way we’re feeling right now isn’t how we’re always going to feel and it isn’t the whole of who we are.
- Three conditioned responses that can rob us of our happiness: clinging, condemning, and disconnecting.
- Four steps in dealing with emotions mindfully: recognition, acceptance, investigation, non-identification.
- We need to distinguish what’s actually happening in the moment from the add-ons we bring such as shame, projecting into the future or weaving an entire negative self-image from a scrap of fleeting emotion.
- Mindfulness meditation doesn’t eliminate difficult feelings or prolong pleasant ones, but it helps us accept them as passing and impermanent.
- It’s a thought; it’s not who I really am.

BOOK REVIEW by: Wendy Ryan, PhD
www.waterfrontwellness.ca

Real Happiness: The Power of Meditation Conclusion

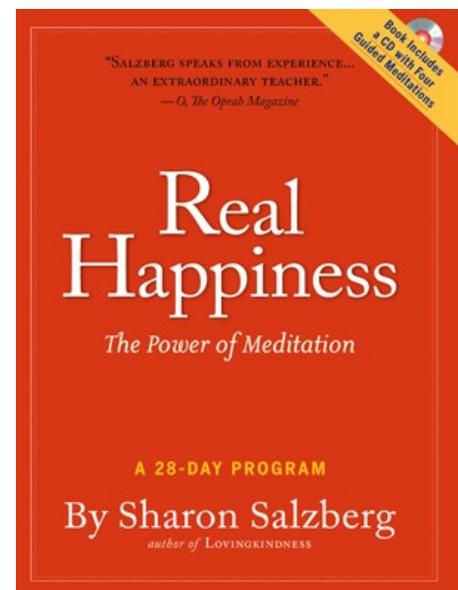
- Name the tape and remind yourself that it's just visiting.
- Be with the emotion. Stay in the moment. Recognize add-ons.
- Take a moment and choose a different response.
- Mindfulness meditation can help us to see the distinction between our actual experience and the story we're weaving from it (our add-ons), and allows us to choose whether to pursue that story or not.
- When others are acting unskillfully, look beyond their actions and recognize that they are suffering and that they too want to be happy.
- Look at unskillful behaviour with compassion instead of contempt.

I can identify with the student quoted in Salzberg's book who said "I'm filled with lovingkindness and compassion for all beings everywhere as long as I'm alone. Once I'm with someone else, it's really rough." This is a real challenge for many of us and for our clients... to bring lovingkindness and compassion into interactions with others in stressful situations. Practice and self-compassion are essential.

Salzberg's *Real Happiness* is a book that I will refer to again and again, and will recommend to my counselling clients. It is full of practical advice on how to improve your life using meditation. The CD is a wonderful way to build your meditation practice or re-establish your meditation routine. After following her 28-day program you will be well on your way to real happiness.



Buy this book at [Amazon](#)
Buy this book from [Workman Publishing](#)
ISBN 9780761159254 (0761159258)



Can Psychotherapy Escape Spirituality?

By Lakshmi Sundaram, MA Candidate, Counselling,
Psychotherapy and Spirituality, Saint Paul University.

Perhaps Freud may have thought spirituality and religion were forms of escape but many modern day therapists believe in the assimilation of some kind of spirituality into their practice. Human beings are, after all, spiritual creatures and thus a modern, integrated psychotherapy should tend to all our human dimensions when exploring the psyche.

If psychology's aim is to help us discover ourselves with a goal of well being, then our spiritual self, that sacred place within ourselves which seeks a sense of awareness and connection to *other*, must become an integral part of that study. As therapists, our job is to help integrate fragmented parts of our client's being into a more holistic sense of self and thus attending to that spirituality as it is reflected in each individual is paramount to an integrative practice

The sheer magnitude of globalization imparts the amalgamation of innumerable cultures and faiths and spiritual diversity onto the clients we see in practice. We understand that their values and relationships, their religion or spirituality all influence their beliefs and their actions. This *stuff* of our individual lives contributes to our basic morals and principles and ultimately to the manner in which we engage, behave, function and survive in society. Spirituality offers a frame of beliefs and our way of being in this world is outlined and supported by those beliefs.

The former gap between psychology and spirituality must be sewn together in order to nurture an integrative environment of growth towards a more holistic conception of being. Our human ache for change and growth is often challenged by our desire to reside safely in what we know. The tension in that oh so familiar paradox is where our resistances thrive, where our relational defences begin to overpower well-being and where we become immersed in the chaos of life. Our spirituality is often what helps us see through that chaos and helps rope us back to a familiar place where we can reconnect with ourselves. It can help us see that, regardless of where we are in our lives, or how uncertain or unknown our present condition, that we are worthy of exploration. On the other hand, opening the door to a client's spirituality may also uncover unhealthy beliefs and doing so may possibly help thwart radical fundamentalism or other acts dangerous to the person or to others.

Can Psychotherapy Escape Spirituality?

By Lakshmi Sundaram

Conclusion

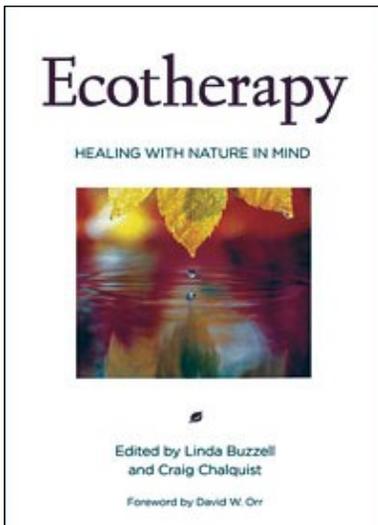


Our hermeneutical presuppositions colour all that we are as individuals and therapy can help us increase awareness of our biases and baggage in order that we may keep moving towards our authentic selves. A client's existential quest more often than not involves a search into the meaning of life, into a sense of belonging and how *I* fits into *We* and how *We* fits into *Us*. Can we really expect to get to the root of problems without examining the spiritual dimension?

We know that the answer to our search for peace lies within ourselves but, we must also recognize that we can only begin that search by releasing the knots which have been holding us in position...sometimes toxic positions. Many of those knots are spiritual in nature and relate to our universal longing for meaning and interconnectedness. They require a gentle yet deep massage in order to be felt or potentially released, in order to begin to move towards otherness, towards alterity, towards a continuum of being and an enlargement of our societal condition.



Lakshmi Sundaram, MA Candidate,
Counselling, Psychotherapy and Spirituality
Saint Paul University



BOOK REVIEW by: Jan Christensen, M.A., CCC

Ecotherapy – Healing with Nature in Mind

Edited by Linda Buzzell and Craig Chalquist

Sierra Club Books, 2009

Ecotherapy, defined as ‘applied’ eco-psychology offers us a broad systems perspective in working with our own, and our client’s well-being. Ecotherapy practices include a broad range of nature-based methods of psychological healing. This book is a compilation of articles that provide us with glimpses of what these practices can encompass.

Linda Buzzell, a practicing psychotherapist and founder of the International Association for Ecotherapy, and Craig Chalquist, a professor of psychology and ecopsychology at John F. Kennedy University, are leaders in the field of nature-based therapies in North America. As a psychotherapist, Linda Buzzell, sends out a challenge to all therapists to expand their clinical worldview and approach to include the whole of nature – situating human beings, and human well-being, in the context of being a part of nature – and therefore, expanding our systemic views of interconnection.

Ecotherapy – Healing with Nature in Mind offers an easy to read ‘sampling’ of what nature-based therapies can be – such as attending to dreams and symbols, experiencing wilderness retreats, equine therapy, therapeutic transformations that come from being of service to the well-being of animals, the healing benefits of working in a garden, and therapeutic rituals that connect us to the natural world. Ecotherapists are also keenly attuned to the impact of environmental crisis and climate change, and the effect that this has on our sense of security and well-being – and our need to pay attention to this impact.

Conclusion

I found this book to be a great introduction to the philosophy and practices of Ecotherapy. As a therapist, I found Linda Buzzell's writings to be particularly helpful in conceptualizing how this can be translated into a counselling session, bringing the client's relationship to nature into the session as an integrated exploration of the connection of mind/body/spirit to one's place on earth. When meeting with a client, she may choose to have the session outdoors; she has a garden area outside of her office that allows her to do so easily. Broadening her exploration in the initial sessions with clients, she is curious about the human-nature relationship – asking not just about who their loved ones are, but also where they were born, and where they live now, what role nature plays in the lives of their loved ones and what role nature plays in their own life. She explores whether there are animals, or special environments where they feel open and good about life. She also explores where they spend most of their time – sitting, moving, in front of a screen, indoors/outdoors, alone or being touched. She might choose to explore spiritual connection, asking “when in your life have you felt closest to the deepest mysteries of Life?”; she states that clients commonly note this as being a place in the natural world. She states “I believe the sense of place is basic to our health as human animals, so it's important to know what ecosystems my client inhabits.”

Linda Buzzell and other contributors to the book describe therapeutic interventions – some of which are areas of specialized intervention such as wilderness retreats or equine therapy. They also refer to interventions that can be easily incorporated into counselling sessions, such as prescribing homework in nature for clients, using natural metaphors or visualizations of natural settings, teaching about universal aspects of rituals, and decreasing stress through establishing more natural rhythms in daily life and developing positive connections to healthy food.

In my own personal life, a connection to the natural world has played an essential role in maintaining a sense of connection to life, balance, and well-being. I find it refreshing to hear how therapists are incorporating nature into their intersections with the lives of their clients. This way of working also assists clients in connecting to a larger purpose and meaning when they are contributing to the well-being of animals, or the environment, and connects us to a web of life that can support us as we go about being human.

Jan Christensen, M.A., CCC
Sage Tree Circles
www.sagetreecircles.com



PRIVATE PRACTITIONERS IN ONTARIO
Trish Loraine McCracken
CCPA Ontario Anglophone Director 2011-2015
Member of the Private Practitioners Chapter



As a private practitioner in Ontario, I have personal experience enough to say that the biggest challenge for private practitioners in Ontario, is preparing to apply to the new regulatory college called the CRPO, the College of Registered Psychotherapists.

If they are eligible for the grandparenting application route, they need to prepare. They might tally their currency hours over the last three years prior to application, This includes hours in direct client contact (DCC), hours involved in preparing for those DCC hours and record-keeping, hours in professional development in psychotherapy, Clinical supervision, hours supervising other, hours in research and writing in the field of psychotherapy, hours teaching psychotherapy, hours managing, hours consulting and hours in other professional activities. No matter which application route they take, they need to tally the hours in DCC for their whole career and the hours of supervision.

To work independently in private practice as a psychotherapist the applicant has to have had 1000 hours in DCC and 150 hours of clinical supervision. Otherwise, they may receive a Qualifying Membership with conditions to meet.

The on-line application to our College (CRPO) should be ready sometime in January and applicants also have to complete an on-line module on Jurisprudence and professional practice.

Those in private practice will need to budget for increased insurance costs re mandatory changes in the policies, the application fee for the Jurisprudence and Professional Practice Module, and the \$500 membership fee. If a private practitioner's practice is incorporated, laws dictate what the business may be named and additional layers of costs come in for private practitioners who are accredited. So it is a complicated time in Ontario for Private Practitioners.

There is no residency requirement for our College so anyone who lives in Canada may apply but only those with Ontario residency may apply to serve on committees of the College. Those who live in Ontario and work in contiguous provinces (Manitoba and Quebec) might choose not to join. If a person providing psychotherapy wants to practice in Ontario when the College opens (is proclaimed) , they must be a registered member of the CRPO.

YOUR HEART - THE CENTRE OF YOUR BEING

Linda Bovolotto M.Ed., M.A. Couns. Psych.

Elegance, beauty, subtleness, intensity, connectedness, loving-kindness, guidance, rhythm, joy, peace, love ... all this and more is felt and experienced through your heart. It is your heart that brings these ways of being and your experience of the world to life. With your heart at the centre of your being, both your inner and outer world transforms. Your relationship with yourself and others becomes one of openness and integrity.

Heartfulness

Mindfulness meditation received much attention by clinicians as it quickly made its way into the therapeutic arena, through the influence of Thich Nhat Hanh - Vietnamese Zen Buddhist master, and *Jon Kabat-Zinn* - the founding director of the Center for Mindfulness. Over time Jon Kabat-Zinn clarified the need to incorporate a deeper understanding of the eastern philosophy of mindfulness to include *heartfulness*.

He explained that in Asian languages the word for mind and heart are synonymous and that to grasp the idea of mindfulness we must go inward and also hear heartfulness. To explain further, in eastern traditions there are different philosophies. Mindfulness is at the core of Zen philosophy and heartfulness at the centre of Sufi philosophy. The heart is the main focus in the Sufi way of being; the mind does not play a part.

The concept of heartfulness is now piquing the curiosity of clinicians and those in the healing arts. Once again they are excited by the notion of incorporating the new approach of heartfulness into their practice. Where mindfulness appeared to find its way seamlessly into our western culture, heartfulness may be a bit of a different experience. Heartfulness, as a way of being, requires a depth of understanding and commitment that goes far beyond paying attention in the moment.

The practice of heartfulness is like a loving invitation from your heart to become consciously aware of yourself through your heart - to honour yourself and live from a place of authenticity. Heartfulness requires a dedication that comes from an appreciation of the importance of your heart. The experience itself of living from your heart becomes a powerful motivator to sustain the practice of heartfulness - whether it is heartfulness as a meditative practice and or simply as a state of being.

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***our Heart***

To fully appreciate your heart you must first understand the role this remarkable organ plays in your life. Your heart is a precious gift. It brings all together in unity: the physical, mental, social and spiritual aspects that make up who you are. Your heart sustains you by pumping life, giving oxygen throughout your body; it is a source of wisdom; it is your intimate connection with yourself and to others; and also a symbol for love and spirituality.

Your heart, like a dear friend and dance partner, supports, encourages and guides you back in the direction of truth - knowing who you are and recognizing what is needed to live healthily and happily. Much like a well choreographed dance, your heart invites you to be a willing and joyful participant in the flow called life.

When awareness is centered on the heart, life moves into a natural balance. When in a state of balance there is a graceful flow and ease to your life. There is an effortless quality to relationships and how you navigate the world.

It is only through the heart that you truly believe you deserve peace, joy and balance in your life. The mind, as useful as it is, is often mischievous and attempts to undermine our confidence in this belief. The heart gently invites the mind to understand that you are enough by simply being. There is a greater sense of freedom and trust that comes from loving yourself unconditionally.

New Perspective

With time a deeper awareness of self is sensed and perceived through your heart. A person often describes a shift in perspective and discernment that is accompanied by expanded awareness. A unique perception of self develops which can only be found through the heart.

A change in perspective can happen over a period of time but can also occur in an instant - in a moment of receptivity of your heart. Picture a moment when you heard, felt or saw something that required no explanation. You knew instantly that what you experienced could only be described as truth.

A moment like this is often described as simple yet profound. In that instant there may be a slight or significant and meaningful change in perspective - a different way of seeing yourself and the world around you. If asked to pinpoint where in your body you felt or experienced this moment of truth, you would most likely say your heart.

Bringing heartfulness to life

As a clinician the ease with which you make this transition from the concept of mindfulness to heartfulness will depend on your own personal understanding and practice of heartfulness. Heartfulness is not a therapeutic tool but a way of being that requires a focus and commitment that can only found through the maturity and wisdom found within your heart.

As you embody the practice of heartfulness your perspective and way of being with yourself, your clients and the world transforms. Your experience of this way of being harmoniously aligns both your inner and outer world. You become a living example to those around you of how to live simply from the heart. It is from this place of authenticity that your personal and professional relationships become natural, balanced and heart-centered.

Linda Bovolotto M.Ed., M.A. Couns. Psych.
Counsellor, facilitator, speaker.
Website: www.bovolotto.com
Author of: *Your Heart* (2012)



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