

PhotoTherapy Techniques Training Workshop (Level One)

3-Day Training Workshop • San Francisco, California • April 9 - 11, 2011

For Therapists who are already-practicing in a Mental Health Profession -- Others only by pre-approval of Instructor

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

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

Brief Summary

PhotoTherapy Techniques use clients' own personal snapshots, family albums, and pictures taken by others (and the feelings, memories, and thoughts, these evoke) to deepen and enhance therapeutic communication 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 with memories, feelings, values, and information far below conscious awareness -- along with deeply-held beliefs, expectations, and judgments that these produce

This 3-day Training Workshop is for mental health professionals who are already-trained in therapy itself, to learn additional techniques that will help clients benefit from exploring the "why" of their photographs, through slide- and video-illustrated presentations about PhotoTherapy theory and applications, explanation of the "what", "why", and "how" of all five major techniques (including case anecdotes as illustrations, demonstration role-plays, guided viewing of tapes of "live" sessions, interactive discussions (including ethical considerations), and the opportunity to encounter all of the techniques personally*, so that participants can begin using them immediately in their work.

• **Participants will need to bring copies of photos; instructions will be sent with Registration Form.**

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

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 35-plus years of therapy practice on using PhotoTherapy techniques to help her clients improve wellbeing. She currently consults, lectures, and gives training workshops world-wide, teaching people how to use these techniques to improve their therapy work.

➔ **For more information, contact: weiser@phototherapy-centre.com or (in Canada): 604-689-9709**

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

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Longer Explanation

Every photograph people take, keep or react to is in many ways a metaphorical self-portrait, a "mirror with memory" reflecting the unique story of their particular life and what has been important to them. Personal snapshots are like "visual footprints" marking where people have been emotionally, as well as physically -- and they also sometimes signal where they might be heading, even when they may not realize this yet themselves! 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 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/family narratives, clients' photos permit a much deeper form of "in-sight" to emerge during people's interactions with them.

In PhotoTherapy-based therapy sessions, clients not only view existing photos, but also take, pose for, actively reconstruct, visually "sculpt", or create new ones (or form new narratives from already-existing ones), as well as remember or imagine those unable to be touched in reality.

PhotoTherapy is about "photography as personally-symbolic emotional communication", rather than "photography as art" -- *using photography and photographs as active agents of change and self-exploration*. And therefore, using these techniques requires no prior experience with cameras, nor any knowledge about photographic art. Thus they can be used by *any* kind of therapist with *any* kind of client population, in any kind of healthcare setting.

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 can greatly enhance their counseling effectiveness.

Format: Slide- and video-illustrated presentations (accompanied by case anecdotes) will alternate with experiential practice sessions*, demonstrations, and discussions. Lectures will cover theoretical rationale, framework for application, practical/ethical considerations, and a survey of how others are using these techniques world-wide.

*Participants will have numerous opportunities to learn the full interrelated system of PhotoTherapy techniques personally** through a combination of role-play demonstrations, dyadic practicing and individual and group exercises -- all done under the direct supervision of PhotoTherapy pioneer Judy Weiser. (***Participation in experiential components is voluntary, as this Workshop is for the purpose of professional training and education, rather than for personal therapy*).

The goal of this Workshop is to explain, illustrate, and demonstrate how PhotoTherapy techniques can be useful counseling tools for all Mental Health Professionals, regardless of their theoretical orientation, preferred therapeutic approach, or particular client population -- and to enable participants to have sufficient training in activating *all* the major techniques, in order to exit the workshop able to begin using them with clients immediately. *Numerous handouts will be provided to guide the experiential process and to assist with further reading and networking.*