



CSSSW NEWSLETTER

The Canadian Society for Spirituality and Social Work - Summer 2022

Rest is not idleness, and to lie sometimes on the grass on a summer day listening to the murmur of water, or watching the clouds float across the sky, is hardly a waste of time. —John Lubbock



Hello all CSSSW members. We are delighted to present to you our third quarterly newsletter since CSSSW was relaunched in spring 2021! Here, you will find meditations, details about our upcoming conference, links to event recordings, opportunities to get involved with our conference and board of directors, and more. Know someone who is not a member who may want to join? Share this [link](#)!

Happy Summer Soulstice

Written by Vice President, Heather Boynton

The summer solstice in the Northern Hemisphere is the longest day in the calendar year when the sun is at its highest point in the sky. This day has a long history of cultural celebrations across the world. Celebrations often include dance, fires, flower wreaths and headaddresses. Yogis practice 108 sun salutations to welcome summer as the life force prana is at its zenith. You may want to do this, or engage in a sunrise or a sunset meditation. This is a day to allow the light in, and a great time to send healing light to others and to the planet.

This time of year is about action, expansion, and expression. Any goals you set earlier can gain momentum and unfold, you can see movement and growth. This time of year is when we are fully active and can enjoy the outdoors to its fullest. It is a time of sensuality, fertility, and abundance. A time to connect with and celebrate our bodies and experience full embodiment.

It is a perfect time to go barefoot and ground yourself with the earth, it is a time to move your body and feel your muscles flow through movement, dance, stretching or other physical activities in your day. It is time to connect with the animal and plant spirits, to listen to the birds, insects, and frogs, or to watch the birds hover in the winds, to dip your toes in to the water, to fully experience the beauty of the earth in an embodied way. You can re-establish your connection to the land and feel and sense of place in the world.

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

What's in this newsletter:

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- NATIONAL INDIGENOUS HISTORY MONTH
- CSSSW CONFERENCE DATE AND LOCATION
- A MESSAGE FROM CSSSW PRESIDENT, DR. CASSANDRA HANRAHAN

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ANNOUNCEMENTS

NATIONAL INDIGENOUS HISTORY MONTH

June is National Indigenous History Month and on June 21, 2022, we observed National Indigenous Peoples Day across the land currently known to many as Canada.

This is a particularly important time to commemorate and celebrate the many diverse and impactful contributions, cultures, and stories of Indigenous people across Turtle Island. This is an equally important time to consider the decolonization and reconciliation work that lies ahead of us, and a time to reestablish commitments to these efforts. As CSSW continues to develop, we aim to focus on these issues, especially given the history of the social work professions and some organized religious institutions as perpetrators of colonial oppression. We hold space for Indigenous ways of knowing and being as we seek to highlight the strengths and healing potential of spirituality within our profession and society at large.

We encourage you to visit [the statement](#) on National Indigenous Peoples Day published by the Nova Scotia Federation of Labour for further reflection. Additionally, recognizing there are different approaches to the work of decolonization, some may wish to consider reviewing this important **[decolonization workbook](#)** designed for non-Indigenous people involved in higher education. Whether you are presently involved in higher education or not, this is a powerful tool for beginning this critical work at both an individual, personal, and community, institutional level.

Stein, S., Ahenakew, C., Jimmy, E., de Oliveira Andreotti, A., Valley, W., Amsler, S., & Calhoun, B. (2021, March). *Developing stamina for decolonizing higher education: A workbook for Non-Indigenous people*. Gesturing Towards Decolonial Futures Collective. <https://decolonialfutures.net/stamina-for-decolonizing-higher-education/>

CSSSW CONFERENCE DATES AND LOCATION ARE SET!

Thursday June 22 - Saturday, June 24, 2023
at Dalhousie University in Halifax, Nova Scotia.

We welcome you to join our conference host committees! **You can apply to volunteer [here](#).** Our volunteer meetings will occur regularly beginning in September 2022. We look forward to having you join our team!

Please see the save the date flyer and volunteer poster attached for more details.



A Message from CSSSW President, Dr. Cassandra Hanrahan

On this summer solstice, CSSW completes a full year of renewed activity, ranging from mindful yoga to ethics, spirituality, and social work.

The Society will take a break from monthly meetings for the summer months of July and August, resuming in September. Planning for the Spring 2023 Conference at that time will be front and centre!

Looking for organizational experience? We are seeking new board members to join our team! Come learn and practice the ins and outs of how to organize a conference, liaise with multiple community and university partners and stakeholders, fundraise, and make friends, meet associates. Visit our website spiritualityandsocialwork.ca and click **“[join our board](#)”** to apply. Please see our call for BOD members attached for more details.

EVENTS

U.S. Society for Spirituality & Social Work (SSSW) Conference

How the Spirit Moves Us, June 7-10, 2022

This year's conference was a program-packed online event, co-sponsored with Morgan State University's School of Social Work. **For conference information and full program go to:**

<https://spiritualityandsocialwork.org>

CSSSW President, Dr. Cassandra Hanrahan, was honoured to have hosted the SSSW Conference Plenary on June 10 on behalf of CSSSW with 90 minutes of Canadian-based content showcasing the work and spirits north of the border.

Thank you to our two Keynote speakers, Dr. Terence Lewis, School of Social Work, Dalhousie University, and Dr. Diana Colholic, Laurentian University, and to Dr. Indrani Margolin, School of Social Work, University of Northern British Columbia, for sharing the gift of song and poetry.

Dr. Diana Colholic
Associate Professor,
Laurentian University



Diana obtained her Ph.D at the University of New South Wales in Sydney, Australia, and her M.S.W. degree at the University of Toronto. Diana is a practicing clinical social worker with 25+ years of experience, and she has been involved with local chapter of the Ontario Association of Social Workers since 2005. At Laurentian University (LU), she is a core member of the research group ECHO-Evaluating Children's Health Outcomes. She is also the SSHRC Leader for LU. Diana's research investigates the effectiveness of arts-based mindfulness group work for the improvement of wellbeing and resilience particularly in marginalized children and youth.

Dr. Terrence O. Lewis

Associate Professor, Dalhousie University
Coordinator, Bachelor of Social Work Program



Dr. Terrence O. Lewis is an Associate Professor and Undergraduate Coordinator at the Dalhousie University School of Social Work. He has clinical practice experience with individuals, families, and groups in community mental health and private practice settings in the United States. As a researcher, he has focused on the relationships between churches and marginalized populations, especially 2SLGBTQIA+ and African-American communities. His dissertation research was on the Phenomenon of LGBT-Affirming Black Churches and Their Responses to the HIV/AIDS Crisis. Dr. Lewis' most recent completed research project was a narrative interview study with African-American pastors who have offered an affirmative ministry. The study was funded by the 2018 Louisville Institute Project Grant for Researchers. Currently, Dr. Lewis is the Co-Director of community-based participatory action research project with Dr. Nancy Ross (Director) and Afolake Awoyiga. The newly funded project is titled: Moving forward together: Unsettling racism, silence and violence in health and social services. The study has been funded by the Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council of Canada (SSHRC). As an educator, Dr. Lewis has focused on developing curricula that prepare students for culturally-responsive critical social work practice. In Nova Scotia, Dr. Lewis has committed to serving the 2SLGBTQIA+ and African Nova Scotian communities through community practice, research, and education.

Other CSSSW member presentations

June 8, 2022

Religion, Spirituality, and Worldview in the Practice of Social Work

Dr. Buetta Warkentin, Associate Professor of Social Work, Booth University College presented alongside colleagues Dr. Cynthia A. Sottie, & Dr. Alexander Sawatsky

Becoming Practitioners and Clients: How Ecosocial Work Can Teach Becoming (peaceful, equitable, kind, compassionate, just ...)

Dr. Cassandra Hanrahan, Associate Professor of Social Work, Dalhousie University, Eric Crowther, MSW, Registered Social Worker, Diplomate, Academy of Cognitive and Behavioral Therapies, Dani Sherwood, MSW Candidate, Social Work, Dalhousie University, and Dr. Indrani Margolin, Associate Professor of Social Work, University of Northern British Columbia

June 9, 2022

Sharing Children's Perspectives on Spirituality

Dr. Heather Boynton, Assistant Professor, Central and Northern Alberta Region, University of Calgary, Faculty of Social Work, and Dr. Indrani Margolin, Associate Professor of Social Work, University of Northern British Columbia, presented alongside colleague Emma De Vynck, MSW Candidate, University of Calgary

COMMUNITY SPOTLIGHT

Maureen Smith

(MSW, RCSW)

Cranbrook, BC



Written by Maureen Smith

I work as a clinical social worker/counselor and I also live, study, and practice in an intentional conscious community. Living in Clear Sky Retreat Center is a way I have found to live my values. It is part of the Vajrayana Buddhist Namgyal lineage, and is a community grounded in the importance of the student-teacher relationship. The center was founded and is overseen by two teachers, long time practitioners themselves with depth realization. Repeatedly, for the past 16 years, I have witnessed the power and healing potential of doing this work. My teachers and community members train me to be able to live with myself and others in a healthy and generative way. I see this as a viable option for people who want healing and are willing to do what is needed to get it. It isn't a path for everyone, but for some of us it is a life raft. Profound luminous wisdom is at the heart of all that we do at this modern monastery.

NOMINATE A COMMUNITY MEMBER!

For each quarterly newsletter, we 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!

REVISIT OUR SPRING EVENTS

***Centering Ourselves with Consciousness
to Serve Others and Self-Heal***

Wed, April 13, 2022

Facilitators: Dr. Heather M Boynton and Dr. Indrani Margolin

Access the Video Recording [Here](#).

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

Thu, April 21, 2022

Facilitators: Dr. Diana Franco and Dr. Maribel Lopez;

Dr. Heather M Boynton and Emma De Vynck

Facilitators: Dr. Heather M Boynton and Dr. Indrani Margolin

Access the Video Recording [Here](#).

Spirituality, Ethics, and Social Work Competence

Thu, May 19, 2022

Facilitator: N Siritsky

Access the Video Recording [Here](#).



We are on Social Media!

We are on now on various social media platforms!

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

[LinkedIn](https://www.linkedin.com/groups/6567277/) : <https://www.linkedin.com/groups/6567277/>

[Instagram](https://www.instagram.com/canspiritualityandsocialwork) : @canspiritualityandsocialwork

[Twitter](https://twitter.com/CanadianSSSW) : @CanadianSSSW

[Linktr.ee](https://linktr.ee/CSSSW) : <https://linktr.ee/CSSSW>



RESEARCH CORNER

Featured 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.

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.

A Gift for our Peace of Mind



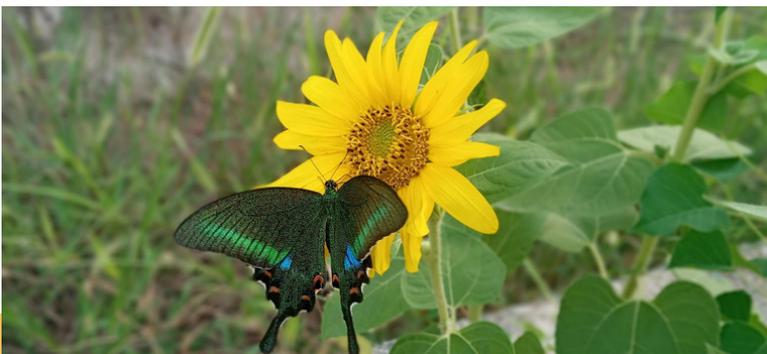
Written by
Maryam Motia,

PhD Candidate, Instructor, Faculty of Social Work,
Wilfred Laurier University

Taking an autoethnographic methodological approach and Frankl's theoretical framework, I investigated how my volunteering experiences uplifted my mental health by opening some space to navigate social relationships and support. I indicated that Frankl viewed humans as spiritual beings at the core and cared about living a life of self-transcendence intertwined with responsibility, the tenets of a spiritual "being." Accordingly, Frankl accentuated inner transformation and spiritually-fueled actions to live a meaningful life. Throughout the paper, I explained my experienced 'aha' moments and involvement in my "being" and "meaning in life" through my volunteering activities. In this light, I explored how these concepts could be associated with "social support" and "mental health" and flourished within the context of volunteering. **The full text is available [here](#).**

Motia, M. (2021). A gift for our peace of mind: Volunteering with immigrants through the lens of autoethnography. *Social Work in Mental Health*. doi:10.1080/15332985.2021.1915443

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

Aristotle, Faith Leaders, Spirituality and COVID-19

Written by Prof. Nisar Ahmad, Executive Director,
Envisions Institute of Development, India



The South Asia SBCC Conversation took place on Dec 7-9, 2021.

A paper titled “How Aristotle Helped in Reducing COVID-19 Related Stigma & Discrimination in Mumbai” was presented by Ms. Varsha Chanda, Ms. Harsha Mehta, and Dr. K Baviskar. The paper presented a programmatic intervention of using faith actors with other spiritual and youth representatives to combat COVID-19-related stigma in the Dharavi slum area in Mumbai which has a population density of 2,27,136/km² making it exigent to follow COVID-19 appropriate behaviors. The problem got compounded with the spread of COVID-related stigma – when people started differentiating between house owners and tenants, between COVID-19 infected households and uninfected people, and so on.

To address this, a multi-stakeholder pathway in congruence with the socio-ecological model was chosen. These stakeholders were categorized with respect to their dominant appeal to the community – logos, ethos, or pathos as defined by Aristotle’s rhetorical triangle, and communication content was developed accordingly.

The intervention successfully reduced COVID-19-related stigma in Dharavi. Some examples are given below:

Success Stories

- COVID-19-induced stigma and fear were overcome resulting in increased demand for essential health services like antenatal care, routine immunization, etc.
- Self-help groups that stopped working were reconvened for earning a livelihood.
- Religious leaders played an important role in reducing stigma and adaptation of CAB for religious gatherings.
- Reduction of the COVID-19 Induced chasm between owners and tenants.
- Communication nudges provided by child volunteers for COVID-19 appropriate behaviors.

Click [here](#) to watch the paper presentation which begins from 48m54s onwards.



THE SOCIETY HISTORY PROJECT

In our Winter Newsletter we announced our Society History project—an exploration of CSSSW’s history! From the society’s creation to the present resurgence, we are covering it all as promised!

During the winter, Hazel spoke with three of the longest serving CSSSW members and asked them about their best memories of CSSSW and the early conferences. Read on to see some of what they had to say.



This project is currently lead by Hazel Kabibi Palmer, BSC. Hazel (she/her/hers) holds a degree in Neuroscience and Mental Health from Carleton University and is currently pursuing a post graduate BSW from the School of Social Work at Renison University College. Hazel has a keen interest in social work and spirituality and hopes to continue studies in the field of Social Work.

THE SOCIETY HISTORY PROJECT

"My best memory was just being able to sit and chat with people who were interested in this

and also, you know, hear from people about their areas of research that they were working on and what their interests were"

—Barbara Swartzentruber, Executive Director of Strategy, Innovation, and Intergovernmental Relations at the City of Guelph

"And so it was a very friendly and cooperative conference.

I've been to many academic conferences and people do their presentations and they go home. At our spirituality conference, there was lots of buzz in the conference. Questions almost all the time, especially over breaks and, and lunches, and lots of conversation as people meet each other, and discover similar relevant interests and off they would go and help each other out."

—John Coates, retired Professor, and former Director of St. Thomas University, School of Social Work

"But I think the one thing that I've really enjoyed about our society and the conferences

was the

broad brush that we had around spirituality and welcoming many people from many different traditions

I always appreciated and valued that at the conferences."

—John Coates, retired Professor, and former Director of St. Thomas University, School of Social Work



"I mean, just the sheer joy of working with colleagues who you know. . . the sheer joy of community. . . one of the challenges is understanding other people and feeling understood back and this was the brilliance of this spirituality venue is that it's a venue where we can kind of come together as a community, and there we're basically saying implicitly. . .

I'm open to this. . .you know, there's a curiosity here. . . I'd like to be part of this, I would like to be part of this conversation."

—John Graham, Professor, University of British Columbia Okanagan, School of Social Work

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)

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.

In the early fall, be sure to check our CSSSW website and social media for updates, full interview transcripts, blog posts and more!

Save the date

The Tenth Annual International Conference on
Spirituality & Social Work
June 22-24, 2023 Halifax, NS

Eco spirituality & Social
Work: A paradigm for
inspired meaning-making,
interconnectedness, and
sustainable living

Check our website link for updates:
<https://www.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 ***Ecospirituality and Social Work: A paradigm for inspired meaning-making, interconnectedness, and sustainable living***

SPREAD THE WORD! We are seeking enthusiastic volunteers on the ground in Halifax, and those at a distance to work remotely, for an enriching and creative conference!

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

- Hospitality (food, hotels, residences)
- Sponsorships/fundraising
- Communications, 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 2022.
Applications accepted on ongoing basis.

CSSSW Conference Committee
Volunteer Sign-Up Form

<https://forms.gle/dsZ6RNduDYbHhrfT6>


The Canadian Society for
Spirituality & Social Work



*Canadian society for
Spirituality and Social work*

CALL FOR BOARD MEMBERS

NOW ACCEPTING APPLICANTS

The Canadian Society of Spirituality and Social work brings together practitioners, scholars, educators and students interested individuals to develop and strengthen the profession's ability to attend to spirituality and religion.

We embrace all spiritual and religious diversity and welcome all individuals to apply.

As our society continues to grow and evolve we are currently looking for 4 new Directors to serve as a minimum of one - two years.

We are looking for board members who have an interest in event/conference planning, social media, and communications.

Please fill out the outline application

<https://www.spiritualityandsocialwork.ca/joinourboard.html>

Deadline to apply is July 30th, 2022

Applications will be accepted until the positions are full.

