

The Canadian Counselling and Psychotherapy Association

COGNICA

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H*ighlights*

A Journey of Discovery

Coming Together to Help Victims of the Fort McMurray Wildfires
p.17

Bill C-16

An Act to Help Protect Members of the LGBTQ+ Community
p.5

In This Issue

President's Message: Mobilizing Action on the Regulation of the Counselling and Psychotherapy Profession in Canada.....3

President-Elect's Message: Bill C-16, An Act to Help Protect Members of the LGBTQ+ Community.....5

Social Media and the Job Search: Ten Trends.....10

Notebook on Ethics, Standards, and Legal Issues for Counsellors and Psychotherapists - What is Counselling? We have an answer.....14

A Journey of Discovery: Coming Together to Help Victims of the Fort McMurray Wildfires.....17

Social Media and the Job Search

Ten Trends
p.10



CANADIAN COUNSELLING AND
PSYCHOTHERAPY ASSOCIATION

L'ASSOCIATION CANADIENNE DE
COUNSELING ET DE PSYCHOTHÉRAPIE

Publication Guidelines



Mobilizing action on the regulation of the counselling and psychotherapy profession in Canada

President's Message

In Canada, the regulation of a profession is the responsibility of provincial and territorial governments. As it pertains to the regulation of the counselling/psychotherapy profession, it is the respective Ministry of Health (or equivalent department) for the province/territory that is involved in the regulatory process because counselling/psychotherapy professional activities are deemed health services.

The process and timing of advancing counsellor/psychotherapist regulation varies across Canada. For example, in British Columbia, a regulatory body (known as a "College") can be formed by an Order in Council (OIC) where no new legislation is needed. In New Brunswick, a private member's bill needs to be developed and introduced. In Ontario, a new piece of legislation to regulate psychotherapy was introduced as part of the Ontario Regulated Health Professions Act.

As a national association, the Canadian Counselling and Psychotherapy Association (CCPA) recognizes the complexities of regulating the counselling/psychotherapy profession across provinces and territories and the fact that regulation activities must

be primarily driven from within the province/territory. However, as your professional association, we are committed to being "at the table" at the provincial/territorial levels to ensure that we advocate for safeguarding the protection of the public from harm while supporting our members in being active contributors to the counsellor/psychotherapist regulation discussions occurring with the provincial/territorial governments and amongst other counselling and mental health professionals.

Over the past few years, I have been pleased with the level of interest that is emerging across various provinces/territories with regards to the regulation of the counselling/psychotherapy profession. Most recently, there has been rapid mobilization exhibited by various CCPA members in their given provinces/territories – members who are volunteering their knowledge, skills, abilities, and time to ensure that CCPA is proactively involved with counsellor/psychotherapist regulation. This has been in the form of creating a provincial CCPA "caucus." CCPA caucuses in provinces such as British Columbia and Alberta are providing opportunities for CCPA members to work with designated representatives from CCPA National Office

2

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, and September 1.

Canadian Counselling and Psychotherapy Association
114-223 Colonnade Rd S,
Ottawa, ON, K2E 7K3
Tel: 613-237-1099
Toll free: 1-877-765-5565
Fax: 613-237-9786
Email: cognica@ccpa-accp.ca

Editorial Committee:
Maxine MacMillan, Sharon Cameron, Julie Ouellette, Isabelle Aubin, Tiffany Beks, Sandra Dixon, Nicole Maurice, and Karina Albert.

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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 CCPA, its officers, directors or employees.

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

Cognica Ad Rates

	1 TIME	4 TIMES	SIZE
1 page	\$510	\$430 ea	6" x 9"
1/2 page	\$325	\$270 ea	3" x 9"
1/4 page	\$215	\$165 ea	3" x 4"
Business Card	\$85	\$55 ea	2" x 3"

3

(e.g., CCPA Chief Executive Officer Barbara MacCallum) and the CCPA Executive (e.g., Blythe Shepard, CCPA Past President and me in my capacity as CCPA President) to update one another on key developments in the provincial/territorial counsellor regulation discussions. In my opinion, this collaborative team-based approach provides a mechanism for CCPA members to utilize a group decision-making process to ensure that we effectively represent CCPA members' interests in the provincial/territorial counsellor/psychotherapist regulation discussions.

In addition to the CCPA "caucus" model, various CCPA members across Canada are actively participating in working groups, committees, federations, and/or alliances where CCPA works alongside other counselling/psychotherapy associations to lobby provincial/territorial governments and advocate for counsellor/psychotherapist regulation. Leadership by CCPA members in the various working groups, committees, federations and alliances is prevalent, which ensures that our Association's voice is heard

in areas related to counsellor competency profile development, governance/bylaw development, financial planning, and registration planning – just to name a few.

As CCPA members, I encourage you to engage in the counsellor/psychotherapist regulation discussions in your given province and territory. For more information about counsellor/psychotherapist regulation across Canada, visit <https://www.ccpa-accp.ca/profession/regulation-across-canada/>.

If you are interested in joining or forming a CCPA caucus in your province/territory to learn more about counsellor/psychotherapist regulation, please do not hesitate to contact me at president@ccpa-accp.ca or Barbara MacCallum (CCPA CEO) at bmaccallum@ccpa-accp.ca.

Thank you/Merci/Meegwetch,
Natasha Caverley, PhD, CCC
CCPA President



Bill C-16, An Act to Help Protect Members of the LGBTQ+ Community

President-Elect's Message

Dear CCPA Members,

On May 17, 2016, the Government of Canada introduced the First Reading of Bill C-16, An Act to amend the Canadian Human Rights Act and the Criminal Code. A summary of the Bill states,

This enactment amends the Canadian Human Rights Act to add gender identity and gender expression to the list of prohibited grounds of discrimination.

The enactment also amends the Criminal Code to extend the protection against

hate propaganda set out in that Act to any section of the public that is distinguished by gender identity or expression and to clearly set out that evidence that an offence was motivated by bias, prejudice or hate based on gender identity or expression constitutes an aggravating circumstance that a court must take into consideration when it imposes a sentence.

The two sections of the changes proposed to the Human Rights Act are below.

The purpose of this Act is to extend the laws in Canada to give effect, within the purview of matters coming within the legislative authority of Parliament, to the principle that all individuals should have an opportunity equal with other individuals to make for themselves the lives that they are able and wish to have and to have their needs accommodated, consistent with their duties and obligations as members of society, without being hindered in or prevented from doing so by discriminatory practices based on race, national or ethnic origin, colour, religion, age, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity or expression, marital status, family status, disability or conviction for an offence for which a pardon has been granted or in respect of which a record suspension has been ordered.

For all purposes of this Act, the prohibited grounds of discrimination are race, national or ethnic origin, colour, religion, age, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity or expression, marital status, family status, disability and conviction for an offence for which a pardon has been granted or in respect of which a record suspension has been ordered.

The day of the announced legislation also coincided with the International Day Against Homophobia, Transphobia and Biphobia. The Canadian Human Rights Chief Commissioner, Marie Claude Landry, was quoted

as saying, "Nobody should have to live in fear because of who they are. Transgender rights are human rights. Transgender people have the same right to respect and dignity as everyone else in Canada." The Human Rights Commission of Canada noted in their quick facts section on the announcement that, "Multiple studies have shown that transgender and gender-diverse people face significant employment barriers, discrimination in medical care, and harassment and violence in their daily lives."

As counsellors and psychotherapists, we know from work related, personal and/or professional experiences, the many serious challenges faced by transgender persons in our community and the numerous forms of discrimination, hate and violence that they experience as citizens of our society. The Canadian *Human Rights Act* provides us with a tangible and certain instrument to offer powerful support to members of the transgender community for whom we may provide professional services.

I am sure that you, as members of CCPA, would agree with me that in our ever-changing Canadian culture and landscape, maintaining professional currency, to ensure that we deliver competent counselling and psychotherapy for transgender individuals, is an ethical responsibility as helping professionals. In CCPA's recently published book entitled, Canadian Counselling and Psychotherapy Experience: Ethics-Based Issues and Cases, there is a section called, "Working with clients Seeking Support for Gay, Lesbian, Bisexual, Transgendered, Two-Spirited and Questioning Experiences". In this chapter, Dr. Kevin Alderson's information, learning activities, and references, provide a good introduction to the ethics-based issues surrounding gay, lesbian, bisexual, transgendered, two-spirited and questioning individuals. The CCPA ethics textbook is one of many resources with which we as a counsellors and psychotherapists can continue to grow in our professional and personal un-

derstanding of our work.

The change in the *Human Rights Act and Criminal Code* is a reminder that ongoing professional development and acquiring new and improved competencies is a vital part of maintaining our professional identity. Many of us may not have taken coursework in our studies that would have included developing skills and knowledge for working with members of the LGBTQ community. In addition, and for many reasons, we may not have completed professional development, widely read, nor conducted research in this area.

As a Canadian Certified Counsellor, I find myself feeling and thinking how fortunate

I am to be living in a society that is working towards developing a culture that values inclusion, diversity, and difference. I am proud to be a member of a profession that openly values supporting all members of our society who may be discriminated against for any reason. I am equally proud to see that we continue to include and protect all those mentioned in our Human Rights Act and Criminal Code. It is through standing up, along with our fellow citizens, for what we know to be true, that we pass laws which build a strong and free Canadian culture.

Sincerely,

John Driscoll, President-Elect

The Stu Conger Award for Leadership in Career Counselling and Career Development

CCDF awards The Stu Conger Award for Leadership to individuals nominated by peers as leaders in the field. In addition to the award, a scholarship is granted to a student, chosen by the recipient, who demonstrates leadership potential. Recipients of the award to date include:

Dr. Dave Redekopp (1997), Judy Lynn Archer (1998), Phillip Jarvis (1999), John McCormick (2000), Dr. Vance Peavy (2001), Dr. Roberta Neault (2002), Dr. Jacques Limoges (2003), Dr. Danielle Riverin-Simard (2004), Dr. Armelle Spain (2005), Dr. Kris Magnusson (2006), Kristine McGhee (2007), Michel Turcotte (2008), Margie Layden-Oreto (2009), Sharon Graham (2010), Dr. Charles Bujold (2010), Bill Borgen (2011), Gray Poehnell (2012), Norm Amundson (2013), Deirdre Pickerell (2014), , Mark Franklin (2015), Nicole Galarneau (2016)..

The nomination deadline for the Stu Conger award is September 30th.

For more information about the award, go to www.ccdf.ca.

ENDOWMENT PROGRAM: BUILDING FOR THE FUTURE

The Canadian Career Development Foundation (CCDF) and the Canadian Counselling and Psychotherapy Association (CCPA) are pleased to sponsor and 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 31st.

For full details, please download the PDF version of the application form at <http://www.ccdf.ca/ccdf/index.php/awards-and-funding/building-for-the-future-endowment-fund>

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

CCPA 2016 RESEARCH CONFERENCE

The Art of Reciprocity: exploring the relationship between research, theory and practice



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CCPA is pleased to announce its 3rd Research Conference, which will be held in partnership with St. Stephen's College, from October 14-15, 2016 in St. Albert, Alberta.



St. Stephen's
College

Creating safe and inclusive environments for sexual and gender diverse (LGBTQ) people

Keynote Speaker Marni Panas invites you to join her and develop skills in creating a safe, supportive and nurturing environment for people in the LGBTQ community



Meaningful Research

Explore the relationship between skill and inspiration with Keynote Speaker Markus Scott-Alexander



Open Heart, Open Mind

Enjoy an evening with Bell Let's Talk Spokesperson Clara Hughes

POST-CONFERENCE WORKSHOPS WITH DAWN MCBRIDE AND MARKUS ALEXANDER
SEE BACK OF BROCHURE FOR DETAILS



CCPA 2016 RESEARCH CONFERENCE

The Art of Reciprocity: exploring the relationship between research, theory and practice



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St. Stephen's
College

Post-Conference Workshops



Counselling Session Notes: Unpacking the Ethical and Legal Issues To Make The Process A Whole Lot More Efficient!

Dawn McBride will give you strategies to maintain client files in an efficient, ethical and simple manner.

Soulful Inquiry

Through the interplay of letting go and shaping, Markus Scott-Alexander will show how the phenomenon of flow in the creative act is essential to the research process.



The Evening with Clara Hughes is included in the conference registration. Delegates who register for the conference receive a discount on the post-conference workshops.

REGISTER AT
[HTTPS://WWW.CCPA-ACCP.CA/2016-RESEARCH-CONFERENCE/](https://www.ccpa-accp.ca/2016-research-conference/)



Social Media and the Job Search: Ten Trends

Technology has been a game-changer in the past 10 years, and you better believe it is transforming career development

By Chris Kulbaba

In today's war for talent, it is becoming increasingly hard to ignore the impact that technology is having on jobseekers, recruiters, businesses and the people that help them. It is very important for career professionals to be aware of these changes and, of course, to be familiar with using these tools in order to assist clients. A study by Reppler in 2011 found that over 90% of recruiters were checking potential hires through social media channels. Whether career professionals personally use the tools or not, it is important to realize the implications for business and individuals. Simply because you know what a hammer is, that does not mean that you can build a house with it now – you start small and increase your skills as you go. The best way to begin then is to understand the changes that have taken place, and how people are using these tools with impact in their jobseeking.

1. Connecting and relationship management

We often talk about the fit of employee into an organization, and that means the worker must do research first before applying for a job. Tools such as websites, LinkedIn, Twitter, Facebook and more are an easy and free way to find people to talk to in order to determine fit. The focus of social media is that it is "social," and many people who would not be willing to talk on the phone or through email will do so in these channels. Finding groups or forums related to an organization or a career topic is an easy way to build relationships leading to success. I had a client who was a new Canadian and wanted to be

a medical affairs director, something I had no idea about. I reached out on LinkedIn and introduced him to people in Egypt, Italy, the US and Canada. He was able to connect with a few people to do information interviews and start his career journey.

2. Building authority

As we head into a new Age of Information, we are building an economy based on relationships and networking. The ability to create a presence using inexpensive or free tools is easier now than it has ever been. Becoming a subject matter authority in your sector is as easy as beginning to write your own website, or "blog." Free tools such as typepad.com, blogger.com or wordpress.com can assist you in creating your own platform and start a process known as technical blogging, meaning creating content that identifies you as a subject matter expert in certain areas, and all it takes is your time. Not only does this process communicate that you are aware of new technology, it also says that you are aware of the changes in the social landscape and how to navigate them, something employers are increasingly looking for.

3. Personal branding

Personal branding is one of the most important trends that is happening today. It is not, however, a universal process. Not all professionals are undertaking this process, for instance front-line staff, labourers, skilled trades or non-technical workers. Those that do see the importance of personal branding do not have to begin on their own, but can

simply look at the gurus. Gary Vaynerchuk, author of *Crush It!*, is one of those people. Gary took a small family-owned wine store in New Jersey that was earning about \$2 million a year and, using free social media tools, that store began earning over \$25 million a year. You can find more about him at gary-vaynerchuk.com; another well-known personal branding guru and best-selling author, Dan Schawbel, can be found at danschawbel.com. Creating a long "tail" of information on the Internet that an employer can easily find and evaluate before they spend time on an interview can make a significantly positive difference for a candidate.

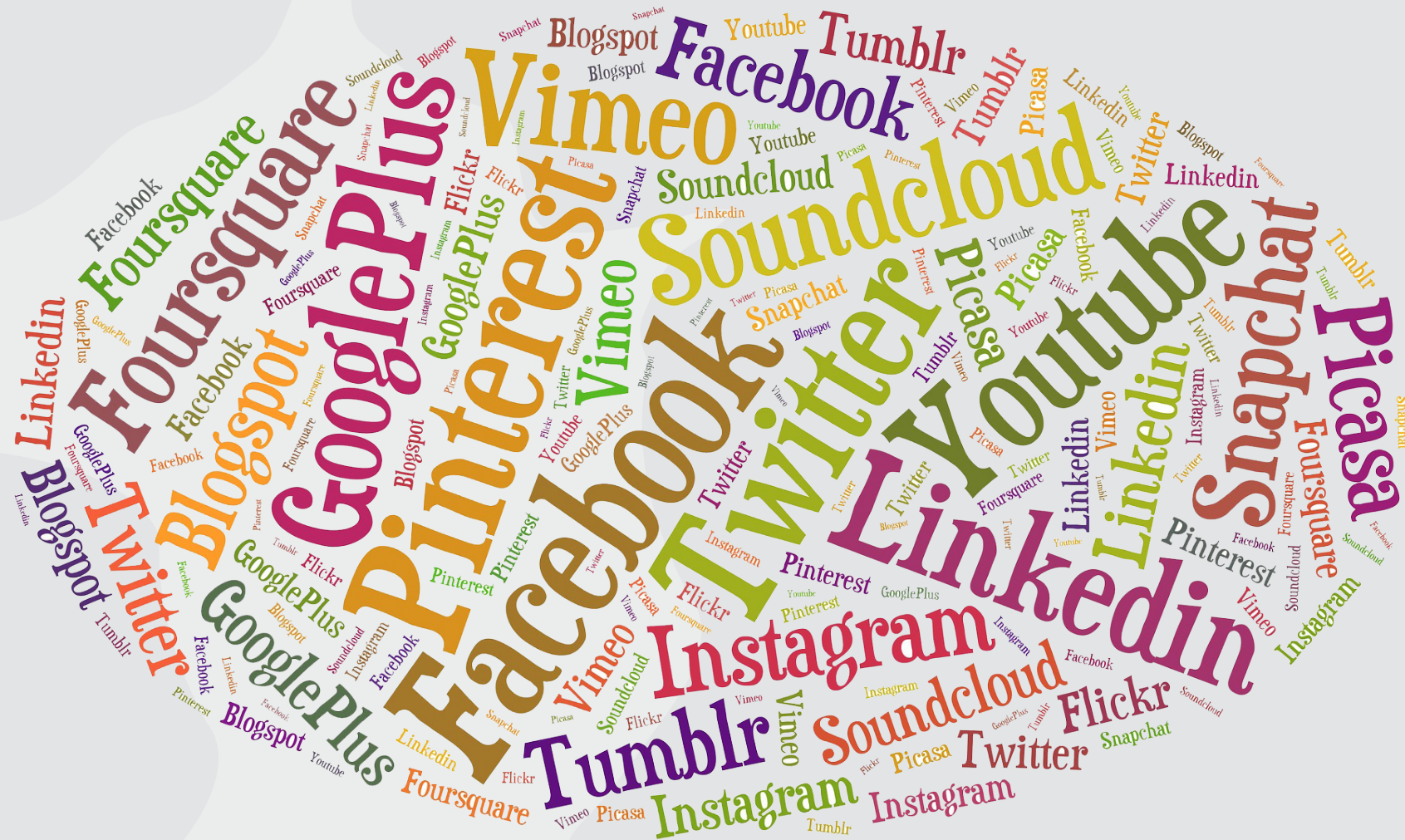
4. Employers are using social recruiting

"Social recruiting" is the process of sourcing or recruiting candidates through the use of social platforms such as LinkedIn. Much like it has changed how we live our lives, social media has found a way into how business is being performed across the globe. Many companies are embracing social media to

increase their business, leverage the impact of their brands, create awareness of their products and services, and many are not. The companies that are ahead of the curve and are early adopters in the process of social recruiting are finding many benefits to this process, and the staff being recruited this way are already fully engaged.

5. Mobile technology – Managing your career "on the go"

Data is inexpensive to purchase and many tech-savvy people are turning to their smartphones and tablets to collect information, network with others, communicate to find information or solve problems, seek out new ideas and stay efficient. Reading a newspaper article on the way to work, listening to a podcast on the commute back home, sharing ideas through applications such as evernote.com and dropbox.com; the way that technology is being used is becoming faster and more dynamic.



6. Search engine optimization

Have you tried to Google you own name yet? That is just the thing that an aspiring ad executive did back in 2009 – he bought the Google AdWords of the names of the top ad executives in New York City. When they “Googled” their own names, the result was a message: “Googling your name is fun – but what is more fun is leveraging the results for success. I can be reached here for a conversation.” He spent less than \$10 to be recruited into a job that paid 6 figures – simply by being really creative.

7. Resume links

Time is of the essence in our society, and as career professionals we urge clients to tell their story, in a concise way, but at the same time in a way that creates a persona. Say enough, but not too much, and say the right thing – a difficult task. A potential solution is to create different digital tools, and then let an employer link to those tools through an interactive resume. Technology such as Quick Response codes (small digital bar codes that look like a maze within a small square) are an easy way to access mobile technology. Most smartphones can download a free application to read these codes, and they can send you to any number of sites – your profile on a Dropbox link, your PowerPoint presentations on slideshare.com, your LinkedIn profile, your Twitter feed, your personal blog and more. Hyperlinks are another way to save space on a resume and still deliver a significant amount of information to a potential employer.

8. Time management

Using tools such as social media or looking for information online can quickly eat your day, taking productive time away from job search efforts. Dashboards such as Hootsuite (hootsuite.com) can help you use a single tool to listen and hold conversations in up to five social media channels, all for free. I prefer Hootsuite to other dashboards because it is web-based, so I can access it anywhere there is an Internet connection.

9. Twitter chats

Twitter chats happen when a group of people all tweet about the same topic using a

specific hashtag (#) that allows it to be followed by Twitter users. The chats take place at a specific time and often happen on a regular basis. I like to follow different conversations in Twitter using Hootsuite. Specifically, learning LinkedIn can be much easier if you are on the Twitter chat #linkedinchat that is hosted by Viveka Von Rosen each Tuesday from 8:00 pm to 9:00 pm ET, or you can just follow the chat in your Hootsuite channel at any time convenient to you as the chat history is right at your fingertips. If you want to learn more, Hootsuite University can teach you all about using their tool, for free.

10. Social skills

For a business to stay competitive, gauging the effectiveness, speed and content of communication skills that lie within a potential hire can be a crucial factor for success of the organization as a whole. For many people, using social media in their daily lives has allowed them to become better at solving problems, researching information, and collaborating with others – all useful talents when searching for a job, during the selection process or once you’ve been hired.

As career professionals, whether we personally use these tools or not, we must be aware of the changes and the potential trends in our ever-changing employment landscape. A global workforce, online collaboration and crowdsourcing – the only thing that will stay the same is that change will always happen. There are fantastic opportunities to share and model success for our clients and ourselves – all it takes is a bit of time to talk to each other and watch the trends.

Chris Kulbaba is an Employment Counselor with the London Employment Help Centre in London, ON. Chris regularly delivers webinars for Conestoga College in the CDP program, offers his services as an expert speaker, facilitator and coach on social media topics, and is creating a new career development tool “Career Card Sort” – but takes the greatest pride in being a dad and a loyal family man. You can find Chris on Twitter, LinkedIn, Skype, Facebook and at his new website/blog launching in January 2014 better-together.ca.

First published in the Winter 2014 issue of *Careering* magazine. Reprinted with permission.



CCPA 2017 Annual Conference

May 16 - 19, 2017

Keynote Speakers

The Neuroplasticity of Art Therapy in the Autism Spectrum - **Christina Dove**



Career Development and Mental Health - **Dave Redekopp**



Psychotherapy and Counselling: Implications for Virtual Reality and Videoconference - **Stéphane Bouchard**



Mindfulness, Mindsight and the Integrated Brain: What is the Mind and Mental Health? - **Dan Siegel**



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Sheraton Hotel
St. John's, Newfoundland and Labrador

www.ccpa-accp.ca

Notebook on Ethics, Standards, and Legal Issues for Counsellors and Psychotherapists

What is Counselling?

We have an answer in the following *Definition of Counselling and its Scope of Practice*

By Dr. Glenn Sheppard

Counselling is often described as a comprehensive profession and this title is certainly justified given its tremendous diversity. We are diverse by: the titles we use, the variation in the clients we serve, the type of environments in which we work, and the many theoretical perspectives that inform our professional practices. Because of this diversity and the extensive and ongoing growth of the profession we have been challenged in our efforts to provide, both for ourselves and others, an inclusive definition of counselling and its scope of practice. Of course, it has always been important to have such a definition and the parameters around our practices captured in a comprehensive manner. This is even more so today with so many groups across the country advocating and working for the statutory regulation of the profession within their respective provinces, since any governmental regulator and regulatory statute is very likely to require such a definition and a scope of practice.

The good news is that we can now provide a positive and ready response to any such request or requirement. In 2007, the Canadian Counselling Association (now the Canadian Counselling and Psychotherapy Association CCPA) established a National Labour Mobility Working Group to address critical matters

with respect to interprovincial/territorial mobility within the counselling profession in Canada and its implication for statutory regulation. The work of this Group was supported by funding over three years from the labour mobility centre in Human Resources and Skill Development Canada (HRSDC). With these funds the Group was able to organize and deliver three symposia (2008, 2009, 2011) in Ottawa. These events brought together on each of these occasions 50 professionals identified as stewards of the counselling profession in their respective provinces. One of the many positive outcomes of these activities was a national survey conducted in 2010 by a Project Working Group (PWG) on a definition of counselling and the scope of practice it had developed. It is noteworthy that both of these Groups were co-chaired by Dr. Blythe Shepard and Dr. Glenn Sheppard.

In 2010, following a period of extensive research the PWG developed a bilingual online survey that was sent to all counselling and counselling related organizations in Canada. The survey asked respondents to identify a number of demographics and professional attributes and then they recorded their level of agreement as to how well the titles, the definition of counselling, and its scope of practice presented in the survey reflected

their professional identity and core beliefs.

Some of the key results of this survey were as follows:

- 46 organizations and 1416 individuals responded to the survey.
- 25.8% of respondents had been in practice 5 years or less; 15.5% for more than 20 years.
- 595 (42.0%) respondent were in private practice; 397 (28.0%) worked in schools and universities; agencies and health care settings accounted for most of the rest.

Results from the survey confirmed a clear understanding of the generic term "counseling profession" and that it was inclusive of (among others):

- Counselling therapist

- Career counsellor
- Counsellor d'orientation
- Mental Health Therapist
- Guidance counsellor
- Clinical Counsellor
- Psychotherapist

Respondents overwhelmingly agreed that the "definition of counselling" and the "scope of practice" were inclusive of them, despite their personal use of more than 70 different variations on counselling-related titles and more than 250 practice types.

For both, the **Definition of Counselling** and the **Scope of Practice**, participants in this survey showed consistently an over 93% agreement, and always less than 4% disagreement regardless of differences in their places of work, job titles, ages, modalities and client base. These results show that

Regional Workshops in BC

CCPA is pleased to announce a pilot series of regional workshops for its members in BC. Each workshop has been pre-approved for 6 CECs!

Come enjoy a day of professional development and networking followed by a special presentation on the status of regulation in the province and an overview of how CCPA is working for you!

Counselling Within an Indigenous Context
September 26th in Prince George

Family Counselling and Creative Arts Therapy
September 24th in Kelowna

Psychological Trauma, PTSD and Healing in Military and Veteran Populations
September 23 in Victoria

A Practical Introduction to Acceptance and Commitment Therapy in Clinical Practice
September 30th in Vancouver and October 1st in Kamloops

Find out more

A Journey of Discovery

By Dr. Laleh Skrenes

Coming Together to Help Victims of the Fort McMurray Wildfires....

Almost everyone has heard of the wildfire in Fort McMurray in early May of this year. According to the regional municipality of Wood Buffalo, over 88,000 people were evacuated, among whom many have lost their homes. When my sister called from Europe, the first thing she asked was: "How is that distraught community managing the fire?" This natural catastrophe became a global news item and concern.

"Every day, do something that will inch you closer to a better tomorrow." (Doug Firebaugh). I felt inspired and responsible to provide my support and direct aid as a helping professional in the field of counselling psychology.

Disaster Psychosocial Program (DPS) commenced with the notion that professional registered therapists and other clinicians would consider volunteering their time in the occurrence of a large-scale crisis or disaster to react to the psychosocial needs of the public and responders before, during and after a catastrophic event. I almost drove the director - the provincial lead in DPS - insane by asking when I was going to be assigned. She patiently calmed me down and told me to wait. I was utterly both honoured and excited to find out that I was, in fact, in Team One!

Team One usually has the most challenging task in a mission: to experience all the rough edges and make the path smoother for the following teams. I had not been afraid to rise to the occasion, but then experienced all kinds of challenges along the way. The

airport was closed, so we had to drive from Edmonton to Fort McMurray. I began to feel the poor air quality as we gradually approached our destination. It was supposed to take 4 to 5 hours, but with all the stops and the formalities as volunteers, it took our team much longer. I had been travelling for 18 hours before getting to my camp. The second day was about planning and organizing, introductions, being introduced to the Alberta Health Services team, visiting different sites, respirator fit testing, etc. Everyone exhausted themselves by working hard to complete their tasks. Nothing is smooth in a crisis. One may not be able to understand until one experiences the situation. We were waiting around, wanting to do what we came for: to provide emotional support to distressed people.

Our accommodation, location, and lodging was really challenging. However, I constantly reminded myself that this was my chance to help the affected individuals. It would be an experience I would remember for the rest of my life. I was on a mission I believed in, so I was willing to be patient and wait. I had to remind myself of other places in the world where I had worked - such as Africa - with more challenging conditions than this one. We started our actual work only on the third day. Our job seemed to be mainly focused on emotional support related to preparing the residents to return. I tried to help in a variety of ways: both directly and indirectly, both brief and in depth; from providing emotional and psychological support, promoting wellness strategies, a pair of good listening ears, handing out AHS brochures; to simple

we have a solid shared identity as a profession and the capacity to be inclusive and to embrace diversity while at the same time sharing a very strong core belief about our definition of counselling and its scope of professional activities.

Here is what was presented in the survey and about which there is such an extremely high level of near unanimous agreement across the country. This definition has been adopted by CCPA.

Definition of Counselling:

Counselling is a relational process based upon the ethical use of specific professional competencies to facilitate human change. Counselling addresses wellness, relationships, personal growth, career development, mental health, and psychological illness or distress. The counselling process is characterized by the application of recognized cognitive, affective, expressive, somatic, spiri-

tual, developmental, behavioural, learning, and systemic principles.

Scope of Practice:

The counselling profession:

- ***Is attentive to and responds to diversity and inclusiveness;***
- ***Works in the best interest of individuals, couple, families, groups organizations, communities, and the public-at-large; and***
- ***Works in the domains of cognition, emotion, expression, somatics, human development, behaviour, learning, and interactive systems.***

NOTE: To all those working towards statutory regulation of counselling and psychotherapy across the country, the important work reported here is already done and is a gift to you. Remember there is no need now "to re-invent the wheel".

greetings, offering a kind word, and a smile. I believe that the magic of a smile works even among the impacted people in such a crisis. I had initially held back smiling out of respect to the people in this catastrophe. The magic of a smile, indeed, worked even in these difficult circumstances! Yes, a simple smile; it might be the only positive and tender gesture a person - particularly one in distress - receives all day.

Through my interaction with the residents, I got to know many individuals better. Many respondents and volunteers were from the area and, thus, were affected by the fire. I discovered that several of the responders were lodging in places like motor vehicles since their arrival, as the accommodation elsewhere was completely occupied. I felt fortunate for having a small room with a shared bathroom.

At the Health Services centre where I was assigned to work, I would walk around the other tables when I had a chance, introduce myself, and ask the residents about the nature of their support. Many of these individuals were also residents of that area, with some heartbreaking stories to tell about the fire. Some came back to work, even when they had no place to reside. They were residing in restrictive accommodations. I was amazed how they were able to focus and provide such incredible contributions. I also talked to and helped hundreds of the affected residents with their unique and heartbreaking stories to tell. I heard from some people that the impact of the fire was so intense; they found the idea of returning to their house overwhelming, even when they were permitted to do so. One young mother said she and her spouse were eager to do so, but their children were adamant against the idea. They preferred to stay in the lodge, rather than returning to their own home.

We were fortunate to have a quiet and private room in the centre to take individuals to when they wished to talk in depth about their experiences. I also helped residents to the appropriate tables where their physical necessities could be addressed. My observation and work in Fort McMurray has taught me a lot about its citizens. Fort McMurray is a place of diverse cultures. There are large ranges of employment opportunities with different categories of

income that one may not usually find in a small, remote city. However, what makes the inhabitants of Fort McMurray unique is their ability to help each other in difficult situations. These are a few of the many stories that I personally heard from its people and that they wished to share.

In the midst of the chaos of the wildfire situation, one of a set of triplet 15 year-old girl from the city - the daughters of a deputy fire chief - and her 19-year old cousin, were killed in a horrific car crash on the highway that was being used by evacuees, while fleeing from the fires. According to the RCMP, the crash was between an SUV containing the two youth and a tractor-trailer fuel truck on Highway 881 at Range Road 94 at Heart Lake First Nation. This was a site that we used to drive by every day from our camp to Fort McMurray Composite High School, where she had attended school. Everyone, including the Mayor, fire fighters, police officers, and the residents in the town were wearing an orange ribbon to show their respect to the grieving family.

"I'm a guy that's usually super prepared, and now I don't even have a pillow."

Another less well known story is about a man with a young family, who was suffering from his third bout of cancer. He had to sell his house, and his family had to take a second mortgage to be able to pay for the first and second rounds of treatment. Then a third bout of cancer showed up! It didn't take long before he sent a couple of messages to everyone in town. Immediately, people were organising activities to raise money. They quickly raised almost half a million dollars for his treatment in the US. I was recently informed that he was doing well.

"When the food bank was low, you would see a lineup of people going there and donating. When the Salvation Army was running low on supplies, the next morning there would be boxes behind the Salvation Army of clothes that appeared to be new. I think people

were going to the store buying supplies and donating them. Many of the mining and oil companies opened their camp accommodations to allow many residents and volunteers to come in and help the community. Without them we would have had nowhere to go. I'm a guy that's usually super prepared, and now I don't even have a pillow. I don't even know where I'm going and usually I have everything in place. Without [the camps], I would have slept in my car for days and days," one resident told me. It was that spirit of Fort McMurray that people were talking about.

"Fort McMurray also has given a lot of money to other cities when they were in trouble, and now it's their turn. You see that the whole of Alberta is behind Fort McMurray. There's a reason for that. There are so many people across Alberta, Saskatchewan, and Manitoba, who came here in the beginning some 35 to 40 years ago, and they worked hard. They made their money. They might have gone back home, but they never forgot what Fort McMurray gave them. Whether you like the oil industry or not, this is a big part of the economy of Canada. It's not perfect - a mine is not a beautiful place to see, it's not a place that you go for vacation. But they are making a lot of effort trying to produce oil in the best way possible. There's a lot of money that is invested in this industry to try to extract the bitumen. That [whole process] may not be fairly publicised. People here understand that the rest of the world or Canada might not understand them, but they have always reached their hands in their pocket when it came time to help others. It is now their turn to get help," another resident stated.

Having just visited Fort McMurray for a week, following approximately a 14 hour challenging work every day, now more than before, I am enjoying my large and comfortable bed with lots of cushions, clean water, and the many accessories of life. After breathing the smoky, acrid air of the burnt forests and city, I have developed a greater appreciation for the fresh air of my home city. When I was on this mission, I continuously thought of my usual run at early dawn, imagining breathing the fresh air in the park, and feeling healthy and optimistic. At times like this, we are not only helping people in need, but also learning from them. The lessons are of a reciprocal nature. After the experiences of helping people survive a natural disaster and coming to their aid, one can return to one's homes with a new

appreciation for one's comfortable, organized life. I was provided with great hospitality, transportation, basic accommodation and abundant food. Nevertheless, an experience like this certainly makes us grateful for all the things we take for granted in our everyday lives. The experience of altruism and charitable acts, reaching out to others in their time of crisis, is a very rewarding and unforgettable experience.

Fort McMurray's spirit is quite strong. I give my sincere admiration and send warm salutations to the spirited residents of that beleaguered city, who have shown incredible resilience and bravery in the recent fire. My gratitude, moreover, goes to those responders and volunteers who took the time to share their expertise, compassion, and care for those incredible people. This article is for you, Fort McMurray, and is dedicated to your strength and bravery! "The strongest people are not those who show strength in front of us, but those who win battles we know nothing about." (Anonymous)

Dr. Laleh Skrenes is a university professor. She has taught both undergraduate and graduate level courses in counselling psychology at University of British Columbia and City University of Seattle in Vancouver Campus since 2008. Dr. Skrenes is also a registered psychotherapist in Vancouver who has been providing professional counselling, psychotherapy, and coaching to children, youth, adults and seniors in a variety of settings including private practices, mental health centers, and hospitals over the last 20 years. Dr. Skrenes was involved with major research projects at UBC. She has published several articles in professional magazines and newsletters. Dr. Skrenes' two decades of experience includes services and experience as a volunteer to a broad spectrum of clients/patients in non-profit organizations both nationally and internationally including psychological services in Africa, as a consultant for Vancouver Persian Radio for youth, in movement/dance therapy workshops for youth and elderly, in couple and family life seminars, to Disaster Psychosocial Program (DPS) and BC Ministry of Health, to First Nations communities in the North, on the board of directors of the Canadian Counselling and Psychotherapy Association, and as a certified EMDR facilitator. She can be reached at dr.laleh.skrenes@gmail.com.

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CCPA National Office

6-203 Colonnade Rd. S.,
Ottawa, Ontario, K2E 7K3
Tel: (613) 237-1099
Toll Free: 1-877-765-5565
Fax: (613) 237-9786
E-mail: info@ccpa-accp.ca
Website: www.ccpa-accp.ca



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