



Cognica

CCA - The Canadian Counselling Association's Newsletter

FALL

Vol. 39 No. 4 October 2007

EXPLORING OURSELVES : DISCOVERING IDENTITY

Moncton, New Brunswick

May 14-16, 2008

Simply put, identity is how we define ourselves. In plenary and breakout sessions, at the CCA 2008 Conference this theme will be examined from a number of perspectives including individual, professional, and collective.

From an individual perspective, our identity is what makes us unique. From a self-in-relation perspective, identity is all of the characteristics we attribute to ourselves as similar or different from significant others. We see ourselves as members of distinct groups which are different from other groups. Our identity determines how we perceive our past, act in the present, and prepare for the future. From a professional perspective, we see ourselves as helpers, often times assisting our clients to deal with identity issues. The

counselling relationship itself emerges from these two identities.

Collectively as counsellors, we have attributes that distinguish us from other helpers. Each helping profession has knowledge, skills, ethics and standards of practice that are unique. Within counselling, there are specialists who provide unique services and yet share common characteristics with all counsellors.

Together these perspectives contribute to identity. As our profession evolves, examining identity helps us to understand ourselves and to take our place among other helpers. Whether you are a career practitioner, nurse, teacher, social worker, psychologist or counsellor, this conference invites you to listen to, reflect on, and discuss the theme of identity.



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ENDOWMENT PROGRAM: BUILDING FOR THE FUTURE

The Canadian Career Development Foundation (CCDF) and the Canadian Counselling Association (CCA) are pleased to sponsor an endowment program established to stimulate and support innovation in the field of career development.

This fund is intended to promote imaginative and leading edge initiatives that extend our understanding of critical issues, push the envelope and strengthen our practice, offer new and creative approaches to service delivery and career self-management, and contribute to improved quality of life in Canadian communities.

Each year, CCDF will award up to \$7,500 to a project, or projects that demonstrate potential for the advancement of career development.

Deadline for submissions is October 31, 2007.

For full details, please download the PDF version of the application form at <http://www.ccdf.ca/PDF/endowment.pdf>.

Please use the Word file at <http://www.ccdf.ca/Documents/endowment.doc> to construct your proposal.

There is no provision for completing and submitting your proposal online.

ATTENTION ALL CCA MEMBERS

CCA AWARDS – 2008

The CCA Awards for 2008 will be presented at the annual conference in Moncton in May 2008. Nominations for awards must be received by CCA no later than December 15, 2007.

The awards to be presented are:

- ◆ The CCA Masters Thesis Award
- ◆ The CCA Research Article Award
- ◆ The CCA Professional Article Award
- ◆ The CCA Counselling Book Award

Nomination forms have been included as a Cognica insert.

PUBLICATION GUIDELINES

Cognica's mandate is to "reflect the current status of counselling across Canada".

Cognica is published 4 times per year. The submission deadlines for articles and advertising are: December 1, March 1, June 1, September 1

Cognica is published by CCA
Return undeliverable Canadian addresses to:

CCA National Office
16 Concourse Gate, Suite 600, Ottawa, Ontario K2E 7S8
Publications mail agreement no. 40012209
Email: cognica@ccacc.ca • Toll Free: 1-877-765-5565 • Tel: (613) 237-1099 • Fax: (613) 237-9786

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Except where specifically indicated, the opinions expressed in *Cognica* are strictly those of the authors and do not necessarily reflect the opinions of CCA, its officers, directors or employees.

All submissions are welcome for consideration. Those accepted will be subject to editorial review prior to publication.

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

The long hot lazy days of summer are behind us and Mother Nature urges us to welcome the autumn season. This season brings with it many changes: shorter days, clear light and crisp air; changing colours of the leaves, the rich taste and smells of the local harvest and the back to school or work frenzy! I hope that you have enjoyed a relaxing summer vacation and have taken advantage of the great weather.

It is hard to believe how quickly the year has gone by. It's already October and before you know it, the holiday season will be upon us. Since the Board of Directors meeting in May of 2007, your Board of Directors has been working tirelessly behind the scenes, on a variety of projects and issues. By now many of you have either heard from your director (through newsletters or emails) or met your provincial/territorial directors. Expect to hear more shortly. Don't be shy! Drop them a note, if you too would like to get involved in some upcoming project. Every one of you as members are a valuable resource to CCA and its continued growth and success!

At the first meeting of this new board I introduced the notion of CCA'S C'S. That is, words beginning with the letter C that one can easily associate with CCA. As you can well imagine there are many and everyone has their preferred C-words. My personal C words include: communication, connecting, collaboration, collegiality, committees, commitment, causes, challenges, community, contribution, constructing, and conversation. It is evident that the list can go on and that everyone would have a slightly different list.

Directors were asked to find their 3 C words when working on their CCA mandates. I would invite you to think about what three C words you can **Connect** to CCA in an effort to **Contribute** to CCA.

Dr. Kris Magnusson, CCA Director for Alberta and NWT, is facilitating **communications** by setting up a student exchange program between the University of Lethbridge and UNB students. This pilot project will ultimately enable CCA student members to communicate with each other on issues related to counselling. It will also provide the essential networking function we thrive on as counsellors.

Dr. Blythe Shepard, CCA Director for British Columbia and the Yukon, has been working on **communications** also. Over the summer she met with Roger John, the new Leader of the Aboriginal Circle, to connect with and see how the British Columbia Chapter, and the Counsellors for Social

Justice Chapter, and CCA in general could support and assist the Aboriginal Circle.

Blythe was also involved in a fundraiser at a local restaurant organized by the President of the Counsellors for Social Justice Chapter - Jo-Anne Stoltz. The purpose of this event was to raise funds to subsidize vital medical relief donated to Burundi health centres. Each attendee paid \$50 to have an incredible meal using local foods and thereby, supporting local farmers and producers. The staff of the restaurant donated their time. Jo-Anne travelled to Burundi to take part in the distribution of medical supplies.

Janice Tester, CCA Anglophone Director for Quebec, has **communicated** with her members via an email broadcast.

Dr. Lynda Younghusband, CCA Director for Newfoundland and Labrador, wrote a letter to Newfoundland and Labrador CCA members following the conference in Vancouver, outlining the central points of discussion at that event, and providing a synopsis of all the sessions she

attended. She also encouraged members to plan ahead to attend the next conference in Moncton. Lynda also reports that she is in discussion about holding a workshop this fall.

Maxine MacMillan, CCA Anglophone Director for New Brunswick, reports that the Membership Services Committee has had their first conference call, and are "fast out of the gate" towards assisting the Board in the provision of **creative** and inviting services to all the members of CCA.

Hope Wojcik, CCA Anglophone Director for Ontario notes that important tasks are being addressed as CCA continues to be an active participant in the Ontario Coalition of Mental Health Professionals. The passage of Bill 171 was realized on May 31, 2007, due in part to an effective lobby campaign organized by the Coalition and supported by many active CCA members, not only in Ontario but in other provinces as well. With step one of the legislation process regarding the regulation of Psychotherapy in Ontario completed, it is important that CCA continue to be an active and influential member of the Coalition. The Transitional Council which will establish the new College of Psychotherapists and Registered Mental Health Therapists will likely be formed soon after the October Ontario election. While regulation is the "hot topic" for Ontario CCA members, ongoing work regarding outreach and support of students in the counsellor education programs, liaison with



MARIA DE CICCIO

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CCA members, and participation on CCA board committees continue on an on-going basis.

Réal LeClerc, CCA Francophone Director for New Brunswick, reports that he has been very busy working with the 2008 Conference Committee. The conference will be held in Moncton in May 2008. He also attended the annual meeting of AFCONB, held in June in Edmunston, NB.

Lorne Flavelle and Pat Donihee (two well-known CCA members) have been working this summer at **re-connecting** the Private Practitioners Chapter. The result will be a pilot project this fall to offer the first of a series (we hope) of Webinars for CCA members. These webinars would be eligible for CE credit hours.

At this time, I would like to refer to two more C words that reflect the vision of CCA.

Celebration

Each year, CCA confers several awards to recognize and honour exemplary contributions to the profession of counselling in Canada. I strongly believe that these awards are a highly visible component of our association's statement about standards of excellence in the field. The recognition and prestige attached to these awards is special, for the individual, as well as, those working with this individual. The CCA National Awards Program offers you the opportunity to communicate your recognition and to participate in honouring outstanding contributions in the field of counselling.

The CCA awards process is under the leadership of the National Awards Committee. The chairperson for this year is Ms Hope Wojcik. Any member of CCA is welcome and encouraged to join the awards process by submitting nominations for any of this year's awards. There is no better time than now to nominate one of your CCA colleagues or friends who you believe deserves to be acknowledged for their outstanding contribution to the counselling field. Nominations must be received by the CCA office no later than midnight of December 15, 2007.

Also, consider joining us in celebrating the award winners at the CCA Banquet during the Moncton Conference next May! The entertainment world has the Oscars or the Gemini awards, the music world has its Grammy Awards, the Sports World has the ESPY awards, and the Counselling Profession has the CCA Awards! We are counting on you to play your part in enriching CCA's history!

The CCA Conference

Each year CCA provides its members with an opportunity to participate in a variety of professional development activities

organized through the directors, Chapters, and the annual CCA Conference. With regard to our annual conference, what makes this opportunity even more unique is that our annual conference changes province each year. Thus, CCA members get to visit a different city, meet and network with colleagues, present their work to others, obtain continuing education credits, and of course participate in their lifelong learning!

I cherish my CCA Conference attendance because of the way in which it has enriched my personal life. In the summer of 2006, I vacationed with my family in the Maritimes and in 2007, we headed out west. In each case, when I was planning my vacation, I contacted colleagues and friends living in the areas that I wanted to visit. I had met many of these people at CCA conferences and had remained in touch over the years. They helped me to plan my trip with insider tips on what to see, where to stay, where to eat, what to do and so on, and updated me on anything special happening in that city during the time of my stay. I can assure you that this made my vacation all the richer and I appreciated all of their assistance. No website in the world can offer you this kind of special attention! If you are lucky enough and your schedule permits you to connect with some of your friends while vacationing, that makes the vacation all that more special. Those memories will forever be etched in my mind and heart.

I hope you seriously consider attending our annual CCA conferences. I can attest from personal experience that in addition to reaping the benefits of professional development and Continuing Education Credits, you will treasure forever the friendships forged, and appreciate the support from networks of colleagues from across Canada. I do!

Conferences also provide members with an opportunity to present and share their expertise and experiences. Here are my top 5 personal reasons to present at a CCA conference:

1. The opportunity to share best practices and experiences with colleagues.
2. Challenging yourself and others to update learning and improve professional skills.
3. Networking with local, provincial, national, and international leaders.
4. Participating in sessions conducted by experts, peers and colleagues.
5. Visiting a different city in this beautiful country and a getting a taste of the people's cultural richness and gifts – their joie de vivre!!

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Mark your calendars! The 2008 conference will be held in Moncton from May 14th-16th. Please visit www.ccacc.ca for more information. We look forward to seeing you there!!

In closing, and in keeping with a tradition that I began in my President Elect's message, I will share a quote for this edition of Cognica. Appropriately, I think it reflects the passion and commitment we bring to CCA when we work together.

"The most powerful weapon on earth is the human soul on fire!" Ferdinand Foch

Wishing you all an exciting and rewarding back-to-school/work year!

Together we can keep making a difference for the counselling profession across Canada.



Maria De Cicco
President

MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT-ELECT

WHAT ARE THE TWO BEST TIMES TO PLANT AN OAK TREE? A COMMENT ON PROFESSIONAL ISOLATION

We work in a profession that can be quite isolating. This is particularly true of counsellors in schools which are located in small, remote and/or rural communities. And, it is often true for many of us who work in private practice or in other settings and, because Canada tends to move east to west, we often forget the challenges of isolation associated with our northern colleagues in Nunavut, the Northwest Territories and the Yukon. In this short message to you, I will tell you how planting an oak tree was my remedy for my professional isolation.

There are two best times to plant an oak tree — so the saying goes. The first is now! The second is twenty years ago! The CCA question is a little altered and becomes "What are the two best times to begin Connecting with the Community of CCA Counsellors from across Canada"? (Lots of "C's" in that sentence!). *Translation: When should I plant my oak tree?* I believe the answer is very similar. It is **NOW** or twenty years ago — and even longer for many of us! CCA is a national, bilingual, and multicultural association representing the diversity of members from across Canada, as well as up and down Canada. It is a community of professionals who are joined together in the discipline and practice of counselling. To become a member of that community requires some personal initiative. Within CCA, there are many ways to do this. You can write professional articles for the *Canadian Journal of Counselling* or articles of interest for *COGNICA*. You can connect to CCA through your provincial associations or by becoming involved in national chapters. Also there is the annual CCA Conference! We are fortunate to have an association whose mandate is to promote the

profession of counselling in Canada, and can do so by supporting local committees, in communities in all provinces, to offer the rest of us the unique flavours of Canada. From my experience, the annual conference has the richest soil in which to plant your professional oak tree. It is where I planted mine.



RON LEHR

I discovered my professional community in CCA at my first ever CCA (then called CGCA) conference in 1981 in Calgary, Alberta. Interestingly enough, the theme of the conference was *Connections*. At that time, I was a school counsellor in Gambo, NL, a small community in which I had grown up. I was the only counsellor in this school and felt very isolated in my work, because I was no longer a teacher and could not engage in counsellor-type conversations.

When I began my teaching in counsellor education programs, I was again fortunate that CCA had a Counsellor Educator's Chapter.

In 1996 Vancouver hosted a joint CCA, British Columbia School Counsellors Association (BCSCA) and International Round Table Association for Counselling (IRTAC) conference with the theme *Counselling in the Global Community*. I attended the Counsellor Educator's Day and walked away with a light step! I found a home within a home! I found people who spoke the same language, who shared the same concerns, and who were there to support one another. I will never forget my feeling of coming home.

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MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT-ELECT cont'd

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Though I have not attended all CCA conferences since Calgary, the numerous ones I have attended have allowed my sense of professional belonging to morph into that of personal belonging. I have now met hundreds of counsellors from across Canada and the rest of the world, and feel part of a much larger community; one, which has contributed to my passion and value for the work I do, and for the people that I meet every day.

If you feel you need a boost to your professional life, attending the conference this year in Moncton, or next year

in Saskatoon is the best time to plant your oak tree, a time to allow your relationship with a community of counselling colleagues to grow. Others who planted their oak tree years ago can attest to the strength and beauty of it today.

I look forward to seeing many of you again or for the first time in Moncton. If you would like to contact me, my email address is ron.lehr@acadiu.ca.

Ron Lehr
President Elect

REGULATION OF COUNSELLING

An ongoing concern and priority for CCA continues to be counsellor regulation. As the issue of regulation sweeps across the country, we find that each province is at a very different point in this process. This issue of Cognica contains information on the status of several provinces. Remember this information is current as of September 2007 when this article was being written. Since regulatory matters can often change swiftly please make sure you check our website at www.ccacc.ca for the latest news.

The statutory regulation of counselling has been a much-discussed topic and a much sought after goal in many Canadian provinces for the past 15 years. It has been almost two years since the historic Symposium on Counsellor Regulation was held in Vancouver. In November 2005, the BC Association of Clinical Counsellors (BCACC), in cooperation with the Canadian Counselling Association (CCA) and the Task Group for Counsellor Regulation (the "Task Group"), invited representatives of counselling organizations from across Canada to participate in a *National Symposium on the Regulation of Counselling*. The goal of statutory regulation seemed very tangible to the more than 70 attendees.

The participants of the Symposium thought they had a somewhat accurate picture of how the future might unfold. New statutory regulation seemed imminent in Quebec. It was thought that statutory regulation might be announced in Vancouver in May 2007, and Ontario was once more seriously starting its quest.

Now, two years later, the landscape has changed dramatically in some provinces and not at all in others.

Ontario

The regulatory process in Ontario took off on a fast track. Bill 171 was passed on May 31, 2007 and received Royal

Assent in June 2007. Bill 171 included the Psychotherapy Act. This new Act brings many previously unregulated mental health practitioners under the Regulated Health Professions Act. The bill provides for a new college which will be called the College of Psychotherapists and Registered Mental Health Therapists.

The next step in the regulatory process is the appointment of the Transitional Council which will actually establish the new college and determine:

- its entry requirements
- who will be granted the controlled act of Psychotherapy; and
- who will be eligible to join the college.

It is anticipated that not all practitioners who currently call themselves Counsellors will be eligible while many others will be. Until the Council does its work, we will not know.

Due to the election in Ontario on October 10, 2007, the Ontario Government has waited to appoint the Council. Once the Council is appointed it may take up to two years to accomplish its work.

Quebec

Quebec has regulated different specializations in counselling, namely, guidance counsellors, psychoeducators, marital therapists, and soon will regulate psychotherapists. The Order of Guidance Counsellors and Psychoeducators regulates guidance counsellors who work in all kinds of work settings such as educational systems, employability and rehabilitation services, private practice, and "psychoeducators" – counsellors who work with people with special needs students, troubled children

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and youth (often adolescents involved with the criminal justice system).

In December 2005, the Office des Professions du Québec released the report of an expert committee, whose mandate was to make recommendations to update professional regulation in the fields of mental health and human relations. It recommended that psychotherapy become a reserved act for physicians and psychologists, to be “shared” with members of certain other professions – namely, social workers, marriage and family therapists, career counsellors, psychoeducators, occupational therapists and nurses. The committee further recommended that current practitioners of psychotherapy who are not members of one of the named professions be grandparented, providing they meet certain qualifications. Members of the Order of Career Counsellors and Psychoeducators, certified as psychotherapists, are mentioned as one group who would be grandparented.

It seemed in early 2006, that this legislation would move quickly through the legislative process, but this has not been the case. We are still waiting for some word on this legislation.

British Columbia

B.C. has been reviewing the possible regulation of counselling, including clinical counselling/ psychotherapy (“counselling therapy” in B.C. terminology), for a number of years. In 1997, the B.C. Health Professions Council concluded that counselling was a health profession and that it should be regulated. Draft legislation in 2001 proposed that counsellors be designated under the *Health Professions Act*; however, discussions between the Ministry of Health and the Ministry for Children and Families, as well as the need for counselling groups to speak with one voice, have delayed the process.

In November 2005 at the Symposium, based on the information available, it seemed that a goal of May 2007 would be feasible for the regulation of Counselling Therapists. However, this does not seem to be the case and work is continuing.

Alberta

In Alberta, under the province’s new health professions legislation, performance of a psychosocial intervention is one of 16 restricted activities, reserved to specified regulated health professionals. The restricted activity is defined as follows:

[Performance] of a psychosocial intervention with an expectation of treating a substantial disorder of thought, mood, perception, orientation or memory that grossly impairs judgment, behaviour, capacity to recognize reality, or ability to meet the ordinary demands of life.”

The words “substantial disorder” and “grossly impairs” have not been defined.

Prince Edward Island

This province is actively engaged in pursuing legislation, having had meetings with the Honourable Chester Gillan, Minister of Health and department officials. Minister Gillan was a guest at the February 2007 annual meeting of the Prince Edward Island Counselling Association. At that meeting he committed to proceeding as quickly as humanly possible, which he indicated would be within two years.

The Prince Edward Island Counselling Association, Psychotherapist Counselling Chapter has been created and is affiliated with CCA.

Nova Scotia

The Nova Scotia Association of Counselling Therapists (NSACT) has been actively working toward regulation for many years. Their most recent attempt was denied by the Nova Scotia government who preferred to wait until one of the other provinces had taken this step. With the recent activity in Ontario there is some hope that discussions will resume.

In November 2006 at a Special General Meeting the decision was made to change the name of the association representing counsellors in Nova Scotia from *Nova Scotia Association of Professional Counsellors* to *Nova Scotia Association of Counselling Therapists*.

The primary reason for this change was to offer clarification and thus protection to the general public. Within Nova Scotia there are those using the term Registered Professional Counsellor who have not met the academic qualifications and hours of supervision required by the Canadian Counselling Association for the “*Certified Canadian Counsellor*” designation nor the more stringent requirements of the Nova Scotia Association of Counselling Therapists, which qualifies one to use the designation “*Registered Counselling Therapist*”. Prior to the name change members of NSACT, who had met the requirements of CCA and NSAPC were using the designation “Registered Professional Counsellor.” This change will differentiate those using RPC and those who have met the requirements to use RCT.

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And so we see that the landscape has changed but certainly not in the manner we anticipated.

Your national board has chosen to stay at the table and take part in the important discussions occurring in each province. As David Paterson noted in January 2006, CCA continues to plan and ask important questions about the future for our association.

Will CCA continue to serve a purpose? Will we continue to be a growing association?

Our answers are still the same.

- ◆ Counsellors regulated under provincial statute will continue to require a national gathering place. Our CCA conferences will continue to be important events in the year for all who attend them.
- ◆ Counsellors regulated under provincial statute will continue to be enriched by a professional journal. The Canadian Journal of Counselling has an established reputation for relevance and excellence.
- ◆ Counsellors regulated under provincial statute will wish to maintain professional relations with colleagues such as our School Counsellors and Private Practitioners who will continue to contribute mightily to CCA and the development of counselling in Canada.

- ◆ Counsellors regulated under provincial statute will value the opportunity to collect CE credits and present them to the provincial Colleges as evidence of continuing enhancement of core competencies.

To this end, CCA has some very important questions to consider and initiatives to undertake.

The CCA Board has proposed the formation of a Legislative Support Fund to ensure that as each province undertakes regulatory activities, CCA can stay involved in a way that protects the professional identity of our members. More about this fund will be available in future editions of *Cognica*.

The CCA Board of Directors is seriously considering changing the name of our association to the Canadian Counselling and Psychotherapy Association. This name change, we believe, will more accurately reflect the professional identity of our members.

It is evident that these are exciting and challenging times for CCA. We remain committed to the Canadian counselling profession and the best interests of our members.

THE TIME IS NOW... TO MAKE A CHANGE!

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ANIMAL-ASSISTED SUPPORT SERVICES

By: Joanne Moss

In 1996, I began my journey as an Animal-Assisted Therapy Practitioner and advocate for and with persons with disabilities, who utilize guide and assistance dogs in every-day living. While volunteering I discovered that there was no Animal-Assisted Support Services {AASS} sector within the healthcare field in Canada or abroad. Rather than focusing on this gap, I viewed my discovery as an opportunity to unite potential stakeholders to explore the possibilities and benefits of coordinating service delivery, to protect the health and well-being of Canadians with disabilities and seniors.

With this in mind, I began identifying potential stakeholders' and assets such as talents, skills, networks, and resources. Consequently, I recognized the tremendous potential to build the stakeholders' capacity to address this gap if they so choose.

Registered charities and practitioners that provide guide and assistance dogs, therapeutic riding, and animal-assisted therapy have a number of things in common.

- ◆ They serve Canadians with disabilities, youth, children, and seniors.
- ◆ In every case the animal becomes the instrument/channel represented in treatment and/or utilized for assistance.
- ◆ The Human-Animal Bond is the catalyst that enriches quality of life by fostering inclusiveness and unconditional love.
- ◆ Sustainability challenges are mutual and cannot be resolved by one person or by one group alone.

The vision began to take shape when I was asked to share these discoveries with members of a Headquarters Advisory Committee of Employees with Disabilities. As I shared my story and vision with this attentive group they offered to raise the funds to create an organization. The Canadian Alliance for Animal-Assisted Services was registered as a non-profit organization on February 6, 1998. On February 10th, 2005 the organization was granted a registered charitable public foundation status. The name was recently changed to better reflect the purpose of the charity – The Canadian Alliance for Animal Assisted Services.

The Foundation's mission is to assist individuals living with a disability and seniors to access and experience the mutual benefits of the human-animal bond, through the coordination and integration of animal-assisted therapy, therapeutic riding, and use of guide and assistance dog programs.

We are committed to developing resources to build the capacity of this community's abilities, skills, talents, and

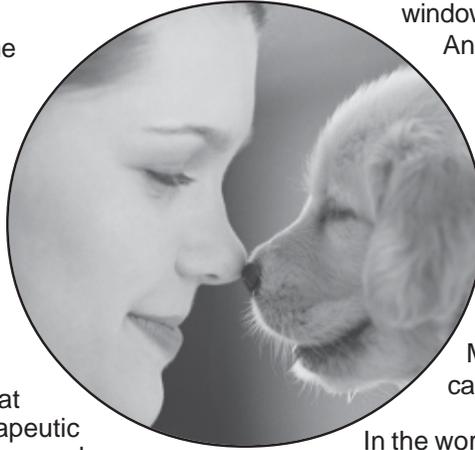
learning networks, to ensure a consistent level of quality, safety, and end-user satisfaction.

Our shared vision encompasses uniting people to co-create an online community, website portal, and learning networks, in the spirit of inclusiveness and cooperation.

The Foundation is a member of the Canadian Health Network and Health Technology Exchange Network, to create a window of opportunity to educate people about Animal-Assisted Support Services.

The organization's web site is currently under construction. As a result, we are establishing a distribution list for those who wish to be notified when it is officially launched or would like more information on how to be a part of this emerging community. If you wish to be added to the list, please contact Joanne Moss at 613-774-0001 or by email at cafaas@cyberus.ca.

In the words of Henry Ford, *'Coming together is a beginning; keeping together is progress; working together is success.'*



MARK YOUR CALENDAR NOW!

ACA Annual Conference & Exposition



Honolulu, Hawaii

March 26-30, 2008

	Summer Rate Mar. 26– Aug. 31	Super Saver Sept. 1– Nov. 30	Advance Dec. 1 – Feb. 15
ACA Members Professional/Reg.	\$250	\$280	\$330
New Professional/ Student/Retiree	\$165	\$180	\$225
Non-Members General Attendees	\$450	\$470	\$520
Non-Member Student	\$280	\$300	\$430

Pre-Conference Learning Institutes: March 26–27
Education Sessions: March 28–30
Exposition: March 27–29

Register Online: www.counseling.org/conference
By Phone: 800-347-6647, x222 (M-F, 8AM - 7PM ET)

COACHING THAT COUNTS

by Estienne de Beer

Coaching is a profound leadership mindset, but you have to believe in it first. Andrew Wood explains the big picture as follows: “Leadership is not a right of passage, or at least it shouldn’t be. Leadership is a state of mind. A philosophy. An attitude. Understanding this, you can recognize and develop the key traits that will enhance and improve your personal capacity for leadership.” Great leaders touch the lives of their followers through coaching. The key to consistent business success is to understand that people come before spreadsheets. The personal growth and coaching of their employees is put on top of the priority list, and soon the results on the spreadsheets will follow.

When you hear the word “coach”, what comes first into your mind? Do you picture a sports team with someone shouting out directions? A frowning manager pacing to and fro, calling out the names of the players? Coaching is no longer reserved for sports teams; it is now one of the key concepts in leadership and management. So why has coaching become so popular in the business world?

Coaching levels the playing field.

Coaching is one of the six emotional leadership styles proposed by Daniel Goleman. Moreover, it is a behaviour or role that leaders enforce in the context of situational leadership. As a leadership style, coaching is used when the members of a group or team are competent and motivated, but do not have an idea of the long-term goals of an organization. This involves two levels of coaching: team and individual. Team coaching makes members work together. In a group of individuals, not everyone may have nor share the same level of competence and commitment to a goal. A group may be a mix of highly competent and moderately competent members with varying levels of commitment. These differences can cause friction among the members. The coaching leader helps the members level their expectations. Also, the coaching leader manages differing perspectives so that the common goal succeeds over personal goals and interests. In a big organization, leaders need to align the staffs’ personal interests and goals with that of the organization, so that long-term direction and strategy can be pursued.

Coaching builds up confidence and competence.

To take any company or team to the top, you can’t treat employees as digits. That is why I dislike the term “human resources” ... it is expendable. But not a “human asset” approach. This means that in both theory and practice, people come before projects. You will never reap the right

kind of financial numbers until you truly invest in the coaching of your people. This is the ultimate competitive advantage in the business world. Individual coaching is an example of situational leadership at work. It aims to mentor one-on-one, building up the confidence of team members by affirming excellent performance and behaviour during regular feedback; and increase competence by helping the individual assess his/her strengths and weaknesses towards career planning and professional development. Depending on the individual’s level of competence and commitment, a leader may exercise more coaching behaviour for the less-experienced members. Usually, this happens in the case of new employees. The manager gives more defined tasks and holds regular feedback for the new staff, and gradually lessens the amount of coaching, directing, and supporting roles to favour delegating as competence and confidence increase.

Coaching promotes individual and team excellence.

Excellence is a product of habitual good practice over a period of time. The regularity of meetings and constructive feedback is important in establishing these habits of excellence. Employees catch the habit of constantly assessing themselves for their strengths and areas for improvement. They themselves perceive what knowledge, skills, and attitudes they need to acquire to attain team goals. In the process, they attain individual excellence as well. An example is in the case of a musical orchestra, each member plays a different instrument. In order to achieve harmony of music from the different instruments, members will polish their part in the musical piece, aside from practicing as an ensemble. Consequently, they improve individually as an instrument player.

Coaching develops high commitment to common goals.

A coaching leader balances the attainment of immediate targets with long-term goals towards the vision of an organization. As mentioned earlier, with the alignment of personal goals with organizational or team goals, personal interests are kept in harmony. By constantly communicating the vision through formal and informal conversations, the members are inspired and motivated. Setting short-term team goals aligned with organizational goals, and making an action plan to attain these goals, can help sustain the increased motivation and commitment to common goals of the team.

■ Continued on page 11

■ Continued from page 10

Coaching produces valuable leaders.

Leadership by example is most crucial in coaching. Coaching leaders lose credibility when they cannot practice what they preach. This means that coaching leaders should be well organized, highly competent in their field, communicate openly and encourage feedback, and have a clear understanding of the organization's vision-mission-goals. By vicarious and purposeful learning, team members catch the same good practices and attitudes from the coaching leader, turning them into coaching leaders themselves. If team members experience good coaching, they are most likely to do the same things when entrusted with formal management roles.

Some words of caution though: coaching is just one of the styles of leadership. It can be done in combination with the other five emotional leadership styles depending on the profile of the emerging team. Moreover, coaching as a leadership style requires that you are physically, emotionally, and mentally fit most of the time, since it involves two levels of coaching: the individual and the team. Your team members expect you to be the last one to give up or bail out in any situation, especially during times of crises. A leader must be conscious that coaching entails investing time with each individual, and the whole team. Moreover, that the responsibilities are greater, while you are coaching members, you are also developing future leaders as well.

Estienne de Beer is a Professional Speaker and Leadership Coach. He is the author of the book "Boosting Your Career - Tips From Top Executives". To receive his free personal development newsletter or to browse e-books for your success, visit his website at www.leader2leaders.com or e-mail him at estienne@lantic.net

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Demystifying The Career Puzzle: What Do You Want To Be When You Grow Up?

by **Pauline Pitcher, B.A.**

Vocational Rehabilitation Specialist, Service Canada

Abstract: *This article will provide a historical context of the career development process, reference some of the resources and strategies available to one during the exploration phase, celebrate some national initiatives developed, consider the correlation between one's values and occupational choice, while emphasizing the role of personal responsibility in making a realistic career decision.*

Frank Parsons, credited as the father of career development, was a visionary in that he realized the importance of career exploration and management. It was not very long ago that one had minimal exposure to the many career choices available. Historically, gender considerations, familial responsibilities and expectations restricted career choice. Women became teachers, nurses, librarians, and secretaries. Men entered the fields of medicine, technology, science and security. Many women however assumed non-traditional occupations as a result of the War effort for a period of time. People often spoke of certain vocations as "callings" in non-secular times. Career choice was often influenced by a sense of familial obligation and to not follow suit in the line of lawyers, doctors or teachers was often seen as a betrayal of sorts.

From my own experience, I received minimal counselling within the secondary school system. The career/counselling guidance process began far too late. At best, one engaged in a brief discussion with the guidance counsellor and received a generic computerized print out of possible occupation(s). There are those individuals who decide on a vocational goal from an early age and stick steadfastly to it, however these are the minority. For most people choosing a career is a painstaking process with many bumps and bruises along the way. Many individuals get lost in the shuffle, failing to make the right connections, speaking to the right people, utilizing family, friends and career counselling offices as valuable resources. They become professional students, or plunge into a job/career which is far from satisfying; the workplace environment, consequently, may be negatively impacted in several ways: low productivity, tardiness, absenteeism, and a sense of misguided frustration and resentment are only a few of the indicators.

Today, there are many resources available at both the counsellors' and parents' disposal to guide students, such as career assessment tools/inventories which confirm preferences and aptitudes in relation to vocational choice, a myriad of books on career exploration, development and management. These can be used as a

starting point in exploring/discussing career choice(s). Software such as "PAWS in Jobland" is targeted at young children in an effort to foster engagement in the career process sooner rather than later. Portfolio building is encouraged in the schools and provides both a way in which to catalogue skills/strengths, and encourage active thinking on the subject matter.

National Career Week is celebrated across Canada the last week of October and Take Your Kid to Work Day is held in November. The latter involves a collaborative effort on the part of parents, teachers and the workplace to raise awareness of various jobs and careers. It is estimated that "over 150 million kids have participated to date and tens of thousands of workplaces." Prospective careers can be tested through volunteer work, internships, job shadowing, and information interviews. There are campaigns to present women in non-traditional occupations, and newspaper articles accentuating the shortage of personnel in this area. A survey commissioned by the Canadian Apprenticeship Forum and Skills Competencies Canada concluded that "The majority of people believed the trades were "dirty, noisy, physically demanding and not intellectually challenging." Concerted efforts are being made to dispel such myths.

There are several variables which feed into the career equation: independence, autonomy, flexibility, financial reward, opportunity for advancement, the ability to help others and job satisfaction. The values one holds important are key; prioritizing these values is an extremely telling exercise. Not only are interests and aptitudes key, but also one's emotional intelligence may be critical to certain occupations. A realistic career choice is one in which all of the variables mesh together for the individual. Parents have long instilled in their children's minds that the world is their oyster and any occupation is within their grasp. The message is well meaning, but the reality is quite different. We can all develop certain skills and become better at certain tasks, but not everyone is suited to be a nuclear physicist.

Personal responsibility is vital to career awareness and exploration. We live in an age in which one can expect to make at least four to five career changes during his/her working life, and some would say this is a conservative estimate. Therefore, one must be able to identify transferable skills, exercise flexibility, make a commitment to life-long learning, and perceive one's career path as a continuum, rather than as a series of interruptions along the way.

"It is the work in one's life which is the ultimate seduction." — (Pablo Picasso.) This is the essence of truly satisfying work.

COMPASSION FATIGUE: THE COST OF CARING

Denise E. Hall, Vocational Rehabilitation Consultant

Excerpt from Master's of Counselling Psychology Research paper October 2006 Adler School of Professional Psychology

Working with traumatized and distressed individuals has implications for helpers' professional and personal quality of life. Defined as an occupational risk in the article, awareness of the issue is low, particularly in the Vocational Rehabilitation field. The article and literature review defines the risk in terms of compassion fatigue, vicarious traumatization, and secondary traumatic stress and introduces other terms used for the impact of the work on helpers in a number of settings and on individuals, organizations and society in general. The article offers strategies for treating the issue and protecting helpers from the impact of this difficult and challenging work. It also describes a pilot study of the impact of the work on vocational rehabilitation consultants. The research methods include a focus group and the administration of the ProQol R-1V Professional Quality of Life Scale.

The evidence supports that, not only are workers unaware of the full impact of the work on their personal and professional lives, but employers are not aware, or not willing to address the issue perhaps, because they do not want to open the floodgates. Their interests are served better by making employees fully responsible for the impact of the workplace on their health and wellness. This approach to addressing the issue is short-sighted and the negative impact on the workplace is profound. Shain (1998, 2000) suggests that a stress risk assessment needs to be conducted at the organizational level. He outlines the ethical responsibilities of employers in his Stress and Ethics Summary:

Stress is often the product of choices that people make about how they will treat one another. Employers know, or ought to know, that when they impose excessive and unnecessary stress on employees they place them in harm's way. Therefore, employers have a responsibility to avoid the imposition of excessive and unnecessary stress. It is the foreseeability and avoidability of harm that attracts responsibility for it. (p. 21)

Changes in the workplace generally either come about when the issue affects the bottom line or the union movement responds to the health and wellness of its members. The union sector is only beginning to address these issues with their employers. The Health Sciences Association (HSA) of BC (2003), a public sector health care union, identified the issue of vicarious traumatization as a serious occupational health and safety risk in the January/February 2003 issue of The Report. Authors Kurahashi and Riviere:

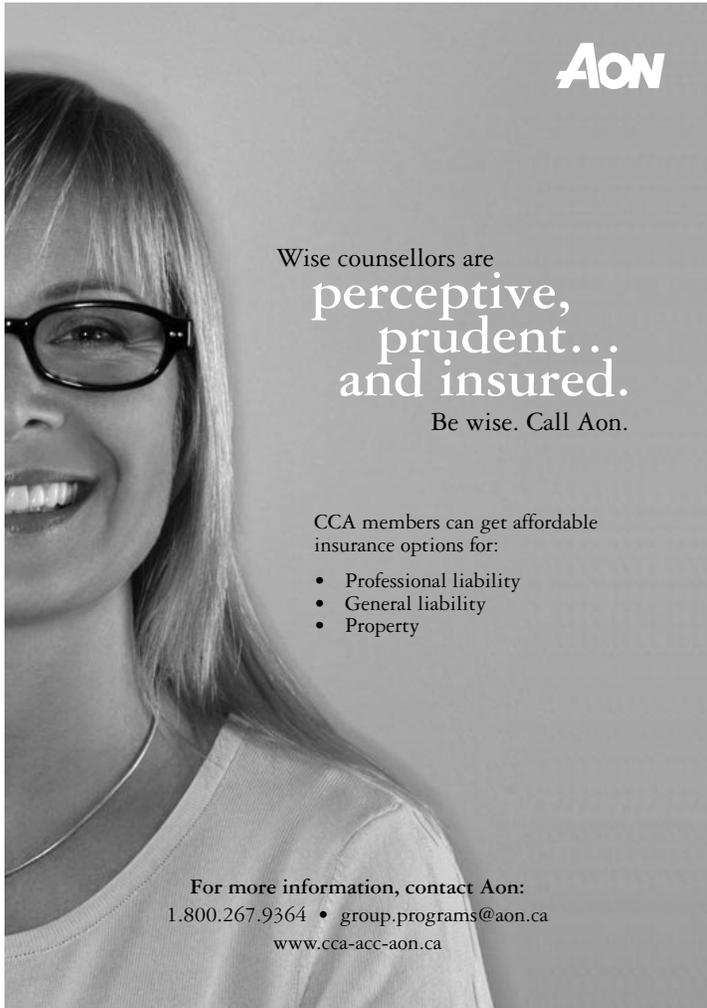
In 15 years of working in the field of women's counselling, Eberl has seen many co-workers leave the workplace due to what was most likely vicarious traumatization. "go off on stress leave, and they sometimes end up leaving the work," she said. "There's a high turn-over, and the burn-out just seems to keep happening. Maybe it's not expected that people can do more than a few years of this kind of work. But I think it's possible that people can remain in this work for a long time if they have the right kind of environment where they get support, and feel they can be open about these issues as a normal hazard of the workplace". (p.4)

Certainly the problem of compassion fatigue/burnout will continue unabated for helpers unless there is a better understanding of the underlying components and a recognition that work with traumatized and distressed individuals is an occupational hazard and not exclusively a personal psychological issue. Employers are responsible not to put their workers in "harm's way" and need to develop strategies within the organization to protect and support their employees. On an individual basis helpers need to be aware of their own distress, seek help, and develop strategies to alleviate their symptoms. It will take a great deal of courage on the part of individual practitioners to address their own compassion fatigue, support their colleagues, and advocate for better protection within their organizations.

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