

## EXPLORING THE SECRETS OF PERSONAL SNAPSHOTS AND FAMILY ALBUMS

• Using PhotoTherapy Techniques in Art Therapy and Other Counseling Practices •

### Introductory Workshop • Toronto, ON

7 p.m. - 9 p.m. Wed., January 16\* -- *plus* -- 9 a.m. - 5 p.m. Thurs. & Fri., January 17-18, 2008

*For Mental Health Professionals (& advanced Graduate students in these fields) -- Others ONLY by pre-approval of Instructor*

**Instructor:** Judy Weiser, R.Psych., A.T.R. -- Founder and Director, PhotoTherapy Centre (Vancouver, Canada)  
Author, "*PhotoTherapy Techniques: Exploring the Secrets of Personal Snapshots and Family Albums*"

### Brief Summary

PhotoTherapy techniques use therapy clients' own personal snapshots, family photos, and pictures taken by others (and the feelings, thoughts, information, and memories these evoke) as catalysts for therapeutic communication, change, and healing.

Since the emotional contents of any photograph are far more important than its visual details, clients' ordinary snapshots and family albums can serve as powerful symbolic self-constructs, emotional catalysts, metaphoric transitional objects, and visual traces of family systems dynamics and personal/family narratives -- that bridge into previously-unconscious, long-buried, or overly-defended information (and underlying beliefs and values), in ways impossible with words (or internal self-reflection) alone.

This Introductory Workshop will begin with a slide- and video-illustrated presentation about PhotoTherapy theory, techniques, and applications -- and then will combine interactive discussions, demonstration role-plays, and the opportunity to encounter *most* of the techniques personally\*, so that participants can begin using them immediately in their work counseling others. (**\*Please note:** *Participation in exercises is voluntary; prior experience with cameras or photographic art is not required! This event is for participants' education, not personal therapy.*)

Participants will need to do some pre-reading and to bring photos from home, so  
**Please get the "Advance-Homework Assignment" from Registrar at least two weeks in advance.**

**\*Important:** The Wednesday evening Lecture **is** part of the full Workshop schedule. However, it will also be open to additional others who will not be continuing for the full event.

**Workshop registrants who cannot attend the Wed evening Lecture** must contact Instructor in advance to get pre-readings to substitute for the missed evening lecture, *which is free for Workshop registrants.*

### Instructor

Judy Weiser is a psychologist and art therapist in private practice. Founder and Director of the PhotoTherapy Centre in Vancouver, former Editor of the Journal *Phototherapy*, and a gallery-exhibiting photographer, she consults, lectures, and gives training workshops world-wide about using PhotoTherapy techniques to improve counseling practice.

Along with her book, "*PhotoTherapy Techniques: Exploring the Secrets of Personal Snapshots and Family Albums*", and her website "*PhotoTherapy Techniques in Counseling and Therapy*", she has produced a video and numerous book chapters and articles on the subject. *She can be reached at:* [jweiser@phototherapy-centre.com](mailto:jweiser@phototherapy-centre.com) or 604-689-9709.

*For a longer description, and instructions about what to bring with you, please see the next page...*

**\*Registration, location, costs, etc., contact: [heleneburt@sympatico.ca](mailto:heleneburt@sympatico.ca) • 416-924-6221**

## EXPLORING THE SECRETS OF PERSONAL SNAPSHOTS AND FAMILY ALBUMS

• Using PhotoTherapy Techniques in Art Therapy and Other Counseling Practices •

### Introductory Workshop • Toronto, ON

7 p.m. - 9 p.m. Wed., January 16\* -- *plus* -- 9 a.m. - 5 p.m. Thurs. & Fri., January 17-18, 2008

*For Mental Health Professionals (& advanced Graduate students in these fields) -- Others ONLY by pre-approval of Instructor*

### Longer Explanation

Every photograph we take, keep, or react to is in many ways a metaphorical self-portrait, a "mirror with memory" reflecting the unique story of our particular life and what has been important to us. Personal snapshots are like "visual footprints" marking where we have been 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 use therapy clients' personal photos and pictures taken by others, (and their interactions with these) 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.

In PhotoTherapy-based counseling 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 unable to be held in their hand. PhotoTherapy is about "photography as symbolic emotional communication", rather than "photography as art" -- *photography as an active agent of change and self-exploration*. And therefore, using these techniques requires no prior experience with cameras, nor any knowledge about photographic art.

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: Opening with a slide- and video-illustrated presentation (accompanied by case-anecdotes) to provide background theoretical rationale and framework for applying these techniques, this Workshop will also provide participants with experiential opportunities to encounter *most* of the major techniques personally\* -- under the direct supervision of PhotoTherapy pioneer Judy Weiser. (*\*Participation in exercises is voluntary, as this event is for the purpose of participants' 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 instruction in activating most of the major techniques, to be able to exit the workshop and begin using them with clients immediately. *Numerous handouts will be provided to guide the experiential process and to assist with further reading and networking.*



***PARTICIPANTS SHOULD BRING COPIES OF*** 20 to 30 snapshots that have special meaning:

(This could be personal or family photos, postcards or greeting-card photo-images, print-outs from jpg's or Internet images, photos on pages torn from magazines — or even just photocopies of these things)