

Exploring the Secrets of Personal Snapshots and Family Photographs: Using PhotoTherapy Techniques in Family Therapy

PhotoTherapy Techniques use people's own personal snapshots, family albums, and pictures taken by others (and the feelings, memories, thoughts, and information these evoke) to deepen and enhance their therapy process. The "story" of any photograph lies not so much in what its surface imagery depicts, but more in what these selectively-noticed details mean inside the mind (and heart!) of each person who sees them.

Therefore, the emotional contents of any photograph will always be more important than its visual ones. For this reason, clients' snapshots and family photo-collections can serve as powerful bridges into previously-unconscious, long-buried, or overly-defended information (and underlying beliefs and values) in ways impossible with words or private self-reflection alone.

In PhotoTherapy-based sessions, clients not only view existing photos, but also take, pose for, actively reconstruct, visually sculpt or create new ones, as well as remember or imagine those not possible to bring to the session. PhotoTherapy is about "photography as symbolic emotional communication", rather than "photography as art": photographs as an active agents of change and self-exploration, but always explored while under the guidance of a trained therapist.

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. Not limited to "paper photographs", these techniques can be used with any photographic imagery, including digital/electronic formats, videos, DVDs, films -- as well as technologies yet to be invented...

This Lecture will: introduce and illustrate the theory and techniques of PhotoTherapy, with special attention to Family Therapy applications -- and if time permits, will also discuss related techniques of Therapeutic Photography, which use photos in non-therapy settings to help people, families, and societies increase personal insight, activate social change, strengthen communities, expand qualitative research, improve communication, and produce other kinds of healing in situations where a therapist need not be involved.

More information about PhotoTherapy can be found at: <http://www.phototherapy-centre.com>

Information about the Presenter, Judy Weiser, is on the next page.....

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Presenter

Judy Weiser, psychologist, family therapist, art therapist, consultant, and trainer, is Founder and Director of the *PhotoTherapy Centre* in Vancouver, Canada, and an early pioneer of PhotoTherapy techniques (using people's personal and family snapshots to access feelings and memories during therapy).

Long considered the "world authority" on PhotoTherapy, she has given nearly 300 workshops, lectures, and training intensives about these techniques (and related applications of Therapeutic Photography) in over 50 cities world-wide during the past 30 years, and has mentored dozens of graduate Theses and Dissertations.

Former Editor of the journal *Phototherapy*, she authored the classic 1993 text, "[*PhotoTherapy Techniques: Exploring the Secrets of Personal Snapshots and Family Albums*](#)" (now in third printing), as well as numerous professional articles, book chapters, and a video/DVD on the subject. She also created and maintains the primary informational resource and networking website for the field ("[PhotoTherapy Techniques in Counseling and Therapy](#)") as well as its related "[PhotoTherapy and Therapeutic Photography Discussion Group](#)".

Her list of upcoming events, full publications list and additional biographical details can be found on the above website, and she can be contacted at: 604-689-9709 or at: jweiser@phototherapy-centre.com.