

The Secret Lives of Personal Snapshots and Family Albums: Experiential Workshop Introducing the Use of PhotoTherapy Techniques in Therapy

**1-Day Introductory Workshop* • Delaware Valley Art Therapy Association
January 24, 2010 (9 to 5) • Philadelphia Airport Marriott Hotel**

* *Open only to Therapists, Counselors, and other Mental Health Professionals*
(and advanced-level Graduate Students whose admission has been pre-approved by the Instructor)

Instructor: Judy Weiser, R.Psych., A.T.R., Founder & Director, PhotoTherapy Centre

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

Brief Summary:

PhotoTherapy Techniques use personal snapshots, family albums, and pictures taken by others (and the feelings, memories, and thoughts, these evoke) to deepen and enhance therapeutic process in ways not possible using words (or inner self-reflection) alone.

Since the emotional contents of any photograph are far more important than its visual details, clients' snapshots and family photos can be powerful yet safe nonverbal "bridges" that quickly connect them to memories, feelings, values, and information far below conscious awareness -- along with deeply-held beliefs, expectations, and judgments that these produce.

This day-long Workshop is for mental health professionals who are already-trained in therapy itself, to learn additional techniques that help clients benefit from exploring the "why" of their photographs, through several structured experiential* opportunities, each followed by in-depth de-briefing and discussion.

(*Workshop is for the purpose of participants' education, not for personal therapy)

- No prior knowledge/experience of cameras or photographic art needed.

Important: Participants must complete the "advance-homework photo-gathering assignment" before arriving (and those not attending the Keynote will need to do a *small* bit of pre-reading)

Instructor:

Judy Weiser is a psychologist, art therapist, trainer, consultant and early pioneer of "PhotoTherapy techniques". Founder and Director of *The PhotoTherapy Centre* in Vancouver, and former Editor of the Journal *PhotoTherapy*, she has long been considered the "world authority" on PhotoTherapy and has given several hundred workshops, lectures, and training intensives about these techniques world-wide during the past 30 years.

Author of the classic text *"PhotoTherapy Techniques: Exploring the Secrets of Personal Snapshots and Family Albums"*, and the informational resource website *"PhotoTherapy Techniques in Counseling and Therapy"* (www.phototherapy-centre.com), she has also produced numerous professional articles, book chapters, and a video/DVD on the subject. She can be reached at: jweiser@phototherapy-centre.com

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For more information (and Registration details) about this Workshop, please contact: michelledean.mac@mac.com

(For questions about content or plan for this event, contact the Instructor at: JWeiser@phototherapy-centre.com)

Objectives:

Participants will leave this Workshop being able to:

- 1) List and describe the five major "PhotoTherapy" techniques
- 2) Describe at least one example learned from their personal experience role-playing as "therapist" during the experiential exercises of how they can use at least one of these techniques in their own therapeutic practice.
- 3) Describe where and how to find more information about the history, literature and other practitioners of PhotoTherapy techniques.

Outline: (note: there are NO "known risks" to participants)

MORNING (first half):

Experiential session with **"Photo-Projectives"** Technique (Instructor explains and demonstrates, and then directly guides Participants in doing the technique themselves (in dyads where half the time one role-plays as "therapist" and the other as "client" -- and these roles reverse half-way through the allotted time) -- ending with each participant having the time to de-brief and cognitive re-frame the experience, so that the technique is clearly 'sited' within an intentional therapy framework.

-- Morning break -- Instructor remains in room for any discussion that arises

MORNING (second half):

Experiential session with **"Photos of the Client"** and **"Self-Portrait"** Techniques (using same procedure as with Photo-Projectives Technique above)

-- Lunch break -- Instructor remains in room for any discussion that arises

AFTERNOON (first 2/5):

Experiential session with **"Family and Photo-Biographical"** Technique (using same procedure as with Photo-Projectives Technique above)

-- afternoon break -- Instructor remains in room for any discussion that arises

AFTERNOON (second 2/5):

Experiential session with **"Photos By the Client"** Techniques (using same procedure as with Photo-Projectives Technique above)

AFTERNOON (final 1/5):

Closure of day (additional discussion, question-answering, & evaluations)

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Longer Description:

Ordinary personal snapshots serve as 'footprints of our lives' reflecting what and who has mattered most -- thus their value lies more in what they are about *emotionally*, than in what shows on their surface *visually*.

Based on this, PhotoTherapy techniques use clients' personal snapshots, family photos, and pictures taken by others (and the feelings and memories these evoke) as catalysts to deepen and enhance their therapy process in ways not possible using words (or inner self-reflection) alone.

Serving as powerful symbolic self-constructs, metaphoric transitional objects, frozen traces of family systems dynamics, and visual/cultural narratives, clients' photos can be powerful bridges into previously-unconscious, long-buried, or overly-defended information, their "secret lives" thus providing insight also into deeper beliefs, values, and expectations.

In PhotoTherapy-based therapy sessions, clients not only view and discuss existing photos, but also take, pose for, actively reconstruct, visually sculpt or create new ones, -- as well as describe those they can only remember or imagine.

PhotoTherapy is about "photography as symbolic emotional communication", rather than "photography as art" -- photographs used as active agents of change and self-exploration, but *always* done under the guidance of a trained therapist.

PhotoTherapy techniques explore the "why" of clients' photographs, not their "how" (or their "art part") -- therefore, using these techniques requires no prior experience with cameras, nor any knowledge about photographic art -- and they can be used with any therapeutic modality, client population or setting. (And therapists with special additional training in art therapy can develop additional benefit using photos as one more art medium during "Photo Art Therapy" work with clients).

This full-day Workshop for "helping professionals" will provide several structured opportunities for experiential* practice (guided by the Instructor) with several of the major techniques (through interacting with photos brought by the Instructor and also with their own**) -- as well as for in-depth de-briefing of each experience into a cognitive framework permitting later application and practice.

*Participation in exercises is *voluntary*: This event is for the purpose of participants' education, not for personal therapy.

More information about PhotoTherapy can be found at: www.phototherapy-centre.com

****IMPORTANT: Please get Advance Homework "Photo-gathering" Assignment from Registrar as early as possible.**

ALSO: Those participants not attending the Conference Keynote on the previous day will need to do less than an hour's pre-reading (just a few webpages) to familiarize themselves with the basics of these techniques *before arriving* -- because **this day presumes the same prior knowledge in all participants.**

Registrar will provide both assignments upon Participant registration

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