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CCPA 2013 AGM Agenda

ATTENTION ALL CCPA MEMBERS

The Canadian Counselling and Psychotherapy Association will hold its Annual General Meeting on May 16th, 2013, from 12:00 p.m. to 1:15 p.m. at the Westin Nova Scotian Hotel at 1181 Hollis St, Halifax, Nova Scotia, B3H 2P6. Every member is invited.

AGENDA

Welcome

1. Acceptance of Agenda.
Motion Required: To accept the agenda.

2. Minutes of May 2012 AGM.
Motion Required: To accept the minutes of the May 2012 AGM as presented (as amended).

3. President’s Report.

4. Presentation of the Board of Directors 2013 - 2015.

5. **Motion Required:** To destroy the ballots received for the 2013 elections.

6. Financial Report 2012-2013.
Motion Required: To receive the 2012-2013 audited financial statement as presented.

7. Approval of 2013-2014 Auditors.
Motion Required: That van Berkomp & Ritz LLP be selected as the Financial Auditors for 2013-2014.

8. By-Law changes. (http://www.ccpa-accp.ca/_documents/Bylaws_changes_2013.pdf)

9. **New Policy announcement**

10. **Annual Research Conference announcement**

11. Other Business.

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12. Good Faith Motion.
13. Adjournment.
Motion Required: To adjourn the meeting.

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President's Message

Of Humility, Thanks, and Farewells

**"I've heard it said that people come into our lives for a reason
Bringing something we must learn
And we are led to those who help us most to grow
If we let them and we help them in return."**

— Stephen Schwartz

You came into my life: the people of the Canadian Counselling and Psychotherapy Association. You came for a reason and you came with a passion and a force not to be deterred. It was a defining moment. I recall vividly clutching the signed President-Elect nomination papers I had been handed in my balled-up fist in November 2008. Wide-eyed. What was it that you meant for me to learn? How was it that I was to help you grow? It was a moment in time that Anais Nin has described as the day "when the risk to remain tight in a bud was more painful than the risk it took to blossom." I remain just as humbled by your trust and faith in me on that day as I do on this day, my leaving day. I am honoured to have been your President and the time has come for me to step back and encourage others to share their gifts and talents. It is their turn to grow and to blossom.

Being President of CCPA is a shared task designed to build community and strengthen each of its members. It is with the Executive Committee, the National Board of Directors, the National Office staff, and the ongoing support from the members that we have moved projects forward and advanced the Association in Canada and around the world. In my term as President we have inched towards a membership of 5000. As the national voice of counselling and psychotherapy in Canada, we are acknowledged on the national and international scene and our opinion is sought on issues related to counselling and psychotherapy by the media, by pan-Canadian partners, and by national and international organizations. Our voice is heard at multiple venues and research conferences and we are invited guests at multiple other high profile events. CCPA has come of age in a vibrant and strong community that spans the globe.

It is a rare occurrence to pause and step to the stern of the CCPA ship to witness the wake we have created. Typically, the day-to-day activities keep the team at the helm navigating the waters towards our destination. But such an opportunity exists for me now as I step away from my post.

We have grown and we have blossomed. From the 3500 members when I stepped onto the Board to the current 4700+, we are more robust, more diverse, more focused, and more active.

During the two years of my Presidency, CCPA's ship has left a wide wake that has rippled across our membership:

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Outreach and Education:

- CCPA’s inaugural Research Conference, designed as a “seed project” to encourage counselling/psychotherapy research conferences across the country and to increase collaborative research into our profession by our professionals
- Website repository of counselling-related press releases, media events and professional reports
- Website repository of research conference proceedings (and soon, member publications)
- A public-facing website to help those we serve to understand our profession better
- Increase in continuing education opportunities through association with the Mental Health Academy and our own increasingly robust webinar program
- CCPA Supervision Course, at the Master’s level, to further educate members who wish to become qualified supervisors
- Increase in the variety and monetary value of CCPA Awards Program
- Attendance at national roundtables, national committees and international groups related to counselling/psychotherapy, including the Champions and Faces programs, the Canadian Alliance on Mental Illness/Mental Health, the Canadian Primary Health Care Research and Innovation Network, the Canadian Alliance for Prior Learning Assessment, the Canadian Network of National Associations of Regulators, and many more
- A Supervision Handbook, specific to the counselling/psychotherapy profession
- An updated and revised Ethics Casebook (currently undergoing editing prior to publication)
- A Supervision textbook (currently being written)

Certification and Accreditation:

- Multiple pathways to CCC to address the diversity of life events that bring practitioners to our profession from around the globe
- Multiple pathways to CCC-S to address the need for qualified supervisors in our profession and the different routes that have brought them to the role of supervisor

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- Updates to the Council on Accreditation of Counselling Education Program (CACEP)
- Introduction of CCPA Agency Accreditation Program

Governance and Professional Regulation:

- Alignment of CCPA’s Constitution and By-Laws to the Canada Not-for-Profit Corporations Act
- Creation of an inclusive policy to welcome an Aboriginal Director to the National Board of Directors
- Creation of CCC-S, a designation that provides certification of qualified supervisors of counsellors/psychotherapists
- Creation of the COMPASS Centre for Examination Development, an entity that creates a national entry-to-practice standard assessment for the profession of counselling/psychotherapy
- Implementation of a Risk Assessment Committee and reporting process that informs CCPA’s strategic direction
- Development of a webinar for members wishing to become National Directors
- Development of an Orientation Guide for Directors
- Development of an Orientation Guide for Incoming Presidents
- Regular web posting related to regulation across the nation
- Pathways Project designed to support regulatory colleges (and organized bodies seeking regulation) to meet together, share information, and consider pathways aligning with the tenets of the Agreement on Internal Trade

For each small wave mentioned above that forms the greater wake, I am thankful. I am indebted to the wonderful people who made each wave possible: the visionaries, the constructionists, the revisionists, the shepherds, and the nurturers. And I am blessed; you have helped me grow. My parting hope is that in some small way I have helped you in return. John Ruskin said it best: “The highest reward for a person’s work is not what they get for it, but what they become because of it.” I have become a better person. Thank you and farewell.

Lorna Martin

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President-elect’s Message

Developing and Sustaining Research Communities: Planting Seeds

CCPA takes on a new direction! In mid-February, 2013, the Canadian Counselling and Psychotherapy Association’s Inaugural Research Conference was hosted by the University of Ottawa. For a day and a half, students, faculty, researchers, and practitioners from across Canada gathered to socialize, network, share research knowledge, and to reflect on the fundamental issues of the profession. Students were particularly invited to present and discuss their research ideas and their work in progress. New collaborations were formed as researchers presented ideas and encouraged others to join them in developing research agendas and projects.

In British Columbia, counselling psychology research conferences are also taking place. Since 2011, counselling psychologists in British Columbia have organized three annual research conferences. The first Counselling Psychology Research Conference was hosted by the University of British Columbia (2011), followed by Trinity Western University in Langley, BC, (2012) and most recently by the Adler School of Professional Psychology in Vancouver (2013). I have been very fortunate to attend two of the research conferences, this last time as a representative of CCPA who was a financial supporter to the conference. The purpose of the Counselling Psychology Research Conferences on the west coast are to bring together researchers in British Columbia to share their knowledge, challenges, practices, and findings from recent research projects with other academics and community partners. Presentations by scholars, practitioners, and students are welcomed.

Why the need for separate research conferences? The Ottawa and BC research conferences are small, low-key events, focused exclusively on research, and offer many opportunities for more intimate networking and discussions. Students and researchers/faculty have many more occasions to interact with each other informally at such focused events than is possible at a larger CCPA Annual Conference. The research conference provides a forum for developing new research agendas and national research collaborations. Most importantly, the research conference highlights counselling and psychotherapy research by Canadians for Canadians.

Why is research so important? At the Inaugural Research Conference in Ottawa, Marla Buchanan (UBC) and José Domene (UNB) identified the need to engage students in counsellor education programs to “grapple with issues related to research.” Well-conducted research is vital to the development of counselling practice. Research forms the foundation of effective counselling practice, counsellor education, and the growth and development of counselling programs to reflect current knowledge about our profession. Good research produces results that are examinable by peers, methodologies that can be replicated, and knowledge that can be applied to real-world situations. Researchers often work as a team to enhance our knowledge of how to best address issues of interest within the profession. Whether research findings are rooted in theoretical constructs, practice-based evidence, or

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evidence-based practice, it is the act of ongoing research by our professionals about our profession that informs and supports effective practise. For more information about the Inaugural Research Conference in Ottawa, please go to <http://www.ccpa-accp.ca/en/conferenceproceedings/>.

As a counsellor educator, I am often asked by students why we include a research course in their program. According to the *CCPA Code of Ethics and Standards of Practice*, counsellors/psychotherapists are to "maintain high standards of professional competence and ethical behaviour" (A1). We have a moral and ethical responsibility to know whether counselling is promoting the welfare of clients. We need to know what "works." Without current and ongoing research in the Canadian context, the counselling profession is seriously hampered when it comes to discussing outcomes. Without a solid research base that articulates the characteristics of practicing counsellors, their respective practices, and counselling outcomes, our profession may not be competitive in the contemporary environment of increased accountability, managed care, and research-based practices.

The use of mentoring in the counselling profession is one way to increase students' interest in research activities. Mentoring can take many forms, from including students on a research team, to assisting them in publishing the results of their thesis or in co-publishing articles. The Canadian Journal of Counselling and Psychotherapy provides a supportive environment for students to publish their research. Counsellor educators can advocate for the requirement of research courses in their programs and for students to have access to both quantitative and qualitative research courses. Faculty and students need to be encouraged to increase research productivity for the benefit of the Canadian mental health community. Such endeavours would increase the visibility of our members within the larger context of the health professions and add to our pride in counsellor education as a profession that continues to mature and produce influential research in the mental health community. A new section of our CCPA website will be devoted to member research. In the coming weeks, check for an e-call to submit for posting your abstract and a link to information about published works. •

Blythe Shepard
CCPA President-Elect

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Counselling Connect

Check out Counselling Connect, CCPA's blog!

Here are a couple blurbs from some of our contributors:

Pin This!

I confess. I have a Pinterest account. And I have spent most of my time on the site mindlessly surfing through the recipes, fashion and travel. What my dad used to call "bubblegum for the mind".

For those of you who may not know, Pinterest.com is a virtual pinboard where you can organize and share things you find on the web that are of interest to you. Once you create an account you can start 'pinning'. Basically, when you 'pin' something to the virtual pinboard the pin is a link to the website or page where you saw what interested you. The idea behind the site is that you will connect with others with similar interests. FYI – you don't have to create an account to browse through the site.

And it took me about 10 months of using Pinterest to clue into the idea that people just might be 'pinning' Online Counselling material.

I used a variety of search terms: online counselling, mental health & technology, online therapy. And – presto – I found pins.

By: Dawn Schell

To read the full article, visit <http://www.ccpa-accp.ca/blog/?p=2564>

The Psychological Benefits of Animals

As humans, we are often known to show superior attitudes to our fellow dwellers of this planet. In fact, we not only have an ability to cognitively outwit the animal kingdom but we also have a means with which we can measure our intellectual superiority through IQ (Intelligence Quotient) testing. Ironically, despite our intellectual superiority over the animal kingdom, we have yet to manufacture a substitute for our four legged friends. Moreover, the health benefits received from relationships with our four legged and feathered friends seems to be irreplaceable.

What is it about the relationship with our pets that we cannot live without? Why is it that children are instantly drawn to a new puppy or kitten? What causes the heart of a hardened criminal to melt like butter when playing with a puppy?

By: Asa Don Brown

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To read the full article, visit <http://www.ccpa-accp.ca/blog/?p=2215>

Interested in reading more great posts? Want to leave feedback for the authors? Visit www.ccpa-accp.ca/blog.

Counselling Connect is always welcoming new contributors. Certified members are encouraged to contact Stephanie at blog@ccpa-accp.ca to find out how they can get involved.

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The Counsellor's External Office

By Dr. Richard O'Connell

When the paperwork begins to mount and the phone calls never seem to stop, school counsellors often wonder, "When am I going to get the chance to see the kids? What about all those failing students I need to encourage? What about all those follow-up requests from parents?"

The next thought jumps to that initial dream that all school counsellors have: "I love kids. I want to get to know them, and I really want to help them. But all I do is make endless schedule changes, fill out forms, keep logs and file. And when that finally gets done, it's time to begin scheduling for next year."

As a school counsellor, do you wish to:

- Increase your contact with students?
- Increase your faculty contacts?
- Increase your efficiency, while decreasing your workload?
- Increase your knowledge and awareness of students on the basis of their physical appearance?
- Improve the guidance public relations effort in your school?
- Strengthen your students' realization that you really care about them?
- Deliver more service to your students in a more efficient manner?

If so, try this simple practice. Stand in a central place such as the entrance to school, outside your office or in a main corridor each day for the half-hour before school begins and greet both students and staff.

Initially, it will take both courage and self-discipline to get to your self-appointed post each day. Yes, courage in putting yourself out front to be observed by the whole school community. It will be something new and there will be those who see you as attention-seeking, self-promoting and possibly even as someone who does not know his or her place in the hierarchy of school beings. The courage part comes when you assume a piece of hallway turf even as staff question why you are there. It takes even more courage to reach out and begin to greet your students and fellow faculty members with a "Good morning."

Over the years, I have come to value this practice, so I make the time in a very busy day to achieve this goal. After awhile, even those who criticized you will wonder why you are not at your post if you happen to be absent.

The hard part is simply to begin this practice. The rewards will be well worth the initial discomfort. The advantage of this practice is that, eventually, both faculty and students will know you are there to help answer questions, to give advice, to share small talk or just to say hello. This practice also affords the counsellor daily opportunities to assess student affect. This is valuable because the more we

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familiarize ourselves with our students, the easier it is to pick up on the subtle changes in behavior or appearance that can indicate a student is troubled.

A few examples from my experience will suffice.

- When a normally upbeat youngster changes into a withdrawn or sad individual, you have an external warning.

- When you see students arriving late, there is a problem.

- When you see a student couple coming to school each day and forming a new relationship, this is valuable information.

- When one member of the couple suddenly "disappears," this can be equally significant information.

There have been cases in which students were depressed or even suicidal after going through a breakup, and the counsellor assesses the situation in the school hallway. When a student breaks a leg, you have immediate knowledge of the situation and can take action to assist the student, such as finding someone to carry the student's books or notifying a teacher that it might be better for the student to come to class a little late to avoid overcrowded hallways.

All the visual clues you pick up firsthand can feed back into your interactions with parents and students during the normal course of the day. What's more, this information is immediate; you won't have to wait until someone comes to your office to fill you in. A case in point: One morning a student approached me. I gently gave him a hello tap on the chest. He immediately flinched in pain. I inquired, "Are you all right?" "I'm all right, but I just had my chest pierced for a ring." I have since given that practice up, but his mother was astounded that I had such private information!

It is amazing how much of your work can be done in the hallway. By nature of our profession, we are constantly requesting students to follow up and fulfill their obligations. In the hallway, we can ask students the status of forms that need to be returned. We can remind them to live up to expectations. We can remind them that assignments are due. We can recognize and praise them for their achievements. We can ask them if they have delivered messages to their parents.

It is difficult to interview all of your students who might be doing poorly as revealed in a review of their report cards or progress reports. But standing in the hallway affords casual opportunities to see many of these students and to give them a bit of encouragement or advice. For most students, a friendly hello will suffice. For those who need a reminder to be on time for class, to complete an assignment, to follow up on one of your directives...just your presence may trigger a response.

By the way, a friendly hello from you in the morning might serve as a welcome postscript to a horrific family experience the night before. Above all, your very presence in the hallway and your effort to greet students with a kind hello is a statement to the students that you care about them. I am sure this message is conveyed in other ways throughout the day, but your presence in the hallway only increases the opportunity to reach more kids.

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Regarding the faculty, they are on the run for the most part. Your presence in their path along the way to their classrooms gives them easy access to discuss a student, to request a conference or to fill you in on a particular problem. These exchanges are often made more difficult (and more time consuming) if a formal meeting has to be scheduled. Even substitute teachers appreciate having someone to turn to in trying to negotiate the intricacies of an unfamiliar school. This accessibility has tangential benefits, including helping to establish a good rapport with staff. For counsellors to function effectively in any school, we need the cooperation and support of our staff to assist our students.

Regarding the school administration, they appreciate the backup in the hallway. I have never been asked to function as a “monitor.” Rather, administrators appreciate the “reach out” efforts of counsellors who are not closeted in their cubbyholes, “secreted away” from the main flow of the school. Your presence in the hallway will also reach “across the street” to central administration. The public relations aspect of the school counsellor’s external office is obvious.

During the course of the year, many parents will also cross your path: PTA members, parents with staff appointments, new parents visiting the school and so on. On each occasion, your presence serves as a reminder that there are counsellors in your school who reach out, increasing the likelihood that the counselling department is spoken of favorably in their private conversations.

In summary, the school counsellor’s external office delivers more service to students. It makes the counsellor more accessible. It establishes a rapport with staff and conveys a sense of care and concern to students. It establishes an atmosphere of involvement and helps to break down barriers. It also maximizes the use of our time, so much so that I stand at my “post” whenever I can shake free during my busy day. And in addition to all these attributes, it has become for me a great deal of fun.

Dr. Richard O’Connell is a past recipient of New York State’s Counselor of the Year Award. This article appears in slightly different form as an addendum to his book: [The Secrets to Being a Great School Counselor](http://www.theseecretstobeingagreatschoolcounselor.com). www.theseecretstobeingagreatschoolcounselor.com). Contact him at docroc16@msn.com.

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CCPA Certification

By Monika Gal, CCPA Registrar

Over the past several months, CCPA's Certification Committee has been hard at work reviewing the certification requirements and application process. Reviewing applicant questions and appeal applications have also helped inform the Committee about areas in the certification requirements that required review. A meeting was held in November 2012 to discuss CCPA's certification requirements and a proposed re-formatting of the certification requirements. The re-formatting was intended to clarify the difference between demonstrating direct counselling practice by documenting direct practice experience through practicum placement studies versus a body of work experience, and has been approved by the Board of Directors. Many other certification items were discussed and reviewed at this meeting, and I believe these updates will clarify the certification requirements and application process for practitioners who wish to become Canadian Certified Counsellors. These updates to the certification requirements will be presented to the Board of Directors

for review and approval at their next meeting, and will be unveiled this spring before taking effect on September 1, 2013. You can find out more about the updated application process in a number of ways: read my next article in the Summer 2013 edition of Cognica, which will be devoted to the updated Certification application process; check your inbox for an email update in early June; join a series of webinar presentations that will occur in June; and/or come see my presentation at this year's conference in Halifax on May 15th at 10:45am.

Many thanks to the Certification Committee for the time and effort spent reviewing the requirements and appeal applications. Early in 2013, a call for new Certification Committee Members and a Chair was distributed to the CCPA membership and posted on the CCPA website. I am excited to hear that all current Committee members have agreed to continue to be part of this Committee; their hard work and consistently thoughtful feedback has been incredibly helpful in evaluating applications and reviewing CCC requirements. I look forward to welcoming some new Committee members shortly.

A significant change in the Committee will be in the position of Chair of the Certification Committee; Blythe Shepard has stepped aside as she assumes her CCPA Presidency in May 2013. Blythe undertook a large initiative to review and update CCPA's certification requirements and has invested countless hours in improving the certification program. I'm certain that her time and efforts are also appreciated by the many current and future members who have been able to obtain certification due to her work as Chair of this Committee. Thank you, Blythe!

The new Chair of the Certification Committee is David Smith. A professor of counselling at the University of Ottawa, David has been involved with starting a joint venture between the University of Ottawa and CCPA to offer Canadian Certified Counsellors a graduate-level course on clinical

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supervision. Having also served on the Certification Committee for almost two years and with previous experience as a member of CCPA’s Ethics Committee and President of the Counsellor Educators Chapter, David has a wealth of knowledge upon which to draw for this position. Welcome, David!

The past year has been a busy and exciting time in Certification, with the number of monthly applications consistently higher than in previous years. CCPA’s Canadian Certified Counsellor program is growing along with our Association. Thank you to everyone involved in making this program a growing success.

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Healing the Body to Come to Oneself...

By Sarah Schlote

My whole life, I have been a talker; the loud one in the room, the one whose intense energy would erupt and flow all over anyone who would listen or pay attention. For years, I felt the shame of always being told "We're right next to you, you don't have to speak so loudly", or "do you always talk this fast (or this much)?" By the same token, I was always told that I was in my head and "too cognitive", which seemed both judgmental and out of sync with my sense of myself as being a deeply sensitive person.

Years of various forms of talk therapy helped to a degree, but there always seemed to be something missing whenever I would seek out support. There was something addictive to the venting, that I needed it to feel better, but whatever was happening inside me didn't truly shift in spite of it.

It has been said that to achieve a different result, one has to actually try something different. In my mid-20s, after moving to the West Coast to begin graduate studies in Counselling Psychology, I began to explore more holistic and alternative health modalities, including energy healing and equine-facilitated experiential learning at Spirit Gate Farms in Victoria, BC. Numerous table sessions in studio and a weekend workshop outdoors with the horses really underscored for me just how disconnected I was from myself, how much emotion there was inside that didn't know where to go. Although I didn't know where things were headed, I sensed I was on the right path.

I recall a reflective round pen session in which making eye contact with the people witnessing my time with a horse named Hawk was incredibly triggering for me. Being seen at my most raw and vulnerable was overwhelming, and I didn't have the internal capacity to be with all the fear of judgment, rejection and ridicule that I held inside. Unbeknownst to me at the time, Hawk had decided to follow me as I made my way from one person to the next along the fence, his nose near the small of my back, supporting me onward. Making eye contact that day was incredibly difficult, but has since become the measure by which I can determine how resourced I am inside myself.

It was around the same time that I was introduced to Somatic Experiencing (SE) at the University of Victoria. This naturalistic approach, developed by Dr. Peter Levine to resolve trauma and emotional dysregulation, works at the level of the nervous system to support the completion of blocked self-protective responses (fight/flight/freeze). This in turn supports a greater capacity to be present to one's emotions and sensations in the moment without feeling overwhelmed or the need to manage through various coping strategies (like addictions, distraction, dissociation, venting, etc.). After my experience with Hawk, this approach really intrigued me.

SE emphasizes tracking what wants to happen in the body; sitting with sensations, impulses and emotions while working within a window of tolerance; orienting to one's surroundings and to resources

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that are comforting; pausing and allowing time; the notion that less is more; grounding, titrating, redirecting and containment... things that horses and donkeys model for us so well and that are crucial for developing trusting relationships with prey animals with very attuned nervous systems, as well as building solid attachment relationships with humans (go figure!).

I was fortunate enough to have an internship supervisor who had received training in SE, as well as work at a sexual assault centre with SE-trained staff. After moving back to Ontario a few years later, I knew it was something I wanted to experience for myself, but was surprised at how little awareness existed in Eastern Canada about somatic work. I began to realize how fortunate I was to have studied out West and been exposed to SE so early in my development as a psychotherapist. It took a few years, but finally enough people had signed up to launch Ontario's first cohort of SE students in 2011, which I was thrilled to be a part of.

At the same time, inspired by my experiences at Spirit Gate, I began a parallel process of training in Integrative Equine-Facilitative Wellness at Generation Farms in Nanaimo, BC. The model developed at Generation Farms is grounded in somatic / self-regulation principles, mindfulness, natural horsemanship and the Epona Approach, and corresponded nicely with my ongoing development in SE. The Generation Farms training has been approved for the National Association for Equine-Facilitated Wellness (NAEFW) certification process. More information about this process can be found at www.equinefacilitatedwellness.org.

During one of the demonstrations during the IEFW training, the old triggers came up for me again – about being seen, being ridiculed, appearing incompetent – but I was able to remain much more present this time around. I was even able to smile while making eye contact to those in attendance, without falling apart. It helped that I had just reconnected with Hawk a few days prior before heading up to Nanaimo and that, at a crucial point in the exercise when I felt at my most vulnerable, a hawk began to circle overhead. Since then, hawks and horses have been strong messengers for me – but that is a tale for another time.

So how did I get there? How did I go from being so utterly triggered and overwhelmed by my feelings, to being able to stand tall and collected in the face of a very triggering moment? By working at the level of the body and nervous system, a process that has been utterly transformative. Allowing what wants to happen in the body at the sensory level, while uncomfortable and strange at first, created so many changes in me – from a greater capacity to self-soothe and self-regulate, to a much larger internal container and capacity to be in stillness with my own pain and impulses without acting out, venting, or flipping up into my head. This larger container also holds so much more love, a deeper sense of self in my attachment relationships, and a greater capacity for joy and aliveness than ever before...

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The deeper quality of my presence and my ability to be more regulated has resulted in more attuned connections with not only my loved ones but also with the animals who share my world. My clinical work has also benefitted from the transformations within. Areas in which I used to struggle with clients now flow more effortlessly as our work together deepens and meaningful breakthroughs are occurring... especially for those clients who, like myself, had been through the therapy mill and were searching for something more, something different.

But the most profound realization was that the deep cry inside for others to receive me, to hear me – which showed up through all my loud talking and fears of rejection and abandonment – was really about a deep longing for connection with myself. I never truly appreciated that until now: that my flooding, staying in my head, or seeking to be soothed by others were signs that I had abandoned ME.

Through SE, I feel more whole, as though all the little fragmented pieces of me have integrated and I have come home to myself. I'm more fully present and embodied, and I love all of me for perhaps the first time ever. Though I had been practicing mindful self-compassion for years, SE took this to a much deeper level of integration than I realized was possible. My inner container is large enough now to house the depth of emotion within so it no longer has to spill out all over the place. I can be with discomfort, triggers and pain and stay connected with myself. It is remarkable.

While I can still be that girl who can talk the hind leg off a mule, especially when I'm passionate or excited about something, I am able to differentiate between my natural, bubbly effervescence and when it comes from a place of neurotic insecurity. There is a flexibility and ease that weren't there before, and greater possibilities and choice within. It is difficult to put into words, understandable given that the silent language of the body – the felt sense – is not one that can be spoken by the human tongue.

The more connected I am within, the less I need to speak. Yet somehow, I still feel heard. What a homecoming.

Sarah Schlote is a psychotherapist and owner of Satoria Counselling and Wellness / Thérapie et mieux-être, a bilingual private practice in Guelph, ON. She is currently offering 1-day introductory trainings on somatic skills for self-regulation for helping professionals, hosted by CAST Canada. To request a training in your area, please connect with Sarah at 519-591-7795 or www.satoria.ca. She is also launching EquuSpirit, an equine-facilitated therapy and wellness program this summer: www.equuspirit.com (website under construction). For more information on the personal and professional journey that is Somatic Experiencing, please visit www.traumahealing.com. New Canadian training cohorts starting in 2013 will be held in London, ON, Montreal, QC, Kelowna, BC and Vancouver, BC.

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Kids These Days

By Shelley Skelton

Growing up, one of the recurring battles in my home centered on television use. Apparently my brother and I were spending too much time in front of the tube and not enough time doing whatever else we were supposed to be doing. My father in particular just did not get it; in fact the television became the focus of his frustration as a parent. Moreover, my father considered the content of our television shows to be unworthy of our time. This was a clash of values.

As a counsellor who works with teens, I can better understand my father's concerns because I struggle with how technology continues to transform the adolescent experience. I likely have the same concerns as anyone else who is on the far side of this generational gap. I worry that this generation will not have the interpersonal skills they need because the art of conversation has been lost in cyberspace. I wonder how the replacement of face to face contact with online connections will impact people's need for belonging. I have not yet negotiated how friendships can be forged and maintained solely online because I fear that this will replace my concept of face to face friendships. The fact is that I do not get it.

Just because I do not get it does not mean that I do not recognize that teens are growing up in a different world than I did. Whether I like it or not, communication is evolving. In-person conversations are now somewhere on the bottom half of a list of ways that teens connect with others. Cell phones have become lifelines to everyone in the immediate vicinity and beyond. Social networking sites offer new and dynamic ways to share moments, develop new relationships, harass from a distance, relinquish privacy, and reconnect with former acquaintances.

How can I provide effective counselling to this generation when my values about human connection and relationships are at such odds with their reality? The same way I do with any other cultural difference that exists between myself and the client. I begin with an emic approach to the technological world in which teens live in order to better understand the culture of this generation by familiarizing myself with terms such as tweeting, unfriending, and yes, even sexting. At the same time, I endeavour to develop a relationship with the individual that extends beyond his or her generational affiliation.

My hope for this young generation is to experience relationships in person, with all of the joys and torment that they entail so that they can embrace living in a face to face society. After much resistance, I have resigned myself to the reality that cell phones and Facebook are here to stay and have become central to the social development of our youth. Unlike my father who could cancel our cable subscription, I cannot control this evolution of communication. Instead, I can have faith in this generation to become contributing members of our dynamic society in ways that people of my age

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cannot. As I hope my father would attest, despite my countless hours in front of the television, I turned out O.K.