

Spiritual Identity and Transformation
**Third Annual Canadian Conference
on Spirituality and Social Work**

June 1-3, 2004
University of Manitoba, Winnipeg

Abstracts of Presentations & Workshops

Wednesday, June 2, 2004 3:00pm – 4:30pm

**“Spiritual Roots for Macro Practice:
Nurturing, Informing and Sustaining Social Activism”**

Cathy Holtmann, MDiv, St. Thomas University, NB

Most spiritual traditions emphasize the interconnectedness of all life, compassion, and justice. This workshop explores the role of spirituality as a basis and a support for macro practice. This spiritual connectedness gives rise to a concern for social justice, informs the practice of social activism, and sustains efforts to bring about a more just society. The social work literature on the topic while expanding significantly has emphasized the more reflective, individual aspects of spirituality and has neglected the spirituality of social activism. Participants will explore this neglected aspect of spiritually sensitive practice and identify ways to expand these connections.

Prayer, Ritual, and Meditation: A New Dimension or a Variation on a Theme?

Cathy Rocke, MSW, Child Protection Services and University of Manitoba, MB

While the roots of social work practice are clearly sectarian and the early social workers had little difficulty incorporating religious beliefs into practice, the movement to professionalism resulted in a movement away from practices that were seen as having religious and/or spiritual overtones. With the resurgence regarding spirituality in social work practice in recent years there has been an increased interest in exploring how spiritual practices can be incorporated in work with individuals and families. The social work literature has begun to discuss this issue but the literature is sparse and has tended to be written by academics and from a theoretical understanding of the concepts. The voices and experiences of direct practitioners have not been heard. In this workshop, the facilitator will share various interventions and techniques that she has found particularly effective and the participants will be asked to share their efforts and experiences with incorporating spirituality into practice. Some themes will be identified.