



CSSSW NEWSLETTER

The Canadian Society for Spirituality and Social Work - Fall 2022

I see a time of Seven Generations when all the colours of [humankind] will gather under the Sacred Tree of Life and the whole Earth will become one circle again.

—Crazy Horse

Hello all CSSSW members. We are thrilled to present to you our fourth quarterly newsletter since CSSSW was relaunched in spring 2021! This issue marks a full year of quarterly newsletters! We hope you've enjoyed them so far. If you are interested in volunteering with us to help to design these newsletters in the future, please [join our newsletter committee](#).

In this issue, you will find a fall equinox meditation, details about our upcoming conference and the call for submissions, a message to members from our Vice-President, greetings from our 7 new board members, and more! Know someone who is not a general member of the CSSSW who may want to join? Send them this [link](#)!

Happy Fall Equinox!

Written by Vice President, Heather Boynton

Fall often brings forth pleasant thoughts of activities such as harvesting, walking through gorgeous coloured foliage as trees turn colour, warm crackling fires, cozy warm sweaters, blankets, and scarves, and of course, the aromas and tastes of pickles, sauces, compotes, delicious pies, and all things pumpkin. The days become shorter, and the temperatures cool off, creating a sense of need to prepare for the hibernation process. We are in a constant process of change and transformation through all the seasons. Fall often brings an end to things, yet it also can represent a new beginning. The days and nights are in balance in the fall. We can consider how to get the most out of each and every day as they shorten in length. We can tune into and become aware of what we might need for balance and create or adjust our priorities and activities.

Fall time calls us to consider our basic necessities for a time of going within and inside. It is time to look at our crops (and goals and achievements) and what we have manifested, and what we want to preserve. We take time to consider the things we need to cultivate a safe and comfortable space or a safe haven. What self-protection might we need? Are there things we need to do to focus on regarding our health, boosting our immunity, and ensuring our well-being over the winter months? What might we need to make us feel warm and safe? How might we share our bounty with others who may require support or our gifts and talents? We can also focus on what we want to savour before it is gone.

To read the full meditation, click [here](#). To listen to this meditation, click [here](#).



What's in this newsletter:

FALL EQUINOX MEDITATION

EVENTS

- CSSSW JUNE 2023 CONFERENCE
- VOLUNTEER WITH US

ANNOUNCEMENTS

- CONFERENCE CALL FOR SUBMISSIONS
- REFLECTIONS FROM VICE PRESIDENT & PRESIDENT ON THE PAST YEAR

RESEARCH CORNER

- FEATURE PUBLICATIONS
- CURRENT RESEARCH

OUR TEAM

- GREETINGS FROM NEW BOD MEMBERS

SOCIAL MEDIA

- CHANCE TO WIN FREE ADMISSION TO CONFERENCE

EVENTS

The Tenth North American Conference on Spirituality and Social Work

The Spirit in Social Work: Toward Ecospirituality and Holistic Sustainable Social Work Practice

Pre-Conference Day: June 21, 2023.

Conference Dates: June 22-24, 2023.

Hosted at Dalhousie University (Halifax, NS)

**Co-sponsored by The Society for Spirituality and Social Work
(USA).**

The Tenth North American Conference on Spirituality and Social Work is on June 22-24, 2023. It is being hosted at Dalhousie University (Halifax, NS) and is being co-sponsored by The Society for Spirituality and Social Work (USA). The 2023 CSSSW conference *The Spirit in Social Work: Towards Ecospirituality, Holistic and Sustainable Social Work Practices* aims to explore social work's role in the emerging climate and associated mental health crisis. Understanding and practicing ecospirituality is perhaps more crucial today than ever. In sounding a clarion call calling climate change “the single biggest health threat facing humanity,” the World Health Organization (2021) reported “health professionals worldwide are already responding to the harms caused by this unfolding crisis”. So, where is social work in these worldwide responses?

This timely conference will offer critical and creative spaces in which to think about how we might begin to incorporate climate health and environmental justice – not currently part of core social work and allied health and mental health curricula, nor the typical scopes of practice – from an intersectional non-anthropocentric lens to foster and support sustained individual and planetary wellbeing. This conference will bring together researchers, practitioners, educators, students, and advocates from various disciplines, in person and online. enriching hybrid exchange and dissemination of scholarship, practice ideas, and art that explore the ways Ecospirituality can inform social work in becoming a more germane profession in the face of the many complex issues affecting the world today, threatening the essential ingredients of good health - clean air, safe drinking water, nutritious food supply, and safe shelter.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

CONFERENCE CALL FOR SUBMISSIONS

Early Deadline: October 21, 2022

Submit an abstract of your submission to our conference today! We are offering a blend of in-person and online sessions. Possible topics include social work and global environmental movements, nature/land-based therapeutic approaches, eco-anxiety/climate grief: body and spirit care; addressing environmental racism; Indigenous worldviews and perspectives, and more!

Sessions may include the following formats: scholarly paper presentations; conceptual talks; research findings; student-authored paper presentations; panel discussions; experiential and interactive workshops; creative contributions (e.g., storytelling, poetry, leading meditations, embodied practice; spoken word, song, dance, comedy).

See attached Call for Submissions poster for more details!

Early Submissions due Oct. 21, 2022, with acceptance notification by Nov. 15, 2022.

Second call due Jan. 15, 2023, with notification by Feb. 28, 2023. For conference updates check CSSSW website spiritualityandsocialwork.ca. For questions, please contact Dr. Cassandra Hanrahan at info@spiritualityandsocialwork.ca.



Reflections from CSSSW Vice President & President on the Past Year

As I take time to reflect on the goals we set last year and where we have come I can't help but to be grateful to those who supported these goals and initiatives. Our first aim was to rejuvenate the society and to offer information and activities for our members. We also aimed to reconnect with our American partners in the Society for Spirituality and Social Work. I feel that we have done a wonderful job in attaining both of these aims.

We were able to offer several workshops on ethics, yoga, mandalas, and meditation, and cultural and spiritual attunement. We continue to meet quarterly with our friends to the south and have developed wonderful relationships. Many of our board members attended the successful conference hosted by the SSSW this past spring where we announced our conference for June 21-24, 2023, at Dalhousie University in Halifax. The conference planning has been ramping up over the past three months and we are in full swing of preparations. We continue to seek anyone interested in supporting our work and would love to have you join us. Another goal that Cassandra and I set was to create a stronger and revitalized board of directors. We have attracted some wonderful new members to join our solid team in visioning and working at our mission. We have also had members join as volunteers for committees and events.

Without all of you we could not function and provide everyone with the activities, news, and resources they seek. We truly appreciate all who continue to move the society forward. I particularly want to thank all the board members who continually commit to the work and promote the society and its endeavours. Aside from the conference next year we continue to work towards ensuring you are all informed of research, publications, and activities. We have been working at ensuring our website is current and updated in a timely manner. A big thanks goes out to Dani, our executive assistant, and to Sandi, our website support person. Dani has also been instrumental in keeping Cassandra and myself on top of things and supporting the board activities. I also want to say that I continue to learn and develop from my work as vice president, and from engaging with others who are passionate about spirituality in social work. It nourishes my spirit.

With spirit and gratitude,

Heather M Boynton

Just over a year ago, Dr. Heather Boynton and I continued, in a collaborative fashion the revitalizing work of resuscitating the Society initiated at the start of the hiatus by myself, long-time board member Dr. Susan Cadell, and outgoing CSSSW President, Dr. John Coates. An early order of business was drawing together former and newer members to create an inclusive and active Board of Directors. Today, I am very pleased to report we have an 18-member Board composed of practitioners, graduate students, and faculty, all of whom are involved in various aspects of practice, research, teaching and learning at the intersections of spirituality, well-being, and social work, including the CSSSW Executive Assistant, Dani Sherwood, B.A., MSW student. Meeting monthly, the CSSSW relies on the knowledge, experience, and relations of its Directors. In addition to having hosted and participated in several online web presentations, workshops, conferences, and panel discussions, since September 2021, the CSSSW has re-established its long-time association with the USA-based Society for Spirituality and Social Work (SSSW), also under new direction and set for an inspiring tenure ahead.

A signature characteristic of CSSSW that initially drew me in was the sociable mix of skilled and curious practitioners and scholars who together offered a hospitable space at their bi-annual conferences where I uniquely found my personal and professional selves could be one, and at once strong and vulnerable. This constituted an inimitable and warm welcome for me twelve years ago and is an experience I hope we can continue to recreate for current and future members at CSSSW events. Next spring the CSSSW will host its first conference since its last in 2014 held at St. Thomas University, in Fredericton, NB, ironically themed, "Cultivating Mindful Practice: Integrating the Personal and Professional for Effective Practice".

From June 21-24, 2023, the CSSSW will host its 10th North American Conference on Spirituality and Social Work, at Dalhousie University in Halifax NS. We are proud and grateful to be co-sponsored by the SSSW and the Dalhousie University School of Social Work. The 2023 CSSSW conference *The Spirit in Social Work: Towards Ecospirituality, Holistic and Sustainable Social Work Practice* aims to explore social work's role in the emerging climate and associated mental health crisis and the potential/challenges of an ecospiritual lens or worldview in addressing what the World Health Organization (2021) calls the single biggest health threat facing humanity. We want to create a space where conference attendees can join the health professionals worldwide and other kindred spirits who are already responding to the harms caused by this unfolding crisis. My hope is that you will see yourself and your work in the invitation to attend and/or submit to our conference, and that you will be guided by your spirit to respond to this collective challenge. I also hope to have the honour of meeting you all in June.

-Cassandra Hanrahan

RESEARCH CORNER

Feature Publications

Congratulations to CSSSW Vice President and longstanding board member, Dr. Heather M. Boynton, on the recent publication of her new book!



Trauma and the exposure to traumatic events is part of life, making the need for current and informed social work research and training in this area essential. **Trauma, Spirituality, and Posttraumatic Growth in Clinical Social Work Practice** highlights unique and diverse circumstances throughout a client's lifecycle where trauma is experienced, how one's spirituality is awakened or activated, and how this experience can intersect with interventions toward posttraumatic growth (PTG). More than just a primer on trauma effects, the book offers social workers insights into how to properly assess current resources and individual levels of distress. It also provides practical strategies on how spirituality and spiritual practices can be integrated into psychotherapeutic interventions at various levels of social work practice.

Addressing the impact of trauma-related events and emphasizing the importance of spirituality, the book will inspire and provide transferable knowledge that social workers can use to meet the unique needs of the clients, families, and communities they serve. Board members Susan Cadell and Indrani Margolin, as well as past board member Diana Coholic contributed chapters to this book.

Click [here](#) to get your copy today!

Boynton, H.M., & Vis, J. (2022). *Trauma, Spirituality, and Posttraumatic Growth in Clinical Social Work Practice* (Eds.). University of Toronto Press.

Maryam Motia,
Ph.D. candidate,
Faculty of Social Work,
Wilfrid Laurier University



Motia, M. (2021). **Halloween: A transformative medium.** *Social Work Today*.

https://www.socialworktoday.com/archive/exc_101821.shtml

In this article, I suggested that, rather than death, Halloween could and should be a time for celebrating livelihood and caring about those alive, especially our neighbours and community members. Sharing my lived experience, I emphasized not only developing a sense of care and empathy in ourselves but using the power of parenting to raise children who are also caring and empathetic. I called for careful attention to events such as Halloween to expand the vision of ourselves and our children to include others, health, happiness, and quality of life as well. Every little attempt, in this light, would lead to promoting their lives and making ourselves spiritually more adequate parents for our children.

The full text is available at

<https://www.researchgate.net/profile/Maryam-Motia/research>

Here, we feature recent articles (peer-reviewed, or grey literature) published by CSSSW members related to spirituality and social work! **Have you recently published or read any current and relevant literature in the realm of spirituality and social work?** Email us at info@spiritualityandsocialwork.ca!



Current Research



Title: ***Can I Keep My Religious Identity and Be a Professional? Evaluating the Presence of Religious Literacy in Education, Nursing, and Social Work Professional Programs across Canada***

Written by: Dr. Margie Patrick & Dr. Y. W. Alice Chan

In much of the world, education, nursing, and social work are human-centred professions that aim to engage with individuals holistically. Yet, how much of their training prepares them for this manifold reality?

In this article, we provide an overview of three

Canadian societal contexts, examine the literature on religious literacy in higher education and in the Canadian context, and study the professional programs of education, nursing, and social work offered in the top-ranked universities in the three largest English-speaking provinces in Canada. We describe the incorporation of the Calls to Action issued by the Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada and the limited evidence of religious literacy evident in the online information provided about the chosen programs and then argue that religious literacy is a necessary component of the university preparation programs for those entering these human-centred professions. Student requests for religious literacy workshops provided by the Centre for Civic Religious Literacy (CCRL), a non-religious and non-profit organization that works with partners in communities across Canada, demonstrate a demand for such education.

DOI: <https://doi.org/10.3390/educsci12080543>

COMMUNITY SPOTLIGHT

For each quarterly newsletter, we aim to feature a community spotlight.

Do you know a practitioner, educator, and/or scholar doing interesting and innovative work and/or who can offer insight into the realm of spirituality and social work? Fill out our simple [Community Spotlight Google form](#) with a short write-up of the person you nominate including their education credentials and location in the country, with their consent, and we will consider featuring them here in a future newsletter! Let's get to know about one another!



OUR TEAM

Greetings from our New Board Members



I am Sherry Dale and am an Intuitive Therapist in Guelph, Ontario, in Private Practice in the GTA since 1997. I've developed a protocol that aims to release subconscious trauma.

This may include forgotten/repressed trauma, past-life and intergenerational (inherited) trauma. This protocol is like a rocket booster in my EMDR work with clients. I am delighted to join the CSSSW Board of Directors to help explore and support the relationship between Spirituality and Social Work. I am most interested in how Spirituality and intuition can be included in clinical work with clients. To this end, I have eagerly agreed to establish a new committee, Spirituality and Practice. My intention is to develop learning opportunities and a forum for discussion for Social Workers who incorporate (or wish to include) Spirituality into their counselling practice. I look forward to meeting CSSSW members!



Hello, my name is Theresa Smith (they/she). I am currently finishing up my Master of Social Work at the University of

Northern British Columbia. I am passionate about the ways that spirituality and wholistic approaches can support reconnection to ourselves, and the natural world, as well as the role these play in wellness, healing, and liberation. My areas of interest are eco-feminism, decolonization, and how wellness is impacted systemically. Focusing specifically on queerness, ADHD, and the role of spirituality and wholistic approaches have with healing in a counselling context. I look forward to collaborating and supporting the inclusion of spirituality in social work education, practice, and policy.



I'm Reanna! I am Métis and reside on the traditional territories of Treaty 7, home to the Métis Nation of Alberta region 3. I hold a

Bachelor of Social Work from the University of Calgary (U of C) and am currently completing a Master of Clinical Social Work at the U of C and plan on pursuing a Ph.D. in Counselling and Spirituality. I am currently a research assistant at the U of C and my area of research is Indigenous youth, sexuality, and health. I am passionate about learning, decolonization, and Indigenous ways of knowing. I love to partake in traditional ceremonies and learn from Elders and Knowledge Keepers. I joined the CSSSW for my passion in spirituality, education, and research.



Hi everyone! My name is Kim Sedore. I'm thrilled to be joining the Board and am super excited for the conference in Halifax this June. Eco-spirituality is a topic of deep interest for me, and I look forward to vivid conversation and thought provocation. I'm here to connect, learn, contribute, and support - and we'll see what else as the journey unfolds! Thank you for having me.



Hello! My name is Meital Siva-Jain (pronouns she/her), I was born in Israel and immigrated to Edmonton, Alberta, in 2006. I am a registered social worker with a diploma from MacEwan University. I'm currently enrolled in the MSW Foundation program at the University of Calgary. I see spirituality as a deep sense of connection with myself and the surrounding creation. It has always been present in my life and it's embedded in my social work practice. The fact that the social work principles of respect, equity, and inclusion are tenets of my religious practice adds meaning and strength to my practice. I enjoy working with newcomer communities and supporting people of different backgrounds as they settle in a new country and integrate their traditions into their new life, just like I've been doing. I am grateful to join the CSSSW BOD and excited to work with folks from all over the country.



Hello CSSSW! My name is Amaris and I am from Winnipeg. My MSW degree is from the University of Manitoba. I have a private counselling practice and I also work in Indigenous communities which are unearthing Residential School graves. Spirituality is the most useful lens I have in these communities. From a personal spiritual perspective, I am most connected to earth-based faiths, Buddhism, mindfulness, meditation, consciousness expansion, divination, archetypal study, and intention setting. In my private practice many of my clients identify with witchcraft and traditional healing, so I would like to open up these conversations, so I can provide therapy in a relatable way. As I like to say, it's time to open the broom closet so we can help people who feel trapped in it. Thank you!



My name is Stefani Kolochuk (she/her). I am a Ukrainian Canadian and grew up as part of the diaspora on the Manitoba prairies, also known as Treaty 2 and Treaty 4 lands, the home of the Anishinaabek, Ininiwak and Dakota peoples, and the homeland of the Métis Nation. I currently live as guest on the beautiful unceded territory of the xʷməθkʷəy̓əm (Musqueam), Skwxwú7mesh (Squamish), and səliłwətał (Tsleil-Waututh) Nations. I am a registered social worker in British Columbia and have had the opportunity to work with various populations including children, youth, adults, and families. Presently, I am enrolled in my final year of the UNBC, MSW program and am completing my thesis entitled 'Exploring social workers spiritual meaning making processes after the unanticipated death of a client'. Spirituality and spiritual exploration has been part of my own healing as well as in the lives of many I have walked alongside. I feel honour and privilege to hold a position on the Board of Directors with the CSSSW. I hope to engage in meaningful work in this position with the CSSSW team, to assist in the advancement of spirituality as a tool in social work practice.

- CSSSW Leadership Team**
- Cassandra Hanrahan (President)
 - Heather M. Boynton (Vice President)
 - John Coates (Co-founder, Treasurer & Past President)
 - Dani Sherwood (Administrative Assistant)

- Board of Directors**
- Lucille Villaseñor-Caron
 - Eric W. Crowther
 - Susan Cadell
 - Indrani Margolin
 - Jeannette Waegemakers Schiff
 - Veena Khatri
 - Buetta Warkentin
 - Hazel Kabibi Palmer
 - Sherry Dale
 - Theresa Smith
 - Kim Sedore
 - Meital Siva-Jain
 - Stefani Kolochuk
 - Amaris Nemez (Communications)
 - Reanna Cummins (Communications)

WE ARE ON SOCIAL MEDIA!

Follow us on social media to stay Tuned for details about our upcoming Social Media Contest and a chance to win FREE admission to our Conference!

Feel free to follow us on whichever social media pages you use and please invite your friends to do the same!

- Facebook** : <https://www.facebook.com/CSSSW>
- LinkedIn** : <https://www.linkedin.com/groups/6567277/>
- Instagram** : @canspiritualityandsocialwork
- Twitter** : @CanadianSSSW
- Linktr.ee** : <https://linktr.ee/CSSSW>



To see more details regarding our team members, including our bios, please visit our website's governance page, which continues to be updated.

This newsletter was prepared by Dani Sherwood and Reanna Cummins.



CALL FOR SUBMISSIONS

The Spirit in Social Work: Toward Ecospirituality and Holistic Sustainable Social Work Practice

The 2023 CSSSW conference *The Spirit in Social Work: Towards Ecospirituality, Holistic and Sustainable Social Work Practice* aims to explore social work's role in the emerging climate and associated mental health crisis. Understanding and practicing ecospirituality is perhaps more crucial today than ever. In sounding a clarion call calling climate change "the single biggest health threat facing humanity," the World Health Organization (2021) reported "health professionals worldwide are already responding to the harms caused by this unfolding crisis". But where is social work in these worldwide responses? The new accreditation 2021 standards, released by the Canadian Association for Social Work Education (CASWE-ACFTS, 2021), list "environmental sustainability and ecological practice" as one of the eleven core learning goals (p.16), while the professional values and ethics include an understanding of spiritual and cultural contexts in relation to working with people and communities. These standards must be implemented by July 1, 2023. This timely conference will offer critical and creative spaces in which to think about how we might begin to incorporate climate health and environmental justice – not currently part of core social work and allied health and mental health curricula, nor the typical scopes of practice– from an intersectional non-anthropocentric lens to foster and support sustained individual and planetary wellbeing. With a spotlight on our interconnectedness and dependencies, we encourage you to conceptualize what ecospirituality is (and is not), and to consider how it and related holistic

Possible topics of interest include but not limited to:

- Social work and global environmental movements (e.g., Paris, COP 260).
- Holistic spiritualities -ceremony, ritual, chant, meditation, prayer, observance, and art as pathways to connection
- Inter-faith worldviews, spirituality, environmental activism & social work
- Nature/land-based therapeutic approaches to mental health and spiritual wellbeing
- Eco-anxiety/climate grief/fury: Body and spirit care
- Earth as central spiritual context

The Tenth North American Conference on Spirituality and Social Work Pre-Conference June 21, 2023 June 22-24 2023

Hosted at Dalhousie University (Halifax, NS)
Co-sponsored by The Society for Spirituality and
Social Work (USA).

practices might be practiced and sustainably implemented in different contexts, across the lifespan. This conference will bring together researchers, practitioners, educators, students, and advocates from various disciplines, in person and online. This enriching hybrid exchange and dissemination of scholarship, practice ideas and the arts will explore ways ecospirituality can inform social work in becoming a more germane profession in the face of the many complex issues affecting the world today, threatening the essential ingredients of good health - clean air, safe drinking water, nutritious food supply, and safe shelter.

Sessions will include the following formats:

- Scholarly paper presentations
- Conceptual talks; Research Findings
- Student-authored paper presentations
- Panel Discussions
- Experiential and interactive workshops
- Creative Contributions (e.g., Storytelling, Poetry, spoken word, song, dance, comedy)

Submissions will undergo double-blind, peer review and must include submission title, format, whether it will be in- person or online, a brief abstract, brief presenter bios and contact information, as well as three learning objectives.

- Traditional experiences of sacred space in nature and re-imagining non-utilitarian practices
- Contemplative/reflective practice for climate resilient social work educators, practitioners, and activists committed to environmental justice
- Environmental racism (how spirituality and social work can guide this work)
- Indigenous worldviews and perspectives
- The spirit and decolonization
- Holistic therapies and practices

[Click here to upload your submission](#). Early Submissions **due Oct. 21, 2022**, with acceptance notification by Nov. 15, 2022. Second call due Jan.15, 2023, with notification by Feb. 28, 2023. For conference updates check CSSSW website spiritualityandsocialwork.ca. For questions, please contact Dr. Cassandra Hanrahan at info@spiritualityandsocialwork.ca.

Save the date

The Tenth International Conference on

Spirituality & Social Work

June 22-24, 2023 Halifax, NS



The Canadian Society for
Spirituality & Social Work

The Spirit in Social Work:
Toward Ecospirituality,
Holistic, and Sustainable
Social Work Practice

Check our website link for updates:
<https://www.spiritualityandsocialwork.ca>
Questions? please contact us at
info@spiritualityandsocialwork.ca

Are you interested in **VOLUNTEERING** for the Canadian Society for Spirituality & Social Work International Conference, happening in Halifax, NS on June 22-24, 2023?

The theme is ***The Spirit in Social Work: Toward Ecospirituality, Holistic, and Sustainable Social Work Practice***

SPREAD THE WORD! We are seeking enthusiastic volunteers on the ground in Halifax, and those working remotely, to help us plan an enriching and creative conference! Time commitment may range from 5 to 20+ hours per month depending on one's availability.

Please consider joining one or more of the many committees! Examples include:

- Hospitality (food, hotels, residences)
- Sponsorships/Fundraising
- Communications, social media, marketing/advertising
- Special event and program planning

The CSSSW is committed to being inclusive. CSSSW acknowledges there are numerous and diverse ways of knowing, being and practicing spirituality, which range from expressions of spirituality independent of specific belief systems, to those intertwined with religious beliefs and/or cultures. Some of these activities/traditions may overlap, and others are independent of each other. The aim in CSSSW is to provide opportunities for diverse, respectful, and safer expressions of spirituality.

VOLUNTEERS RECEIVE FREE ADMISSION!
Bi-weekly Meetings Begin September 14 2022.
Applications accepted on ongoing basis.

CSSSW Conference Committee

Volunteer Sign-Up Form

<https://forms.gle/dsZ6RNduDYbHhrfT6>


The Canadian Society for
Spirituality & Social Work