**Practice Notes 2014 – The Season of Winter**

 

If our counselling practice were an orchestra, we would have three *sections* corresponding to brass, woodwinds and strings: the counselling section, the supervision section and the education section. **Counselling.** Since the practice began in 1996, individual, couple and family counselling has been the centre of the work. We consult with clients on a broad range of mental health concerns, with specialized interest and training in work with couples, those who mourn, workplace issues and increasingly with teens, young adults and their families. Grace Gronkowska provides Psychology consultation and supervised practice of clients requiring the services of a Registered Psychologist.

Margotte Kaczanowska RSW, sees clients as an associate of the practice for counselling and consultation. We are able to provide support to couples and families when two therapists, or a male and female counsellor are needed. Margotte is a compassionate therapist with a wealth of experience in mindfulness practices, work with individuals, couples and groups with shared special interest in grief, loss and bereavement. She is fluently bilingual in English and Polish.

**Supervision.** In 2009 I completed the accreditation to become an Approved Supervisor with the American Association of Marriage and Family Therapy (AAMFT). Since that time I have provided clinical supervision to practicing Social Workers and to AAMFT Associate Members working to complete the requirements to become Clinical Fellows of the Association.

Beginning this past January, I now provide group supervision to the Social Work team of the Regional Cancer Program at the Royal Victoria Hospital in Barrie. It's been a privilege to work with this exceptional team of health professionals.

**Education.** We have a strong, ongoing interest and commitment to education. In 2010 we received Ryerson University's Field Instructors of the Year award from the Masters of Social Work (MSW) program. This year our 'classroom' included supervisees as well as colleagues who attended workshops on Narrative Therapy and Grief. In January, we welcomed Rhea Plosker, as a first Post-Graduate counselling intern.

Rhea brings a unique background and perspective to her work as a counsellor. In 2013 she graduated from the Athabasca University's excellent Masters of Counselling Program and became accredited as a Certified Canadian Counsellor (CCC). But what sets her experience apart from the usual path into mental health counselling, is her first career as a Professional Engineer working as a senior corporate technology executive. Not surprisingly, it was personal experiences with workplace challenges, ageing family members, illness, and loss that ultimately created the bridge that joined these two professional worlds. Rhea approached the practice seeking supervised, post-graduate

experience to compliment her Master’s placement focusing on palliative care counselling and work with stroke survivors and their families.  Over the course of the year, Rhea has taken part in client sessions, seen clients of her own, participated in the supervision of the social work team in Barrie, become part of our West Toronto Counselling Network and met for weekly supervision and consultation. It has been a "win-win-win" situation for Rhea, our clients and the practice. Beginning in 2015, Rhea will become an Associate of the practice.

Our commitment to education also means an on-going relationship to the local and international Narrative Therapy community. As students, Margotte and I had the privilege of taking part in several training modules with Michael White, co-founder of Narrative Therapy and the Dulwich Centre in Adelaide, Australia, prior to his untimely death in 2008. In 2011, we attended a Narrative Therapy Master class with co-founder David Epston through Peggy Sax’s Re-Authoring Teaching Centre in Burlington Vermont. Our professional interest has focused on Narrative Therapy and Grief, particularly supporting mourners’ ongoing relationships with loved ones who have died. We have presented this work at the Bereavement Ontario Network annual conference, the Narrative Therapy Centre summer school, the Couple and Family Graduate program at the University of Guelph and this past summer, with the clinical team of the Max and Bea Wolfe Children’s Grief Support program of the Temmy Latner Centre for Palliative Care, Mount Sinai Hospital.

**A Symphony of Services for the Four Seasons**

* The practice was founded in 1996. The original office was beside St. Peter’s Church at Bloor and Bathurst. I shared the office with my colleague, friend and mentor Don Moncrieff, PhD.
* In 1998, Don and I moved to an office within Windermere United Church in Bloor West Village. We stayed there for 10 years. In 1998, I moved to our present location.
* Former clients often return, seeking counselling at different seasons of their lives. They are always welcome to consult with us. Referrals of friends and family members is also very much appreciated.
* When people need help, they tend to need it “now”. Because of this, we try to see new clients for a first appointment within 10 days of contacting us.
* Clients with Extended Health Insurance plans that cover Registered Social Workers, Registered Marriage and Family Therapist and Registered Psychologist can have fees covered to the extent of their coverage. We provide services to major Employee Assistance Plans (EAPs) including Ceridian Lifeworks, Family Services EAP and Salvation Army Pastoral Care.

I welcome your inquiries about counselling, clinical supervision and education. As well as providing learning opportunities for students and professionals, my colleagues and I enjoy presenting talks and workshops on counselling and listening skills, Narrative Therapy, Solution Focused Therapy, Grief, Loss and Bereavement and “Movies That Move Us.”

 Warm Greetings of the Season, to you and your family.

 **William Cooke and Associates + 202-2133 Bloor Street West, Toronto ON M6S 1N2 + 416 762 0330**

**www.WilliamCooke.ca**