



CSSSW NEWSLETTER

The Canadian Society for Spirituality and Social Work - Spring 2022

Spring: a lovely reminder of how beautiful change can truly be - Anonymous

Hello all CSSSW members. We are pleased to present to you our second quarterly newsletter since we've relaunched the society in the autumn! A lot has happened since; our newsletter has been one of the many projects we hope to firmly establish (please see the call for newsletter committee members below).

Here, you will find meditations, upcoming event dates and information, opportunities for volunteer involvement, and more. Know someone who is not a member? Share this [link](#)!

Blessed Spring Equinox

Written by Vice President, Heather Boynton

Our northern hemisphere has begun to tilt toward the sun, and we notice increasing daylight hours with earlier sunrises and later sunsets, and warming temperatures. We often see animals and people emerging from a time of retreat and rest to one of energy, rejuvenation, and joy. Spring is a time of transition, awakening, and growth, of birth, rebirth, and new beginnings.

Many people open their doors and windows to get rid of any negative or stagnant energy and to let in fresh energy and air into their homes and spaces. Spring is a perfect time to clear out clutter and to release the old and perhaps limiting beliefs and relationships that do not serve you in your growth and transcendence. It is a wonderful time for re-creation, re-invention, and co-creation. We can set new intentions and plant seeds for our garden of dreams and new initiatives and discern what it is that we truly want to blossom. We can focus on what needs nurturing to achieve our desires, and how we can build our pathway forward over the next few months.

To read the full guided meditation in a Google Doc: [click here](#).

To listen to the full guided meditation on Google Drive: [click here](#).



What's in this newsletter:

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UPCOMING CONFERENCES

Society for Spirituality & Social Work (SSSW)

Our U.S.A partner society is hosting an international conference, co-sponsored by the Morgan State University School of Social Work, with the theme *How the Spirit Moves Us: Sharing Our Collective Experiences*.

This conference will “explore ways that social work and spirituality collectively address the political, racial, environmental, economic, and health disparity issues that separate us.” This conference will now be virtual, with a mix of live and pre-recorded sessions, and will take place from **June 7-10, 2022**. Learn more about conference registration via the SSSW’s website [here!](#) You can also add the Pre-Conference Virtual Writing Retreat to your registration package! This writing retreat was a great success during its initial launch last year. We highly recommend all conference-goers to sign-up for this additional session, especially if you have any writing or creative projects on the go.

Canadian Society for Spirituality & Social Work (CSSSW)

Save the Date! The CSSSW is planning a conference for **June 2023** in Kijipuktuk (Halifax), Nova Scotia! The theme is ***Eco-Spiritual Social Work: Connecting Wellness & Justice within the Web of Life***. Please see below for volunteer opportunities, as we are looking for an enthusiastic group of individuals to support us in the planning process for this conference. We aim to have a diverse, inclusive, and amazing conference.

Be sure to stay tuned for further details regarding our Eco-Spiritual Social Work 2023 Conference!

EVENTS

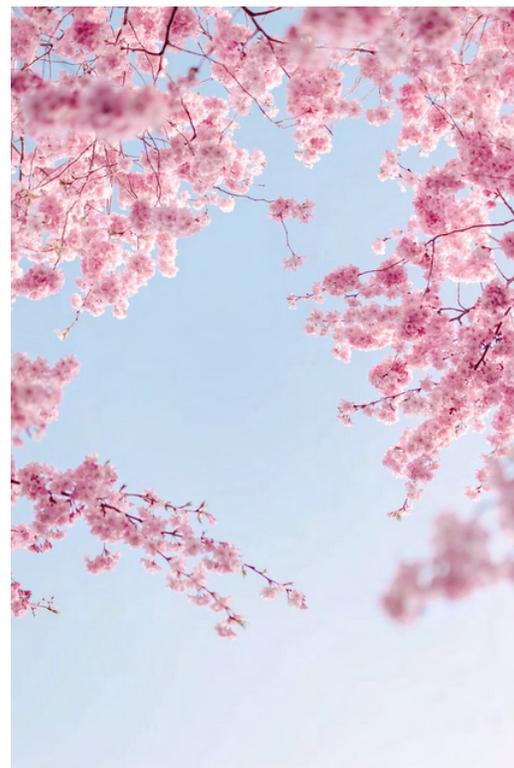
Thank You

Reflecting on Yoga for Mental Health, Thursday, March 24

Thank you to everyone who joined us for the Yoga for Mental Health event, facilitated by Lucille Villaseñor-Caron (MSW, RSW, E-RYT, AWP), from Happiness & Wellness Therapy (<https://happyandwell.ca/>).

Lucille is a Registered Social Worker Psychotherapist, Experienced Registered Yoga Teacher (CYA-E-RYT 500+), and an Ayurvedic Wellness Practitioner who is interested in the overall well-being and harmonious interconnectedness of all that exists.

(This message continues on the next page. . .)



COMMUNITY SPOTLIGHT

For each quarterly newsletter, we would like to have a brief community spotlight.

Do you know a practitioner, educator, and/or scholar doing interesting work 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, with their consent, and we will consider featuring them here in a future newsletter!*

EVENTS

Reflecting on Yoga for Mental Health, Thursday, March 24 (cont'd)

The event was lovely, with a balance between education on yoga for happiness, and the eight limbs of yoga, as well as the immersive experience of the relaxation Yoga Nidra exercise. For those who registered/attended, please check your inbox for a link to a PDF of the presentation. For those who attended, please feel free to provide us with your **feedback**. Your feedback is important to us as it helps us to strengthen our offerings.

Lucille has graciously shared with us a **46-minute recording** she prepared of a **guided Yoga Nidra meditation, available** to you all on our website **here!** We invite you to take a break for your mental health and wellness, to connect and honour your spiritual being. You deserve it!



The U.S. SSSW and CSSSW Present: Spirituality, Cultural Diversity and Social Work

Thu, April 21, 2022

1:30 PM – 3:00 PM ADT

Join us for a discussion on spirituality and cultural diversity in social work practice. Drs. Diana Franco & Maribel Lopez will present on the topic of *Spirituality, Diversity, and Culturally Responsive Social Work Practice*. Dr. Heather M Boynton, and Emma De Vynck, MSW Thesis Student, will present on the topic of *Spiritual and Cultural Attunement in Social Work Practice*.

Read more about this event and register on Eventbrite here. This will be the first of two virtual lunch and learn conversations brought to you by the U.S. SSSW so lookout for the next one!

Centering Ourselves with Consciousness to Serve Others and Self-Heal

Wed, April 13, 2022

8:00 PM – 9:30 PM ADT

Dr. Heather M Boynton, Vice President of the CSSSW, & Dr. Indrani Margolin, CSSSW Board member, are both professors in social work and have years of experience supporting helping professionals enhance their wellness. They will take us on a journey of centering ourselves with consciousness to serve others and self-heal. In this workshop, you will be guided inward to attune to the depths of your awareness. Come; join us to learn the power of Vedic Scientific Principles and walk away with two Ancient Vedic practices to cultivate your spiritual development.

Read more about this event and register on Eventbrite here. There are **only 10 spaces left** for this event, so be sure to register as soon as you can (the waitlist is also available)!

Spirituality, Ethics, and Social Work Competence

Thu, May 19, 2022

1:00 PM - 3:00PM ADT

Join us for an interactive workshop on ethical issues that arise when spirituality meets social work practice. N. Siritsky (MSSW, D.Min., BCC, RSW), professional practice and advocacy consultant of the Nova Scotia College of Social Workers, will guide us through an interactive workshop on spirituality and social work competence, with a focus on the ethical issues that arise.

Read more about this event and register on Eventbrite here.

The events listed herein are free to attend and open to anyone! Please feel free to invite your family, friends, or colleagues along!

RESEARCH CORNER

Current Research

Introduction of a new version of the Post Traumatic Growth Inventory

Written by CSSSW BOD Member, Susan Cadell

Posttraumatic growth (PTG) is a term coined by Richard Tedeschi and Lawrence Calhoun. PTG is both an impact and an outcome; it begins when some event has a significant impact on the person. The impact provokes thoughts and strategies, such as rumination on or meaning-making about the event. The outcome is wisdom which exists alongside the ongoing distress related to the event.

The original measure of PTG, the Post Traumatic Growth Inventory (PTGI) has 21 questions. With 5 domains of PTG, only 2 of the PTFI questions address the domain of Spiritual Change. One question used the word 'spirituality' and the other 'religion'. For many reasons, not the least of which is that only two questions seem inadequate, the measurement of Spiritual Change seemed problematic. It is very pleasing, therefore, to see a revised version of the PTGI. The new PTGI-X (Tedeschi, Cann, Taku, Senol-Durak, & Calhoun, 2017) has added 4 items that address existential and spiritual change. The questions were validated on samples in the US, Turkey, and Japan.

Reference: Tedeschi, R. G., Cann, A., Taku, K., Senol-Durak, E., & Calhoun, L. G. (2017). The posttraumatic growth inventory: A revision integrating existential and spiritual change. *Journal of Traumatic Stress, 30*(1), 11–18. <https://doi.org/10.1002/jts.22155>

Feature Publications

Here, we feature recent articles 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!

Developing Interiority in Children and Teenagers: Difficulties Perceived by Workers and Strategies to Address Them by Benavent-Vallès, Martínez-Rivera, & Navarro-Segura.

Keywords: *interiority, spirituality, childhood, education, social work*

Abstract: “Educating interiority is a fundamental aspect of development and is of the utmost importance in childhood and adolescence because it helps to develop the faculties that allow them to experience life to the fullest. In this project, we aimed to analyze the difficulties that social workers perceive when educating interiority and identify the main strategies that they use to face these difficulties. A mixed questionnaire, with quantitative and qualitative data, was designed to this end, and answered by 128 professionals who work with children and teenagers. The results showed that educators have restrictive beliefs regarding difficulties, which do not always correspond to the real difficulties, which limit their attempts to educate the interior dimension. The difficulties found include those related to the characteristics of the group of children and teenagers and others linked to the low level of education on interiority, the absence of a personal inner life, and the lack of methodological tools to approach this matter.”

Reference: Benavent-Vallès, E.; Martínez-Rivera, O.; Navarro-Segura, L. Developing Interiority in Children and Teenagers: Difficulties Perceived by Workers and Strategies to Address Them. *Religions* 2021, 12, 715. <https://doi.org/10.3390/rel12090715>

ANNOUNCEMENTS

We Stand in Solidarity with Ukraine

Over a month ago, Russia invaded Ukraine. Many organizations and institutions around the world have issued statements of support for Ukraine, including the Canadian Association of Social Workers (CASW): "[In the Face of Russian Invasion of Ukraine, Social Workers Stand for Peace](#)". The CSSSW lends our collective voice to this statement. As the crisis deepens, I have taken a pause to consider how to talk about and explain war to my children. Like many, I struggle to make sense of this abominable state of world affairs, for it is an affair that variously affects everyone inhabiting this world. Amid the images and stories of war–violence, death, displacement, and loss–let us also see and hear those of peace–kindness and relief, resilience, compassion, and love.

—Dr. Cassandra Hanrahan, CSSSW President



We are on Social Media!

We are on now on various social media platforms!

Shout out to our Communications Chair and board member, **Cassie Guye**, MSW candidate with the Dalhousie University School of Social Work, for keeping our socials running smoothly! Feel free to follow us on whichever social media pages you use and be sure to invite your friends to do so as well.

Facebook : <https://www.facebook.com/CSSSW>

LinkedIn : <https://www.linkedin.com/groups/6567277/>

Instagram : @canspiritualityandsocialwork

Twitter : @CanadianSSSW

Linktr.ee : <https://linktr.ee/CSSSW>

VOLUNTEER OPPORTUNITIES

CSSSW SPRING 2023

CONFERENCE COMMITTEES

Do you reside in Canada and have an interest in joining one of our Conference Planning Committees? If so, please let us know by filling out this [CSSSW Conference Committees Volunteer Sign-Up Form](#). We are seeking individuals to join a host of sub-committees such as sponsorships and fundraising; hospitality; keynotes; and special edition journal, to name a few. We are deeply grateful for your support! Please feel free to spread the word amongst your networks to anyone else who may be interested in joining our conference committee! (See Appendix 1 for the poster.)

CSSSW NEWSLETTER COMMITTEE

Are you interested in helping us create our quarterly newsletters? Come join our Administrative Assistant, Dani Sherwood, in preparing these newsletters! They would be very grateful for the extra support! The time commitment would be about 10 hours (or less) per season. If you would like to help CSSSW make our Summer 2022 Newsletter the best one yet, please fill out the [CSSSW Newsletter Committee Volunteer Sign-Up Form](#). (See Appendix 1 for the poster.)



ANNOUNCEMENTS

The Society History Project

Following a short transitional hiatus a few years ago, in which the CSSSW was guided by Drs. Coates, Hanrahan, and Cadell, it is now enjoying a period of renewal and restructuring. Dr. Cassandra Hanrahan (CSSW President and long-time member) felt it important to capture the more than twenty-year history of this unique association, including the stories of longstanding members who have given life to the CSSSW over the years.

“I joined CSSSW as a member back in 2010. I still remember my first conference. It was at the University of Calgary. There I met Drs. John Graham and Jeannette Waegemakers Schiff, faculty at U of C.. I also met Dr. John Coates, professor emeritus and former director of the School of Social Work, St. Thomas University in NB. I also remember meeting Dr. Indrani Margolin, who also joined CSSW as a member at that time. The conference was so inviting, relaxed, and fun. Ever since, the CSSSW conferences have been my favourite academic events, as they present a mix of scholars and practitioners and immersive social events along with standard academic presentations. Animated by spirit, CSSSW is a non-judgmental society with an inclusive approach to spirituality. It is important we celebrate the achievements of those who envisioned the vitality of such a society within the conventional university context of reason and science.”

—*Dr. Cassandra Hanrahan, CSSSW President*

We began interviews for this project over the winter and will continue over the spring with leadership from Hazel Kabibi Palmer, MSW student, and CSSSW board member. We plan to compile snippets of the video interviews and transcripts to share with you all through our social media platforms and our website. To date, we have interviewed Drs. John Coates, John Graham, and Barbara Swartzentruber. Here are a few interview highlights so far.

“My profound gratitude to all people who are part of the continued move forward in this part of our profession because I think it is so very important. And how wondrous is it from it almost being a pariah in scholarly settings to being accepted and embraced, and growing the way it has. . . I mean how magical! How wondrous!

We need everyone who is interested in this. . .We need successive generations to continue to move forward. . .”

—*former CSSSW BOD member and co-founder Dr. John Graham*

“I think the major challenge for people in our planet today has got to do with the connection of spirituality and the environmental issues that we are facing. . .the wellbeing of everybody—people wise—is dependent on the well-being of the planet. . .that’s the critical issue of our time, is that connection, where people see their connection to the rest of the world and the Earth itself, as relevant, and find a way to participate and cooperate in that creative process.

For me, a prayer, is an effort to connect to the creative process of the Universe, whatever those things are—whatever that might be. . . And for many people, that might be what they have come to regard as God, for others it may not, but it’s an effort to be connected to that creative, loving, existence in our Universe.”

—former CSSSW BOD member and co-founder Dr. John Coates



“I am surprised about how I have carried aspects of this forward into my current work, which is around creating a circular food system in Guelph and Wellington County. . .a big part of this project. . .certainly has spiritual undertones and values. And so, what’s interesting to me really is how I have carried the essence of that work along with me in my career as a practitioner, and a policymaker, and a strategy person

...

what an impact it has had to be able to think about things from a spiritual psycho-social-economic perspective”

– former CSSSW BOD member Barbara Swartzentruber

OUR TEAM

CSSSW Leadership Team

Cassandra Hanrahan (President)
Heather M. Boynton (Vice President)
John Coates (Co-founder, Treasurer & Past President)
Dani Sherwood (Administrative and Research Assistant)
Cassie Guye (Communications)

Board of Directors

Lucille Villaseñor-Caron
Eric W. Crowther
Susan Cadell
Indrani Margolin
Jeannette Waegemakers Schiff
Veena Khatri
Buetta Warkentin
Hazel Palmer

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



Are you interested in volunteering with the Canadian Society for Spirituality & Social Work?

We would love for you to join us in this meaningful and inspiring work! As the majority of this volunteer work is virtual, we invite CSSSW board members from across Canada to consider this opportunity. See our sign-up options below!

CSSSW Newsletter Committee Volunteer Sign-Up Form
<https://forms.gle/t5hKLTGN8Q5t4Mgu7>

CSSSW Conference Committee Volunteer Sign-Up Form
<https://forms.gle/dsZ6RNduDYbHhrfT6>

