

**EXPLORING THE SECRETS OF
PERSONAL SNAPSHOTS AND FAMILY PHOTOGRAPHS --
• Introduction to PhotoTherapy Techniques •**

Introductory Educational (and Experiential) Seminar • Lucca, Italy

Friday January 20 (9 to 5) and Saturday January 21 (9 to 1)

Open to therapists (psychologists, art therapists, & other mental health professionals; not for general public)

Instructor: Judy Weiser, R.Psych., A.T.R. -- Founder & Director, PhotoTherapy Centre (Vancouver, Canada)

Author of the book "*PhotoTherapy Techniques: Exploring the Secrets of Personal Snapshots and Family Albums*"

Brief Summary

PhotoTherapy techniques use people's own snapshots, family photographs, and pictures taken by others (and their interactions with these during therapy sessions and personal healing work) to connect them with feelings, thoughts, information and memories that are stored at levels deep inside where words alone cannot reach.

Since the emotional meaning of any photograph is far more important than its visual content, clients' ordinary personal and family photos can serve as powerful bridges into previously-unconscious, long-buried, or overly-protected information -- thus enhancing therapeutic communication and personal growth. Clients' photos are metaphoric "messages from the heart", forming complex narratives and symbolic cognitive maps that mirror beliefs, values, expectations, along with evidence of what is important in the client's life.

This Introductory Workshop will include slide- and video-illustrated presentations about PhotoTherapy theory and applications, explanation of the "what", "why", and "how" of all the major techniques (including case anecdotes as illustrations, interactive discussions, and many opportunities to experience several of the major techniques personally*).

**Please note: Participation in these exercises is voluntary --
this event is for the purpose of professional education, not personal therapy.*

Please note: Prior experience with cameras or photographic art is not required!

*However, reading some of the "PhotoTherapy Techniques" website
(at least its Home-Page and "Five Techniques" pages) will definitely add to participants' learning!*

For more information about PhotoTherapy, see: www.phototherapy-centre.com

Instructor

Psychologist, art therapist, and PhotoTherapy pioneer Judy Weiser is the Director of the PhotoTherapy Centre in Vancouver, Canada (which she founded in 1982). Former Editor of the Journal *Phototherapy* and author of a book, website, and many book chapters and articles on the subject, she has focused her thirty-plus years of therapy practice on using PhotoTherapy techniques to help her clients heal. She currently consults, lectures, and gives training workshops world-wide, teaching people how to use these techniques to improve their therapy work -- and their lives. *She can be reached at:* jweiser@phototherapy-centre.com or in Canada at: 604-689-9709.

For a longer description, please see the next page....

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Longer Explanation

Every photograph we create, keep, or react to is in many ways also a self-portrait, a "mirror with memory" that reflects the unique story of our particular life and what has been important to us. Our snapshots are like "visual footprints" marking where we have come from emotionally, as well as physically -- and they also sometimes signal where we might be heading, even when we may not know this yet ourselves! Thus, a photo's value lies not so much in its surface visual "facts", but more in what these selectively-noticed details *mean* inside each viewer's mind (and heart).

Based on this, "PhotoTherapy" techniques (Weiser, 1993/1999; 1975-2004 below) use therapy clients' interactions with photos (their own and also those taken by others) as nonverbal tools for helping them better understand, express, and resolve their problems and feelings. Serving as powerful symbolic self-constructs, emotional catalysts, metaphoric transitional objects, visual traces of "family systems" dynamics, and representations of personal or family narratives, clients' photos permit a deeper form of "in-sight" to emerge during people's interactions with them.

In PhotoTherapy-based therapy sessions, clients not only look at existing photos, but also take, pose for, actively reconstruct, "sculpt", or create new ones (or new narratives from already-existing ones), as well as remember or imagine those not able to be touched in reality. *PhotoTherapy is about "photography as personally-symbolic emotional communication", rather than "photography as art" -- using photos as an active agent of change and self-exploration.* Therefore, using these techniques requires no prior experience with cameras, nor any knowledge about photographic art. They can be used by *any* kind of therapist with *any* kind of client population.

Used alone, or in combination with various other therapy techniques, clients' own snapshots prove to be worth far more than the proverbial "thousand words" -- and thus mental health professionals trained in PhotoTherapy techniques find that making use of the "secret lives" of such photographs greatly enhances the effectiveness of their work.

Workshop Format: Slide- and video-illustrated presentations (accompanied by case-anecdotes) will provide background theoretical rationale and framework for applying these techniques. Participants will also have several opportunities to encounter several of the major techniques personally*. (**Please note: Participation in these exercises is voluntary, as this event is for the purpose of professional education, not personal therapy.*)

Numerous handouts will be provided to guide the experiential process and to assist with further reading and networking.

 **PARTICIPANTS SHOULD BRING COPIES OF:**

- 1) 20 to 30 snapshots that have special meaning (personal or family pictures, postcards or greeting-card photo-images, print-outs from jpg's or Internet images -- or even photos on pages torn from magazines)
-- and --
- 2) One recent photograph of yourself that you could use to introduce yourself to other participants

ALSO: *Those staying for the Saturday half-day session: please also bring copies of: one photograph of each of your family members (to represent that one person, although there might be other people in that picture too).*

Publications* by Judy Weiser:

*Please note: Most of the articles and book chapters listed below may be downloaded *for free* from:
www.phototherapy-centre.com/biography.htm

- 2004(a) -- PhotoTherapy techniques in counseling and therapy: Using ordinary snapshots and photo-interactions to help clients heal their lives. *The Canadian Art Therapy Association Journal, Fall, 17:2, 23-53.*
- 2004(b) -- The continuum of arts-based healing practices: Arts-in-Therapy/Arts-as-Therapy. *Creative Arts in Counseling Chapter Newsletter (Canadian Counseling Association), Fall, 1:2, 3.*
- 2003 -- A picture is worth a thousand words: Using PhotoTherapy Techniques in Counseling Practice. *Bulletin of the Private Practitioners Chapter Newsletter (Canadian Counseling Association), March, 3:2, 3-4.*
- 2002(a) -- PhotoTherapy techniques: Exploring the secrets of personal snapshots and family albums. *Child & Family, Spring/Summer, 16-25.*
- 2002(b) -- PhotoTherapy techniques: Exploring the secrets of personal snapshots and family albums. *B.C. Psychologist, Winter, 26-27.*
- 2001 -- PhotoTherapy techniques: Using clients' personal snapshots and family photos as Counseling and Therapy tools (Invited feature article in "Special Double Issue: Media art as/in therapy"). *Afterimage: The Journal of Media Arts and Cultural Criticism, 29:3 (Nov/Dec), 10-15.*
- 2000 -- PhotoTherapy's message for Art Therapists in the new Millennium. *Journal of the American Art Therapy Association, 17:3, 160-162.*
- 1999* (Book; 2nd Edition) -- *PhotoTherapy Techniques: Exploring the Secrets of Personal Snapshots and Family Albums. (1st edition: 1993), Vancouver: PhotoTherapy Centre Press [ISBN: 0-9685619-0-X].*
- *IMPORTANT NOTE:** Italian Lawyers have estimated that over 90% of Giusti & Proietti's book "*Fototerapia: E Diario Clinico*" was directly copied from this book. Wrists have been served against the two, and the court date for the plagiarism case is set for Milan, February, 2005. (Visit www.phototherapy-centre.com for more information)
- 1990 -- "More than meets the eye": Using ordinary snapshots as tools for therapy. In: Laidlaw, T., Malmo, C., & Associates (Eds.), *Healing voices: Feminist approaches to therapy with women* (pp. 83-117). San Francisco: Jossey-Bass.
- 1988(a) -- "See what I mean?" Photography as nonverbal communication in cross-cultural psychology. In: Poyatos, F. (Ed.), *Cross-cultural perspectives in nonverbal communication* (pp. 245-290). Toronto: Hogrefe.
- 1988(b) -- "PhotoTherapy: Using snapshots and photo-interactions in therapy with youth. In: Schaefer, C. (Ed.), *Innovative interventions in child and adolescent therapy* (pp. 339-376). New York: Wiley.
- 1986 -- Ethical considerations in PhotoTherapy training and practice. *Phototherapy, 5:1, 12-17.*
- 1985 -- Training and teaching photo and video therapy: Central themes, core knowledge, and important considerations. *Phototherapy, 4:4, 9-16.*
- 1984 -- PhotoTherapy: Becoming visually literate about oneself. In: Walker, A.D.; Braden, R. A.; and Dunker, L. H. (Eds.), *Visual literacy: enhancing human potential* (pp. 392-406). Virginia Polytechnic State University Press.
- 1983 -- Using photographs in therapy with people who are 'different'. In: Krauss, D. A. and Fryrear, J. L. (Eds.), *Phototherapy in mental health* (pp. 174-199). Springfield, IL: Charles Thomas.
- 1975 -- PhotoTherapy: Photography as a verb. *The B.C. Photographer, 2, 33-36.*