

Joel Walker, is a Canadian psychiatrist, photographer, and early pioneer of PhotoTherapy, who has used his own photographic imagery and interactive camera work to evoke patients' feelings, thoughts, and memories in his ongoing psychiatry practice of over 30 years. He has also produced a large body of photographic art, publications and exhibitions in several countries.

Dr. Walker has taught these subjects in workshops for mental health professionals for over twenty years and was a Lecturer about this work at the Harvard Medical School in 1995. He has presented at all past international PhotoTherapy conferences and was the Coordinator for the "International Symposium on PhotoTherapy" held in Toronto in 1984.

His work with projective PhotoTherapy techniques (using evocative ambiguous photographic images as catalysts for enhancing self-awareness, overcoming resistance, facing mortality, and many other patient purposes, with his psychiatric patients), has been documented in many interviews and publications, dating from the early-1980's. And he also has been published (and interviewed) about some of his early Therapeutic Photography projects as well; for example, a three-year "Photography Group for the Elderly" (1982-1984) where residents (average age was 87) of a "home for the aged" met weekly to take and discuss photos to gain insight, education, and enhance their motivation for living.

He has also presented and written about a variety of other related topics (most of which are not only about photographs, but also involve more spiritual considerations about life's meaning and one's identity within it), such as: "Face to Face: Through the Eyes of the Patient and Doctor", "Viewing the World Through the Eyes of the Elderly", and the interactive exhibition, "We May Never Die", which traveled to many hospitals and universities in Mexico and the Czech Republic in 2000.

Combining his psychiatry experience with the public sharing of his photographic images in the form of dialogue with people viewing them (beginning with his first exhibit "See and Tell" in 1979 in New York City), he has given numerous interactive public and professional exhibitions relating to his work. Some, such as "Mirror of the Self: Exploring the Psyche through Photographs", have also been presented interactively at a number of international psychiatric, psychological, and social work conferences.

Dr. Walker has also created the "[Walker Visuals Kit](#)", which is a set of four large photographs, with instructional guidelines (plus examples) which facilitate exploration of affect and sensitive areas, such as conflict, repressed experiences, and self-awareness, as well as how to help patients by following their responses to these images over time.

. Currently he divides his time equally between his psychiatry practice and photographic projects. In the past three years he has produced two books: "The Spirit of the Ride: The RCMP "Musical Ride": A Metaphor for the Journey of Life" and the online book and multimedia project, "[Portraits of the Human Spirit: Lessons in Living \(Photos and Essays\)](#)", which is about people who are living life with passion and strength despite adversity.

KEY LINKS:

"Walker Visuals Kit" descriptive page:

[https://www.mhs.com/ecom/\(tebru1ijjthm3ebaksgnuoyf\)/product.aspx?RptGrpID=WVS](https://www.mhs.com/ecom/(tebru1ijjthm3ebaksgnuoyf)/product.aspx?RptGrpID=WVS)

"Portraits of the Human Spirit: Lessons in Living" website:

<http://www.portraitsofthehumanspirit.com>