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QCA Counsellinks

February 2013



Quebec Counselling Association (QCA) e-bulletin

With the frigid (some might even say, *freezing!*) winter almost at our backs, it's time to look forward to spring!

We are busy planning and organizing Personal Development (PD) and social events for our QCA membership. Some of the QCA things you can look forward to in the near future include:

- **SPEED MENTORING** is back! May 6th at McGill University.
- The QCA would like to highlight YOUR work and accomplishments! Read more below.
- Our new website is almost up and running! Stay tuned!

So, read on, contact us, get involved - and stay connected!

Questions? Comments? We want to hear from you!

qca.counselling@gmail.com

President's Message

Dear QCA Members,

First, I would like to take this opportunity to wish you all a Happy New Year and hope that it will bring much happiness, health, and joy to you, your families, and your clients.

We, at the QCA, have been very busy since September networking and building bridges for our counselling community with provincial and national organizations.

Due to the tremendous cooperation between the Native Women's Association of Canada (NWAC) and the QCA, two of our members were able to attend the Annual NWAC Gathering in Quebec City this year and use their professional skills to provide support to native families who experienced loss of one of their female members (please see Kierla Ireland's article in this edition). Besides an invaluable

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Curious about your QCA executive? Are you looking for professional resources for yourself or your clients?

Visit our [website!](#)

You will find: photos and biographies of board members, an e-bulletin archive, useful forms, links to counselling resources, and more!

learning and work experience, our counsellors were well treated by the NWAC staff and all their expenses and fees were paid for the weekend. The NWAC and QCA are working on creating an ongoing, mutually beneficial relationship for similar opportunities in the future for our members.

The QCA is considering an affiliate status with the [Quebec Community Groups Network](#) (QCGN). The QCGN is a Quebec organization that identifies, promotes and addresses strategic issues affecting our English-Speaking Quebec community. It is currently working with 41 English-speaking Quebec community organizations. As the voice of Anglophone Counsellors in Québec, the QCA encourages the active participation of our members in planning and shaping the future of our profession. Therefore, we feel that an official affiliate status of the QCA with the QCGN is desirable and may be mutually beneficial.

Over the past few years the QCA has established a reputation for affordable and quality Professional Development (PD) Workshops that are approved by the [Canadian Counselling and Psychotherapy Association](#) (CCPA). This year, we have already had two wonderful PD events and we are planning two more – one in March and one in May. Also, as in the past years, QCA and McGill's Career and Planning Services (CaPS) will organize a Speed Mentoring Event for our students and younger professionals. Also, most of our PD events have a Social Networking component that allows our members to meet, exchange, and communicate with each other. Come to learn at our PD events and stay for the Social where you can meet with us and mingle with your colleges!

Finally, I would like to encourage all members to make an effort to support each other and the QCA. Due to provincial regulations counsellors are facing some challenging situations collectively and, unfortunately, individually. I would strongly suggest for our members to connect, share, and work together to overcome some of these challenges. We, at the QCA, would like to offer our help. Please feel free to contact us at qca.counselling@gmail.com and share with us your situation, concerns, and solutions. Our Membership Chair, Carrie Foster and I, would be delighted to hear from you. You can contact us individually at cfoster@videotron.ca and kiraz@videotron.ca.

Wishing you all an early spring,

Kiraz Johannsen
QCA President



Kiraz Johannsen, President

The 2012/2013 Executive Board

President - Kiraz Johannsen

An affiliate of the Canadian
Counselling and
Psychotherapy Association
(CCPA).

**NOTE: The opinions
expressed herein are those of
the authors and do not
necessarily reflect the QCA or
CCPA policy. The QCA e-
bulletin chair (a QCA board
member) holds the right to
publish and edit submissions
to the QCA Counsellinks.*

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Past President, Director-at-Large - Wayne Clifford
Director-at-Large - Mary Ann Lichacz-Karwatsky
Director-at-Large - Meghan Artherton
Student rep, McGill University - Jennifer Persmann
CCPA Quebec Anglophone Director - Lilli Janzen

You can read their bios and check out their snapshots [here!](#)

QCA Membership Focus on YOU!

The Quebec Counselling Association (QCA) would like to offer you the **opportunity to highlight your work and accomplishments**. We would love to interview you for our website and e-bulletin. If you are interested in participating please send us a short biography and link to your website (if applicable).

What is your background, your passion and your life's work? What are your upcoming projects or your interests? We would love to hear from you!

Please send your submission to gca.counselling@gmail.com

QCA Events

PD Event

Multiculturalism and Social Justice

Dr. Ada Sinacore

March 18, 2013

5:30pm - light snacks and coffee

6:00 - 8:00pm

McGill University, Brown Building, room 5000



QCA and McGill CaPS Announces...

The highly successful event is back!

Speed Mentoring

May 6th, 2013

2:00 - 4:00pm

(date and time subject to change)

Thompson House

McGill University

Do you know about all the career options in Counseling, Psychology, Social Work?

Come to this speed mentoring event that promises to be both enjoyable and informative, organized by the Quebec Counselling Association (QCA) and McGill's Career and Planning Services (CaPS). Mentors will be seasoned professionals working in a variety of settings and specialties within the helping professions. As new professionals or graduate students, you will have an opportunity to meet with each mentor and engage in a discussion about their career and ways to get involved in their line of work. Feel free to bring your questions and exchange your contact information so that this event can serve as an important first step toward a mutually beneficial mentoring relationship.

Join the QCA! Membership Benefits and CCC Certification

Not a QCA member yet? It is a worthwhile investment!

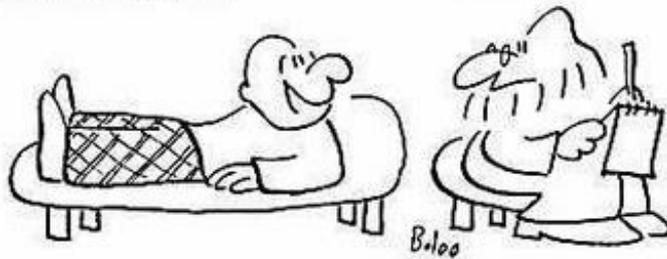
- Stay up to date with **changes in accreditation** (for those working as psychotherapists)
- Learn about **upcoming events, conferences and seminars** - important ways of keeping in touch, up to date and in the loop with other professionals in your field!
- Gain access to our **professional development fund**. (Members

can apply for up to \$150 compensation towards conference or event fees)

Annual membership to the QCA is included in the CCPA membership (\$150 for professionals, \$75 for students, \$130 for guests). Click [here](#) to access a membership application form.

Already a CCPA member? Just tick the "QCA" box on your CCPA renewal form.

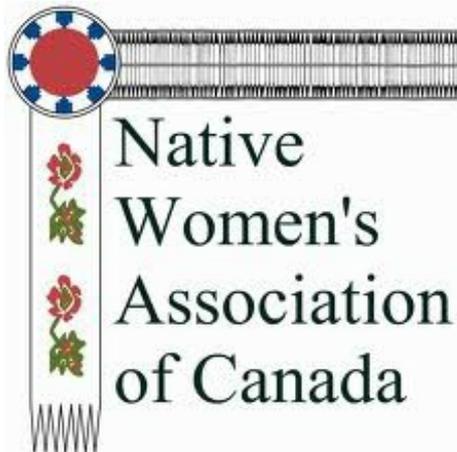
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"Sure, I can learn to accept things as they are. How are they?"

Guest Contributions

NWAC Family Gathering: A Counsellor's



On the weekend of February 2-3, I attended the Native Women's Association of Canada (NWAC)'s 7th annual Family Gathering on the Huron-Wendat territory of Wendake, QC. As a representative of the Quebec Counselling Association (QCA), my role was to support the 26 family members in attendance – parents, siblings, partners, and children of missing and murdered Aboriginal women in Canada.

NWAC's Family Gathering has two purposes. The first is to build and strengthen the support network of families who have experienced the unique and tragic consequences of violence, all within a safe, supportive, and healing environment. It is an opportunity to reconnect with friends; a chance to laugh, cry, and share stories; and a place to honour their fallen Sisters in Spirit. Nearly everyone described the

Family Gathering as a deeply meaningful bonding experience. In one member's words, "Here, the hugs are real."

The second purpose of the Family Gathering is to promote justice for missing and murdered Aboriginal women across Canada. These women are at a disproportionately high risk of violent and sexual victimization, not to mention the broader context of systemic discrimination against Aboriginal peoples in Canada. Through policy analysis and development, knowledge transfer, and lobbying at the provincial and federal level, NWAC provides a strong, clear voice for those who have been silenced.

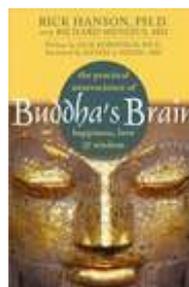
I felt a deep sense of gratitude and humility to have been present at this meeting. At times I felt overwhelmed with sadness for the horrible losses the families had suffered. Many had lost multiple family members – enough for several lifetimes of grief and devastation. From the perspective of a cultural outsider, I also felt outrage and shame for how these families had been treated in the wake of their losses, in particular by non-Aboriginal police and government officials. However, I also witnessed a tremendous amount of resilience, optimism, and hope for healing. I was surprised at how often the theme of forgiveness was repeated throughout the weekend. It's a powerful reminder for us, as therapists, of the incredible healing power of forgiveness, even in the worst imaginable circumstances.

Overall, it was a weekend of learning, of taking new perspectives, and of tradition. It was a weekend in which I saw and felt the true meaning of community. Clearly, however, there is much work to be done to ensure a future without violence towards Aboriginal women and girls in Canada. If you are interested in learning more or getting involved, please visit [NWAC's website](#).

By Kierla Ireland, M.A.

Book Review: Buddha's Brain: The Practical Neuroscience of happiness, love and wisdom

Recently, I have received a beautiful and valuable gift from a friend... a book - "Buddha's Brain: The practical neuroscience of happiness, love and wisdom", by R. Hanson, Ph.D. in collaboration with neuroscientist R. Mendius, MD. The authors look at such beneficial activities as positive attitude, meditation and relaxation in terms of the latest scientific findings about the structural and functional properties of the brain and the autonomous nervous system (ANS). The book is written in a simple, factual, and at the same time almost poetic way, yet it is filled with practical exercises and references. This article will not be a comprehensive summary of the book. I would like to present to you a small portion of the information I gathered during the reading.



The book's focus is on what you can do *now* about increasing the level of inner peace, happiness, and everyday efficiency while increasing the mass of your gray matter and helping your hippocampus to grow new neurons. The mass increase is associated with a process called neuroplasticity, or the brain's capacity to change itself by learning. The new neuronal growth, limited to the hippocampus, is called the neurogenesis.

Sounds exciting? Well, you may want to consider calming down a bit, to be even more receptive.

Take a deep breath, to the full capacity of your lungs, and hold it for a few seconds, then slowly exhale while relaxing your mind and body. You can do this just once, or several times, according to the situation and your need.

Sounds almost trivial, doesn't it? However, you have just activated the Parasympathetic Nervous System (PNS), and in doing so, maintained the normal resting state of the body, brain and mind or the equilibrium of your body functions - also referred to as the "rest-and-digest" system. You also simultaneously deactivated the Sympathetic Nervous System (SNS), designed to keep your body functions in the alert state of the "flight-or-fight" response. The activation of the SNS is a change from the PNS baseline in response to a threat or an opportunity, the authors explain. They mention several consequences to the inactivation of the SNS, such as the loss of energy for the ongoing body functions (e.g. breathing); the prevention of formation of new neurons in the hippocampus; the prevention of feelings of relaxation, contentment and tranquility; and arousal of hot-headed actions prone to harm the self and others.

Since you are now calmer and feel refreshed, you could deepen this relaxed state by thinking about something positive.

According to the authors, the brain is biased in terms of having preference for registering and retaining the unpleasant or negative experiences. This memory bias is based on evolutionary and survival strategies. Consequently, countering this tendency with an active attitude towards positive experiences is necessary to bring about a more balanced and healthier state of the mind, brain and body. The authors differentiate between the explicit and implicit memories. The first ones are associated with the hippocampus and the latter with amygdala. We are conscious of the explicit recollections of specific events, dates, and other factual information. Implicit memories, such as residues of distant experiences, largely escape our conscious attention, yet powerfully influence our states of mind. The negative experiences are mostly part of the implicit memories. The authors propose a simple exercise to help to equalize the positive-negative relationship, in three steps:

1. *Turn positive events or facts into positive experience by noticing something nice, pleasant, wholesome, or beautiful... registering it fully, singling it out. It could be a sunset over the lake, the smell of lilac, a memory from vacation, a minor success at work, a blooming flower...*
2. *Immerse yourself into the experience. It is delicious. Stay with it for 5, 10, 20 seconds, as long as feels right for you. Keep it gently in your focus... thinking of nothing else. Bring your attention to your emotions and body sensations - since they are the essence of your implicit memory. Let the experience be as intense as possible. For example, if someone has been good to you let the feeling of being cared for bring warmth to your whole chest. Pay attention to the rewarding aspects of the experience, as focusing on them increases dopamine release. You can deliberately intensify and enrich any experience. For example, if you are savouring a relationship experience, you can recall other similar experiences of being loved, which will help to stimulate oxytocin, the "bonding hormone" produced by hypothalamus.*

3. *Imagine that the experience is entering deeply into your mind and body... like water into a sponge. Keep relaxing your body and absorbing the emotions, sensations, and thoughts of the experience.*

(You can find the full exercise on pages 68 to 70 of the book.)

In conclusion, I would like to present one more exercise from Buddha's Brain. This one is for the heart, since I would like to wish you all a happy St. Valentine (retroactively, of course). The exercise is related to preliminary evidence about the effect of the heart rate variability (HRV) on such important states and functions as decreased stress, cardiovascular health, immune system and mood. A regular heart rate has small changes in the interval between each beat. These changes are related to the activity of the Automatic Nervous System (ANS). When we inhale, the heart speeds up a bit under the influence of the SNS and slows down under the influence of the PNS. The greater the variability, the healthier the heart is. The authors maintain that HRV is a good indicator of the PNS arousal and ones overall well-being and that you can change it directly by doing the Cardiac Coherence exercise. Please, find more information about the exercise on the site of [HeartMath](#), the original inventors. I recommend to use [this exercise](#) (in French). Unfortunately, I could not find anything comparably good in English. Inhale when the yellow ball goes up and exhale when it goes down... for five minutes. Finally, I would like to repeat that the matter of this short article is only a mere fraction of what is presented in the book. Please feel free to contact me if you wish to obtain more information from the book, about the book, about other books on meditation, or about meditation in general.

I thank you for your kind attention and wish you all great a peace of mind, and healthy brain and body.

Franta Kastanek has been practicing mindfulness meditation for over 20 years, most recently in connection with the Shambhala Center in Montreal.

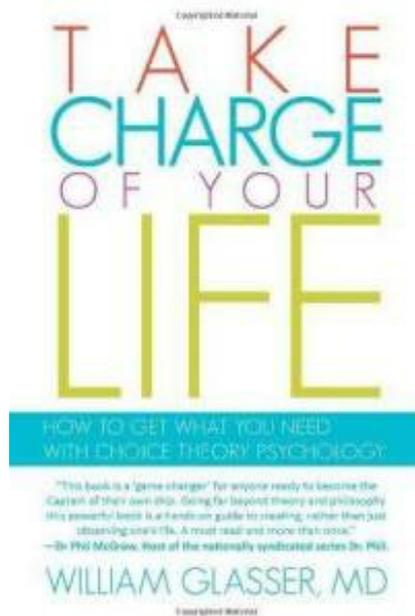


By Franta Kastanek, QCA Public Relations Chair



THE CREATIVE COUNSELOR.

Book Report: Take charge of your life



Take Charge of Your Life: How to Get What You Need with Choice-Theory Psychology by William Glasser

While on sabbatical leave at University of California Las Angeles (UCLA) back in the seventies, I was visiting friends of a relative in Orange County, California. Discussion ensued regarding the radical ideas of William Glasser and their influence in the schools. This is when I began to realize then just how negative right wing lobbies worked. Many years after this occasion, the school board I was working for began training employees in utilizing applications of William Glasser's ideas in their work in schools.

I undertook a rather extensive training and became certified with the

William Glasser Institute during the same year that I joined Canadian Counselling Association (CCA), (now Canadian Counselling and Psychotherapy Association, CCPA) which also happened to be my retirement year. Later, I had the opportunity to hear William Glasser speak at Concordia University. This event prompted me as a Quebec Personnel and Guidance Association (now Quebec Counselling Association, QCA) Director, on a CCA Conference planning Committee, to suggest him as a speaker for the 1998 CCA Conference that was to be held in Montreal. I was aware that William Glasser had a large French Canadian following in Quebec as many of my trainers in the school board had been French Canadian. Our planning committee of QCA and CCPA members also managed to secure Alfred Ellis as a speaker that year. It was a very successful conference with over 700 people attending.

Over the years, I've read many of William Glasser's books, including the classic *Reality Therapy*, which catapulted him to prominence, so when this latest book became available at my local library I quickly reserved it. The book appears to be a distillation of ideas developed in many of his earlier books. Glasser originally introduced his "Choice-Theory" as "Control Theory" in 1984, bearing the name Control Theory, and later revamping it again in his 1998 book entitled *Choice-Theory*. In essence, Choice-Theory replaces what Glasser calls the seven deadly habits of external control with the seven caring habits of supporting, encouraging, listening, accepting, trusting, respecting and negotiating differences. These are all skills that we as counsellors tend to employ in our everyday practices.

Glasser suggests that we have pictures in what he calls our "Quality World", many of which may be shared by people in relationships. A major task of counsellors as they help clients to achieve harmony is through building acceptance and tolerance for those pictures that are not shared between partners by helping partners find enough fun, freedom, love, power or accomplishment. The 'lenses' in our 'cameras' which create the pictures are 'filtered' by our value system. For example, adherents who torture or murder for political or religious beliefs may rationalize a higher value system as motivation for their actions.

Our existing behavioural systems sometimes require reorganization. In his Chapter on Creativity, Glasser indicates that our brains are always in the process of creating new behaviours, which he calls "reorganization". Severe frustration can lead to a variety of ways in which we shape and reshape how we deal with our world, the manifestation of which ultimately becomes our personality. Some wild or dangerous choices are the result of a creative reorganization, some of which may be interpreted by those with different values as craziness, the topic of another chapter. What initially appeared to be craziness have often led to progress that has proven valuable to society. Most of us sometimes utilize a little craziness as one creative way of coping with unique, unfamiliar situations. In most circumstances, however, the counsellor's role is to teach clients more effective ways of taking charge of their lives.

Sometimes clients 'choose to depress' (Glasser intentionally utilizes the verb form to make a point). While this choice can be useful as a temporary tool, just as mourning can serve as a short term means of helping us regain control over our lives, or psychosomatic disorders give people enough control to 'help prevent our bodies from getting involved in the disease process'. Glasser devotes an entire chapter to

psychosomatic illness. Hospitals overflow and medical insurance providers are overburdened because medicine has not yet developed systematic ways of dealing with psychosomatic diseases. Good counsellors, Glasser contends, can recognize irrational thinking and help clients realize the dangers of these thoughts and guide them to more effective, need-fulfilling behaviours.

Addictive drugs, legal and illegal, subjects of another chapter, are counterproductive and can be addressed by the counsellor.

Glasser, a psychiatrist capable of prescribing pharmacological treatments, is opposed to this widespread practice, especially as a prospective cure which promise hope or recovery, which cannot always be delivered. The effect prescription drugs often have is to paralyze the system without helping patients improve. This could be better accomplished through effective counselling. We assume we're in charge of our lives when we feel good. Glasser delineates harmful effects of other drugs which may induce artificial impressions of feeling good, such as marijuana, cocaine, methamphetamines, heroin and alcohol. Some of these have gained society's acceptance undeservedly, in Glasser's eyes. In his company, and having been in a social situation where drinking was the norm during my certification week, I observed the self-discipline Glasser personally employed avoiding alcohol. He implies in the book that alcohol consumption is one of the most destructive forces in society.

This book could be utilized as bibliotherapy with clients. I was struck by the number of references he made to effective counselling as a better alternative to more common medical pharmaceutical solutions to psychological problems, and thus a wonderful endorsement for our chosen profession.



by Wayne Clifford, Director-at-Large

CALL FOR SUBMISSIONS

Members of the QCA, we want to hear from you!

Do you have something to say? Want to share your research findings or counselling techniques? Did you attend an interesting conference or workshop? Our e-bulletin is published six times per year and is looking to include your ideas, thoughts and creative input!

Once submitted, all articles become the property of the e-Bulletin and are subject to editorial board approval and formatting. As **you are credited for your article**, be sure to cite all references in APA style. Please limit submissions to 500 words.

If we can't publish your submission for the next e-Bulletin, we will hold on to it for future publications.

Contact us at: qca.counselling@gmail.com

External Events

West End Community Resource Centre



Centre de ressources
communautés de l'ouest de l'île
West End Community
Resource Centre

NETWORKING LUNCH CONFERENCES
SHARING CONCERNS . TACKLING ISSUES . FINDING SOLUTIONS .
DEVELOPING PARTNERSHIPS . STRENGTHENING COMMUNITY RELATIONSHIPS

Responding to Bullying: Getting Beyond the Hurt

Mona Segal and Deb Kellman of DM Family & School Services will offer concrete strategies for people intervening in bullying situations. Also highlighted will be key features of Bill 56. Presentation in English, Bilingual Question/Discussion period

Presented by:
DM FAMILY & SCHOOL SERVICES
Offices in Montreal & West Island
514.483.9339 / www.dmfamilyschool.com



COME JOIN US ON:
DATE: Friday February 22nd 2013
TIME: 11:30am to 2:00pm
LOCATION: Karnak Temple, 3350 Sources Blvd, DDO
COST: \$20 per person (lunch included)
PAYMENT: by cheque or cash, in advance or at the event
REGISTRATION IN ADVANCE IS REQUIRED
RSVP: Info@crcinfo.ca or 514.694.6404 before Friday Feb 8, 2013

For more information or to RSVP, please contact: info@crcinfo.ca

Website: <http://www.ccpa-accp.ca/en/qcahome>

Email: qca.counselling@gmail.com

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