

HEALTH, HEALING & RELIGION

C O N F E R E N C E

May 24-25, 2013
Muskoka Campus
Bracebridge, Ontario

NIPISSING
U N I V E R S I T Y

Itinerary

Hello and welcome. The theme of our third annual conference is “Filling the Empty Well: Self-care for Workers in the Caring Professions”. It is widely recognized that stress presents a challenge for many people and especially those who work on the frontlines such as nurses, social workers, psychotherapists and hospice workers. But what can we do about this? We will be discussing both the challenges of integrating self-care into our lives and building healthier systems.

FRIDAY MAY 24

9:00-10:00

REGISTRATION

FRONT FOYER

10:00-10:30

WELCOME

LECTURE HALL MAIN FLOOR

What Does it Mean to Fill the Empty Well?

Gillian McCann

Asking someone to give out to others without helping them to care for themselves is a recipe for burnout. In this short talk I will address the overarching theme of the conference with particular attention to gendering the issue of self-care.

10:30-11:30 LECTURE HALL MAIN FLOOR

Challenges in Creating Healthy Lifestyles for Nurses

Rick Vanderlee, Dean of Applied and Professional Studies, Nipissing University

This talk will examine some of the overarching challenges, including economic and political issues that impact the ability of nurses to create and maintain a healthy lifestyle. Drawing on insights from years of nursing and also as an administrator this talk will look at ways the profession can address the challenge of the empty well.

11:30-1:00 LUNCH

1:00-3:00 LECTURE HALL MAIN FLOOR

The Role of the Spiritual in Healthcare

Carol Taylor

In this talk we will look at the role of spirituality as a resource for those working in nursing and other helping professions. Drawing on years of practice, teaching and knowledge of spiritual discipline Dr. Taylor will address some of the key issues around creating a more compassionate approach to nursing that cultivates the art of presence and improves the lives of both nurses and patients.

3:00-5:00 CLASSROOM 3

Contemplative Practice; Finding Solace and Perspective.

Workshop

Gitte Bechsgaard

"Self-awareness is not selfishness but self-connectedness. It is a deep and intense listening to our inner being, learning to be conscious and alert to what our inner world is trying to say to us". (The Christian desert mothers).

Contemplative practice is one of the doorways into the sacred dimension. Within the tradition of yoga many methods are offered for calming the mind, and the approach is one of tolerance. The overarching message is that self-understanding, solace and guidance can come to us from many sources both within and without. In this workshop we will explore the main contemplative practices described in Patanjali's *Yoga Sutras*. As a group these meditative techniques are referred to as *citta parikarma* practices. This term encompasses a wide range of inward-minded practices, all of which hold the power to reduce stress, enhance well-being and offer profound insight and self-understanding

Please wear loose fitting comfortable clothing to this session

5.30-6.30

CLASSROOM 3

Yoga: Rejuvenative Practices for the End of the Work Day

Robin Hurlow

In this one hour class, we will explore yoga sequences and postures to help the individual both ground and restore themselves at the end of the day. After a long work day, an appropriate yoga practice can provide a much needed opportunity to quiet, calm, and rejuvenate the body-mind. The class will include postures to relieve muscular tension and calm the nervous system.

Please wear loose fitting comfortable clothing to this session

SATURDAY MAY 25

9:00-10:00

CLASSROOM 3

Yoga: Self-care and Daily Morning Practice.

Gitte Bechsgaard

In this workshop we will explore one of the core practices of traditional yoga; - the Sun Salutation (*Surya Namaskar*). This sequence, which is traditionally performed at sunrise facing east, allows for the harmonious flow of energy (*prana*) through the body, and helps move blockages and fatigue within the body-mind. Essentially the *vinyasa* (sequence of poses) combines most categories of movement (*asanas*) and focus upon the breath and spine. Through its regular practice vital health, strength and energy is cultivated.

Seen through the lens of *Ayurveda* it is important to find a version that is in alignment with one's stage of life, constitution and stress-level. This workshop offers an opportunity to explore and deepen your relationship with a daily energizing practice, with the potential of filling the empty well.

10:00-11:30

CLASSROOM 7

Navigating Stormy Waters: Surviving and Thriving in Social Work Practice

Anne Wagner

This session will explore the context of professional social work, acknowledging how the current neo-liberal context contributes to feelings of stress and burnout among workers. Working in under-served and rural contexts will be a particular focus, as will be working across differences based on such issues as race, class, gender, sexuality and ability. Participants will have the opportunity to discuss their experiences, as a means of working towards developing strategies to manage stress and even thrive in the context of professional practice.

11:30-12:30 LUNCH

12:30 -2:00 CLASSROOM 7

Panel: Healing Community Healthcare

Lanyan Chen, Zaida Rahaman

Chair: Gillian McCann

“Storytelling, Self-Reflection and Self-Care” and “From Traditional Taboos to Contemporary Medicalization”. The speakers will discuss the challenges and changes of community health in Canada and China.

2:00-2:30 BREAK

2:30-4:00 CLASSROOM 7

Cultivating a Joyful and Balanced Life: Practical Self-Care With Naturopathy

Caroline Meyer

In this session, we will explore the latest in evidence-based medicine on the physical and mental effects of chronic occupational and life stress. We will also discuss how to apply naturopathic medicine to develop optimal well-being. By the end of this presentation, you will gain practical strategies to improve your resilience to stress through a combination of naturopathic modalities including holistic nutrition, lifestyle modification, herbal medicine, energy medicine techniques, and hydrotherapy.

4:00-5:30 CLASSROOM 7

How Meditation can help with Compassion Fatigue

Susan Wood

This autobiographical talk will provide participants with an opportunity to explore how meditation can be a part of the experience of leading a balanced life. People who work in the helping professions work with their eyes, ears and heart. We listen deeply to the suffering of the people we are helping. This is a spiritual and emotional exchange through which we sometimes take in the pain of the other. If we don't have ways of helping ourselves we can carry this suffering around as a heavy weight. We cover it up with activity, food, routine or alcohol but at the risk our own health. How can we face and transform this pain and practice good spiritual and emotional hygiene? This talk will encourage the participant to explore this question.

5:30 CLOSING REMARKS

BIOGRAPHIES

Gitte Bechsgaard, RYT, MTC, PhD

Gitte is the founder of Vidya Institute and has been practicing yoga for over twenty years and teaching for the past sixteen. She received her foundational training in Europe at the Yoga Institute of Copenhagen (1990-1997), and in 1999 completed a two year program at the Esther Myers Studio, Toronto. For the last ten years Gitte has been studying yoga philosophy, Eastern psychology and Sanskrit privately with Krishan Mantri. She holds a B.A. in psychology from Copenhagen University, and a PhD and Masters of Therapeutic Counselling from the Open International University. Her book *"The Gift of Consciousness"* is in press and set to be published in the summer of 2013.

Lanyan Chen, PhD.

Originally from Beijing, Lanyan teaches Social Welfare and Social Development at Nipissing University in North Bay, Ontario, Canada. She was appointed as UNIFEM Gender Advisor in Northeast Asia in 1998 to set up a UNIFEM office in Beijing. During her appointment, she worked with many Chinese government departments, bilateral and multilateral governmental organizations, and local and international non-governmental organizations to promote gender equality. Before Beijing, she taught sociology and international development at University of Victoria and Simon Fraser University after her doctorate at the University of British Columbia. During her decade in China, she joined Tianjin Normal University to promote gender and social development studies. Her published research includes a well received book on *Gender and Chinese Development: Towards an Equitable Society*, and articles both in English and Chinese in areas of women's cooperatives, poverty reduction and micro-finance, health policy reforms, AIDS prevention and migration in China.

Robin Hurlow, B. Sc. Psychology (Hons), E-R.Y.T.

Robin has studied yoga at Vidya Institute since 2006 and is a Registered Yoga Teacher. She has a strong interest in psychology East and West. Her areas of focus as a teacher of both groups and individuals include yoga for seniors and women's practice.

Caroline Meyer, ND

Caroline graduated from the Canadian College of Naturopathic Medicine (CCNM) in 2005. Since that time, she has been teaching at CCNM as a member of the academic and clinical faculty. She also maintains a private practice in Toronto at Vidya Institute, focusing on pediatrics, mind-body medicine and mental health. Caroline volunteers with social service agencies, leading mindfulness meditation sessions for employees. She has written several articles on natural health and has been featured in Sun Media, Hospital News and Vital Link.

Zaida Rahaman

Zaida is a PhD candidate in Nursing at the University of Ottawa specializing in primary health care and Aboriginal health. Zaida has diverse work experiences in the areas of: paediatric nursing, family systems, management, health policy consulting, and community-based research. Zaida is an Assistant Professor in Nursing at Nipissing University; and, teaches Community Health Nursing, Research in Nursing and Health, and Leadership and Management.

Carol Taylor, RN, MSN, PhD

Carol Taylor is a founding member and previous director of the Center for Clinical Bioethics, a senior research scholar at the Kennedy Institute of Ethics, and professor in the Department of Medicine and in the School of Nursing & Health Studies at Georgetown University. Experienced in caring for chronically and critically ill patients and their families, Carol now works closely with health care professionals who are exploring the ethical dimensions of their practice. She lectures and writes on various issues in healthcare ethics and serves as an ethics consultant to systems and professional organizations. Her research interests include professional and organizational ethics and health care decision making.

Rick Vanderlee, PhD., Dean of Applied and Professional Studies, Nipissing University

Rick, as well as being an administrator has taken a leadership role in innovations in nursing. A former nurse, he created the Scholar Practitioner Program at Nipissing in co-operation with the University Health Network in 2011. This program is aimed at fostering leadership and continuing education for nurses and the larger goal of improving health care in Ontario.

Anne Wagner, MSW, PhD

Anne Wagner is an Associate Professor at Nipissing University, Muskoka campus in the department of Child & Family Studies and Interim Director of Social Work. Anne teaches in the area of Anti-oppression and social justice, has done research on trauma and is particularly interested in linking anti-oppression with practice. Prior to entering academia, Anne was a practicing social worker, with a specialization in violence against women & children and trauma.

Susan Wood. B.A. (Hons)

Susan Wood is a psychotherapist who has been in private practice since 1978. She is also on the faculties of the Centre for Training in Psychotherapy and LingYu International Training Centre for Psychotherapy where she is the Registrar. She is the Past President of the Canadian Association for Psychodynamic Therapy (CAPT) and is currently the chair of CAPT's Advocacy Committee where she is following the process of regulating psychotherapy in Ontario.

She has been a Buddhist practitioner since 1981 in the Vajrayana tantric tradition.