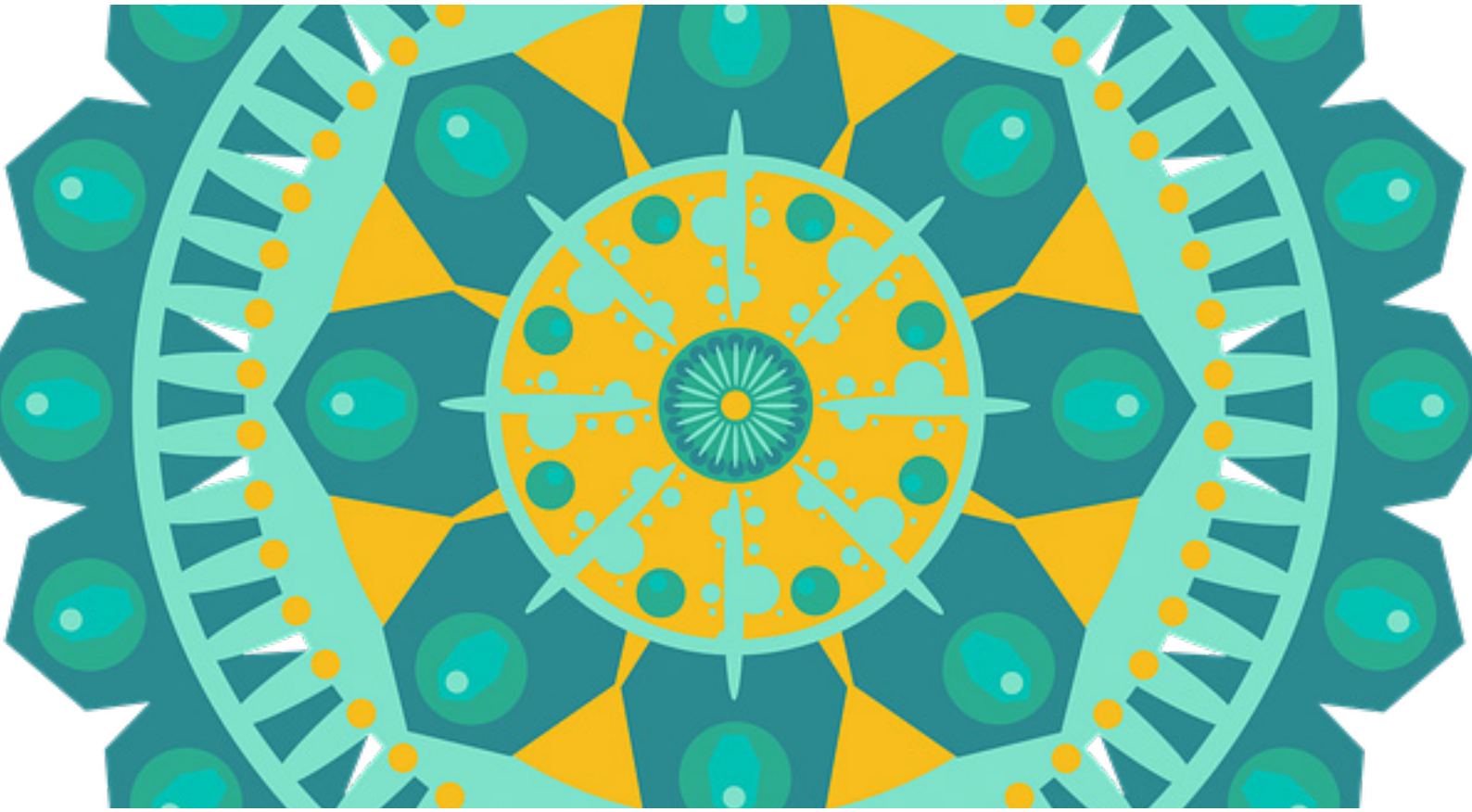
APRIL 2026

Issue no-1

Kaleidoscope

Newsletter of the Counselling Psychology Section

Canadian Psychological Association



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Kaleidoscope focuses on teaching, scholarship and practice for Counselling Psychologists and graduate students in training. We are proud to offer newsletters throughout the year and host a listserve to help keep our membership informed.

We hope you will feel inspired to give us your feedback and become even more involved with our vibrant community.

CHAIR'S EDITORIAL

DANIKA OVERMARS

Happy Spring! As we enter the season of growth and new beginnings, I hope you are experiencing the joy and optimism of spring offers, both personally and professionally. As a section, growth can been seen in the travel grants we are offering to students attending the CPA Convention in Montreal, as well as the traditional awards for research and our Distinguished Members.

I want to acknowledge and thank Dr. Sonya Flessati, who shared a wealth of knowledge in the webinar on CBT for Insomnia offered in March. As a section we hope to be able to offer more webinars on topics of interest to our members. Given the wealth of expertise that our membership holds, I invite anyone with an interest in presenting to reach out to me (Danika@DrOvermars.com); you are also welcome to reach out with a suggestion for webinar topics.

I am very excited about the upcoming convention in Montreal, as our section has impactful research which will be presented and a spectacular Keynote speaker, Dr. Mikaela Gabriel who will be sharing her insights on Indigenous Knowledges and Approaches to Safe, Effective Counselling for and with Indigenous peoples with our section on Thursday June 4th at 4pm. Following Dr. Gabriel's featured speaker address, we will be hosting the Counselling Psychology Section Annual General Meeting and Reception – please come join us, as there will be food and drinks (and the catering menu looks delicious!). Our meetings are scheduled on Day 1 of the convention and offer an ideal chance to connect with folks who you can get to know throughout the convention. Alongside meaningful networking opportunities, we will be presenting research awards, the Distinguished Member Award and inviting folks to get involved in the section executive. Please note you do not have to attend the convention to join the section executive.



Regarding our section executive, I am so grateful for the longstanding contributions of the current executive and pleased to announce we are recruiting new members to join us. Specifically, we are looking for a Chair Elect, Secretary/Treasurer, and an additional student representative. For additional information on role descriptions, see page 20 of the newsletter. If interested, please reach to myself or any member of our executive team to have your name included for consideration.

Warmly,
Danika

Indigenization
ideas and resources

As part of our section's continuing series highlighting Indigenous knowledges and practices in counselling psychology, I recently read Restorying Your Story: Reclaiming Your Voice in the Face of Past Injustice by Dr. Michael Gauthier. Dr. Gauthier, whose First Nation community is Taykwa Tagamou (a Cree community in Northern Ontario), offers a compelling account of a group he facilitated with formerly incarcerated Indigenous men as part of his doctoral research.

Dr Gauthier's group work centred on listening to the men's stories of the past and creating space through collective sharing for those stories to be told, witnessed, and ultimately re storied. This process of "restorying" aligns with Indigenous ways of sharing, and invited participants to imagine pathways toward a future not solely defined by histories of harm, incarceration, or systemic injustice.

Throughout the book, Dr. Gauthier situates this work within the broader context of historical intergenerational trauma and the ongoing colonial systems that shape the lives of Indigenous peoples in Canada, particularly within prison systems. His points simultaneously name the profound impact of oppressive structures while also affirming the capacity of individuals and communities to move toward healing and change.

To guide the group process, Dr. Gauthier drew upon the Medicine Wheel and the Tipi as the foundation for an Indigenous based counselling method. He illustrates how these teachings supported participants in exploring their stories, making meaning, and envisioning new possibilities. The book includes examples of how he facilitated the Medicine Wheel Tipi Model alongside Elders and the men in the group, offering quotations from the men who participated about what this work felt like in practice.

Importantly, Dr. Gauthier also reflects on his own story throughout the book, modelling the process of restorying that he invites others into. His willingness to weave his personal narrative into the work underscores the relational and shared nature of healing through the Medicine Wheel Tipi Model. The result is an accessible and engaging read that offers concrete ideas for how both Indigenous and non Indigenous counsellors can support clients in reclaiming their voices in the face of past (and ongoing) injustice.

Jon Woodend, PhD, RPsych (AB)
Assistant Professor, University of Victoria

Territory Acknowledgement
I acknowledge and respect the lək̓ʷəŋən peoples on whose traditional and unceded territory I live and work, and the Songhees, Esquimalt and WSÁNEĆ peoples whose historical relationships with the land continue to this day.

Executive Updates

KIRBY HUMINUIK

PAST-CHAIR



This past year, I have served on the Counselling Psychology Section Executive as Past Chair, and on the CPA Board of Directors as liaison to Section Chairs. From this vantage point, I have gained a deeper appreciation for CPA's role as the national voice of psychology and a strong advocate for our unique role and contribution to the public good.

I believe this is a defining moment for our profession.

Psychology sits at the intersection of many of the most urgent issues facing our society: a strained healthcare system, rising mental health needs, widening inequities, and ongoing responsibilities for reconciliation and human rights. Psychologists are uniquely positioned to respond, not only through individual care, but through system design, policy influence, prevention, and public leadership. Our training equips us to understand complexity, address suffering, and build solutions that are both evidence-based and humane. Furthermore, decades of leadership from within our discipline of Counselling Psychology has influenced the way care is being conceptualized and delivered, as person-centred care, cultural responsiveness, and cultural humility are now being taken up more broadly across health disciplines.

And yet, our influence at the policy and systems level remains far more limited than it could be. Across jurisdictions, we are seeing pressures that risk narrowing the scope and impact of psychological practice through cost-containment approaches that undervalue relational care, through the dilution of professional standards, and through the persistent under-recognition of what psychologists uniquely contribute.

I believe psychologists have the capacity to contribute to societal well-being at multiple levels: in our clinical work and institutions, as well as in public policy, in health system design, and in advancing equity and human rights. If psychology is to fully step into its societal and system-level leadership, it will require active, engaged participation from across our profession.

CPA staff cannot do this work alone - they depend on members who are willing to contribute their time, perspectives, and leadership.

I encourage you to consider taking on a role within the Section Executive, at the Board level or on a committee. It is easy to feel like there is not enough time or to question whether you are ready, but my experience has been that there are strong structures in place, mentorship and support for new members, and the work itself is collegial and rewarding. For me, the opportunity to contribute meaningfully to the direction of our profession along with thoughtful, committed peers is well worth the investment.

If you are curious about becoming more involved, I would be happy to connect.

Warmly,
Kirby Huminuik PhD, R.Psych
Past Chair

Executive Updates

JON WOODEND

Secretary Treasurer



Warm spring greetings everyone,

I hope this season brings a sense of renewal and a bit more lightness to your days – I know I am looking forward to the time not changing again, here in BC! I am pleased to share that our section continues to be in a strong financial position, allowing us to move forward confidently with the priorities you have helped shape through your participation in last year's Annual General Meeting for the section.

Over the coming months, we'll be directing funds toward several key initiatives outlined in our budget. This includes expanding our webinar offerings, which are designed by section members, for section members, with more details to be announced soon. Work is also progressing on the updated definition of counselling psychology, with the working group preparing a draft that will be reviewed by CPA head office.

In addition to these section based projects, I am participating in the CPA working group revising the evidence based practice guidelines as part of the qualitative research subcommittee. A draft is currently underway, and we will be hosting a session at the upcoming CPA convention in Montreal to discuss the work so far. I hope to see many of you there.

Finally, with so much continuous conflict and uncertainty around the world, I want to note my gratitude for all the work happening across our field, particularly the care you bring to your communities.

Cheers,
Jon Woodend, PhD, RPsych (AB)
Assistant Professor, University of Victoria

Territory Acknowledgement

I acknowledge and respect the lək̓ʷəŋən peoples on whose traditional and unceded territory I live and work, and the Songhees, Esquimalt and WSÁNEĆ peoples whose historical relationships with the land continue to this day.

Executive Updates

DANIELLE SHINBINE

STUDENT REPRESENTATIVE



Students' Facebook Page

Hello all!

As I wrap up the first year of my PhD, I am amazed at how fast time has passed since my last update to you all. I hope you all are managing the end of the semester well and have some plans for the summer to rest and recharge.

Speaking of the summer, I am excited for the upcoming CPA convention this June in Montreal. As a section, we have received many excellent submissions, and I am eager to attend and see the incredible work being done in our field. I also hope that many of my fellow student peers will be able to attend the convention, as it is always a great opportunity to share your research, network with others, and make some fantastic memories.

I am also very pleased to share that we have reintroduced the Counselling Psychology Student Travel Awards for this year's convention. These awards are intended to support graduate students who are presenting within the counselling psychology section at the CPA Convention. The awards are available to Master's and PhD students to help offset travel costs and recognize the important contributions students are making to the field. As a student myself, I know how challenging the financial demands of attending conferences can be, and I hope these efforts will help promote further student representation in the section. If you are interested in applying, please refer to the award information and submit before the deadline of May 2nd.

Additionally, the deadlines for the Best Master's Thesis and Best Undergraduate Research Project awards have been extended to May 1st. These awards are an excellent opportunity to highlight the research that we as students are doing, and I hope those eligible will consider applying so that we can showcase your valuable work.

As always, I hope you are all doing well and wish you a restful and enjoyable summer. If you would like to connect, please feel free to reach out via email.

Danielle Shinbine
Shinbin1@ualberta.ca

The University of Alberta respectfully acknowledges that we are situated on Treaty 6 territory, traditional lands of First Nations and Métis people.

Executive Updates

SONYA FLESSATI

Conference Coordinator & Awards Coordinator



Hello to All:

Montréal, a vibrant place of historic charm and the next stop for CPA's convention, will be held from June 4 to 6, 2026. Whether you find yourself wandering the cobblestone streets in Old Montréal, visiting the Old Port, markets or the Montréal Museum of Fine Arts, we also hope for great days of learning and hearing about the newest research. It will be a time for us to convene with colleagues from near and far.

The organization of the convention always begins with submissions to present. In total we had 92 submissions for posters, conversation sessions, workshops, panel discussions, 12-minute talks, and symposia. I would like to extend my heartfelt gratitude to the 25 reviewers who participated in the double-blind review process. Their time and dedication have helped ensure a strong and diverse representation of our section at the upcoming conference.

Allison Foskett
Angel Leung
Anita Barzagan
Birdie Bezanson
Cala Annala
Chelsea Hobbs
Danielle Shinbine
Danika Overmars
Denise Larson
Elyse Burchill
Janet Miller
Javeria Atique
Jose Domene
Keana Chacon-James
Kenya Thompson-Leonardelli
Krista Socholotiuk
Lara Schultz
Lynda Phillips
Michael Huston
Mikhael L'Heureux
Rachel Bradley
Ricardo Avelar
Shadan Mosavat
Teresa Maynes
Tricia Sandham

A review of the schedule, with a focus on our section's offerings, shows that there is something for everyone. From start to finish, our section will feature presentations on a wide range of topics, including dating violence, ethical practice, social justice, psychologists' roles in policy, relational note-taking, self-efficacy, hope, and supervision.

In particular, sessions by Kirista Socholotiuk ("Building Virtual Relationships with Youth"), Taymy Caso ("Advocacy as Ethical Practice"), Lakota Wood ("Indigenous Cultural Supports"), Meg Hasek-Watt ("Promoting Safety and MInimizing Harm in Supervision"), and Katie Lysakowski ("Death Socialization in Intercultural Families) caught my eye.

Our section's poster session will take place on Friday, June 5, from 2:00–3:00 p.m. in the Grand Hall. This will be a wonderful opportunity to engage directly with researchers and learn more about their work. With 51 posters featured, there will be plenty to explore! In addition to our section's contributions, many counselling-related sessions will be offered across other CPA sections. Please take time to support counselling colleagues presenting throughout the conference. For full details on the conference schedule and registration, please refer to the link https://convention.cpa.ca/.

Each year, the CPA sections host featured speakers, and we are pleased to announce Dr. Mikaela Gabriel as this year's featured speaker for our section.

Dr. Gabriel's presentation, titled "Care and Reconciliation in Action," is scheduled for Thursday, June 4, from 4:00–4:55 p.m. in Room Ville-Marie A.

We encourage you to support our section by attending Dr. Gabriel's talk and staying afterward for our Section's AGM (5-6pm), for nibbles and chats with colleagues.

Executive Updates

To all attendees making their way to "la belle Montréal," I wish you a truly wonderful experience. I hope this convention offers you a meaningful chance to reconnect with new ideas, with colleagues, and with the work that inspires you. May you leave feeling energized and inspired to carry that momentum into your scholarship and practice.

AWARDS UPDATE

As we head into spring, we can shift focus to our planning for the CPA Convention, June 4-6, 2026 in Montreal. I hope that those in attendance will enjoy the city and the coming together of counselling scholars, educators, and practitioners from across Canada. This will be my last column as Awards Coordinator and I am grateful for the work and connection with the executive over the last several years.

As mentioned above, I won't be in attendance this year and our section's Past President, Dr. Kirby Humeniuk will be coordinating awards-related responsibilities at the convention and moving into the 2026-2027 year. Thanks to Kirby!

Student Research Awards:
Our section recognizes outstanding student research in the field of counselling psychology. Awards for the Best Doctoral Dissertation, Best Master's Thesis, and Best Undergraduate Research Project are considered by our executive in advance of the conference and we thank all those involved in the nomination and selection process.
Please Note: We have extended the deadline for Best Master's Thesis and Best Undergraduate Research Project to Friday, May 2, 2026.

Counselling Psychology Graduate Student Travel Awards:

We have an upcoming deadline (May 2, 2026) for the Counselling Psychology Graduate Student Travel Awards. This is the first time that we are offering this award. We wish to encourage students who will be presenting in our section's programming to attend CPA and recognize their achievement in presenting at the convention.

Four awards (2 Master's, 2 PhD), each in the amount of $500, will be available. Award information has also been posted on the counselling section's list serve.

Eligibility:
To be considered for the award, the student must:

(1) Be enrolled in a graduate program (Master's or PhD) counselling psychology program in Canada
(2) Be presenting in the counselling psychology section's programming at the 2026 CPA convention as first author
(3) Submit a copy of their accepted conference abstract

Awards will be adjudicated based on the quality and relevance of the submitted abstract to the field of counselling psychology. If the number of applicants exceeds the number of awards available, submissions will be ranked by the adjudication committee. Winners of the award will be announced during the 2026 Counselling Psychology Section's annual general meeting. Students are strongly encouraged to attend the AGM.

Submit your presentation abstract and proof of convention acceptance by May 2, 2026 to kirbyhuminuik@gmail.com

Student Poster Awards

Three poster awards (Best Undergraduate, Best Master's, Best Doctoral) will be given out at the convention. These awards are for outstanding research projects related to the field of Counselling Psychology. Awards are in the amount of $150 (confirm).

Eligibility:
To be considered for the award, the student must:

(1) Be named as first author on the poster and need to be presenting in our section's poster session
(2) Be present at their poster during the assigned time of the CPA's Counselling Psychology's Poster Session (June 5th, 2:00 to 2:50 in the Grand Hall, 8th Floor).
(3) Membership in CPA's Counselling Psychology Section is not a requirement for award eligibility.

Executive Updates

The evaluation of posters is based on the following rubric:

(1) Contribution to knowledge & understanding in counselling psychology
(2) Quality of the research
(3) Quality of the writing
(4) Visual appeal and organization of the poster

Recipients of the awards will be notified following the poster session and will be strongly encouraged to attend the AGM where the awards will be announced.

Call for Volunteer Adjudicators
(Counselling Section Poster Session)

The Counselling Section's poster event will be held on June 5th from 2:00 to 2:55 (8th Floor, Grand Hall). The adjudication of posters for these awards requires the support of reviewers. I wish to extend an invitation for CPA Counselling Section members to join the review team. This year we had a great abundance of poster submissions to our section and will be in need of reviewers (non-students). Adjudicators will be assigned a small number of posters to review and will complete a rubric form. I welcome your participation and contributions - come and spend an hour talking to students about their scholarly work! If interested, please contact Kirby Humeniuk at kirbyhuminuik@gmail.com for more information.

Annual General Meeting:

Our AGM for the Counselling Section
will be held at the CPA Convention
Thursday, June 4th at 5:00 pm
9th Floor, Ville-Marie A

Our executive will present information related to our section's budget and projects, and we also will have the opportunity to celebrate the work and contributions of members. The Distinguished Member, Student Travel, and Student Research recipients will be announced at the AGM. Poster Award winner will be selected on Friday June 5th and winners will be notified by email. Winners will also be profiled in our Fall edition of Kaleidoscope.

Section Social
Following the AGM, the Counselling Psychology Section will be hosting our annual social event with networking and nibbles.

In my journey of reconciliation, I want to take this opportunity to respect and honour the Siksika, Kainai, Piikani, Tsuu'tina, Lethka Stoney Nakoda, and Metis peoples (Region 3) and the Treaty 7 territory here in Southern Alberta. On a daily basis, I am grateful to the peoples, elders, knowledge keepers, and stewards who have and continue to, care for the land and surrounding waters.

With kindness,
Sonya Flessati
Professor, Student Counselling Services
Mount Royal University
sflessati@mtroyal.ca



2026 KEYNOTE ADDRESS

CPA Counselling Psychology Section

Thursday, June 4th at 4:00 pm, 9th Floor, Ville-Marie A

MIKAELA GABRIEL



Care & Reconcilliation in Action:

Indigenous Knowledges and Approaches to Safe, Effective Counselling for and with Indigenous Peoples

While Indigenous history and realities are continuing to surface among Canada, the realities and impacts to mental health care and delivery. Systemic racism, economic barriers, and the still-enduring effects of colonization compound Indigenous realities and experiences to frightening trends: overrepresentation among the visibly homeless on urban centres; complex health intersections; and distrust of Western service providers. As the fastest growing population in Canada, and the first care takers of Canada, we have an ethical obligation to equip our interventions to better guide cultural safety and treatment. This session looks at our ethical obligations for Indigenous mental health and advancing our understanding; relevant colonial history and how it arises in session; trauma-focused formulations; cultural intersections to interventions; case examples; and insights for practice.

Dr. Mikaela D. Gabriel is an Italian-Mi'kmaq clinical and counselling psychologist, scientist, professor, and auntie. She holds a Canada Research Chair in Indigenous Women & Two-Spirit Mental Health and Homelessness, and is a Research Scientist at Unity Health Toronto across Well Living House & MAP Centre for Urban Health Solutions. Her clinical and research efforts seek to provide culturally-centered, trauma-focused, and ceremonially enriched care for Indigenous Peoples in urban settings navigating housing, healing, and health.

Holding the Clinician in the Work: Clinical Supervision Across a Lifetime of Practice

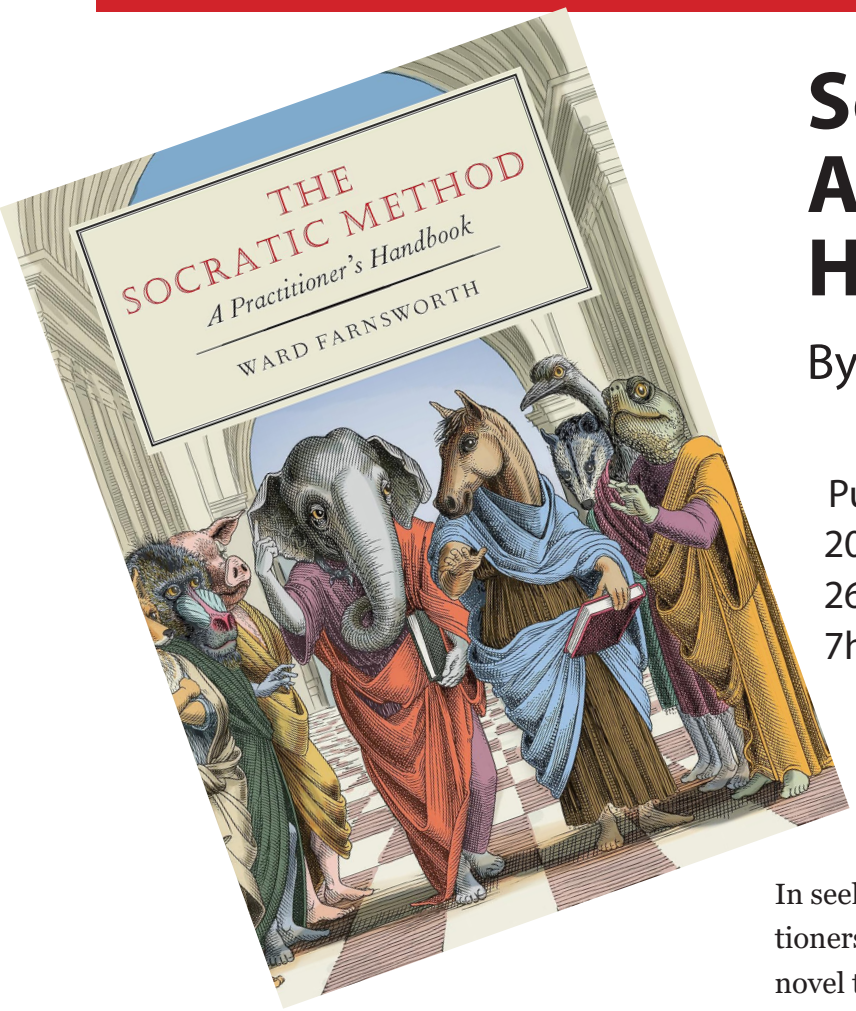
Kirby Huminuik, PhD, RPsych

Clinical supervision is often thought of as part of training and later as a way of ensuring competence and safeguarding clients, but I think this an incomplete conceptualization of the value of supervision across the developmental span of our career as psychologists. At its most generative, supervision is also a developmental and philosophical space in which the clinician is supported as a person to be capable of sustaining complex ethical presence over time.

The developmental arc shifts across career stages. Clinical training in psychology is about skill acquisition but also identity formation under conditions of emotional intensity, moral ambiguity, and systemic constraint. Supervision at this stage functions as a structured relational container in which questions of what to do are inseparable from questions of who one is becoming in the doing. Early practitioners are consolidating clinical thinking, learning to hold complexity, tolerate uncertainty, develop a stable interpretive frame for human distress, and reliably facilitate the change process. Mid-career clinicians frequently encounter a different threshold, where competence is established but coherence is tested by complexity, workload, and ethical ambiguity. Senior clinicians and leaders often face an additional layer of cumulative exposure to suffering, institutional constraints, and the gradual redefinition of meaning in their work.

Across all stages the central issue is not only competence but sustainability. Clinical practice, particularly in trauma-affected, cross-cultural, and high-demand systems, places demands not only on cognition and skill, but on the nervous system, the moral imagination, and the capacity for sustained presence. Without reflective structures, these demands can narrow clinical perception, erode ethical sensitivity, or fragment professional identity.

A strong supervision relationship can counteract this narrowing across the career lifespan, supporting the expansion of clinical perception through attention to process, relational dynamics, and systemic context. It also supports ethical discernment beyond procedural compliance, engaging clinicians in the lived complexity of judgment rather than its abstract codification. As clinicians move from novice to experienced practitioner to senior leader, the nature of distortion risk doesn't disappear – it simply changes form, shifting from uncertainty and over-identification, to routinization and cognitive closure, to institutional habituation or moral fatigue. Ongoing supervision functions as a corrective and re-animating structure across all these phases of experience. It helps prevent the gradual constriction of clinical attention that can occur with repetition, responsibility and systemic pressure, and sustains a capacity for fresh perception. As a continuing discipline of reflective practice, it can protect the openness, ethical sensitivity, and interpretive depth required for complex clinical work over time.



Socratic Method: A Practitioner's Handbook

By Ward Farnsworth

Publisher: David R. Godine
2025
264 pages (softcover)
7h 46 minutes (audiobook)

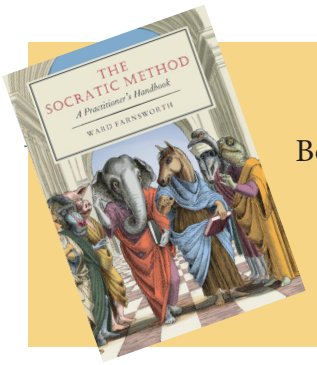
A BOOK REVIEW

by

MATTHEW KOCZKUR, MA,
MSc Student,
Counselling Psychology,
University of Calgary

In seeking to enhance clinical effectiveness, practitioners frequently draw on academic research, adopt novel therapeutic techniques, and even engage with the language of popular psychology. Far more seldom do therapists turn to the wisdom of the ancients. Yet, in doing precisely this, I have discovered an abundant wellspring of inspiration awaiting the intrepid student.

In my case, I turned to the philosophy of the ancient Greeks, not primarily to substantive doctrines such as Aristotle's conception of virtue or Pythagoras' notion of harmonia, though these are themselves of interest, but rather to a method of dialogue known as the Socratic Method. My guide in this inquiry has been Ward Farnsworth, Professor of Law at the University of Texas, and author of The Socratic Method: A Practitioner's Handbook. Published in its first paperback edition in 2025, this work is far from a conventional, austere philosophical tome; instead, it endeavours to render the intricacies of the Socratic Method accessible while still maintaining a high degree of academic rigour.



Book Review, continued

The Socratic Method is preserved in the works of Plato in the fourth century BCE. Rather than being formally or procedurally codified, it is exemplified through the philosophical exchanges, or dialogues, between Socrates and his interlocutors. While much of Western philosophy, including that of Socrates' ancient Greek successors, has been concerned with positing and proving claims to truth, the Socratic Method places a particular activity at its centre: thinking itself. As Farnsworth observes, "we are at our keenest when we work on a question, not after it is answered" (43). In this sense, the Socratic Method consists of a series of questions posed through dialogue to bring coherence and consistency to the thinking of those engaged. In this same regard, I contend that it represents a powerful way of being that can be fruitfully embodied within therapeutic contexts.

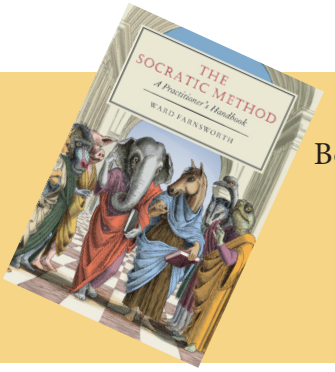
Assuming no prior expertise on the part of the reader, Farnsworth adeptly guides them through the Socratic Method, showcasing the various techniques and styles of reasoning employed by Socrates in Plato's dialogues. He does so through both explication and extensive excerpts from well-known Platonic dialogues, supplemented by more contemporary examples. Farnsworth addresses key components of the method, including the elenchus (the exposure of inconsistency in one's beliefs), systole (definitions that are overly narrow), diastole (definitions that are overly broad), the use of analogy, and aporia (the recognition of one's not knowing). Central to the method is consistency with the principles or values that form the foundation of a person's life. Accordingly, there is a strong emphasis on identifying one's ethical commitments and one's conception of a life worth living. The task then becomes determining whether one's beliefs and actions are consistent with these foundational principles. As Farnsworth notes, being shown to be inconsistent in belief and action can be devastating; however, the gradual construction of cumulative consistency leads to an expansion of knowledge and confidence (p. 61). Thus, when adopted as a stance, whether in personal reflection or dialogical engagement, the Socratic Method emerges as a powerful tool, uniquely suited to therapeutic contexts.

Value for Practice

With respect to its value for therapeutic practice, Farnsworth's book is of exceptional worth. The Socratic Method benefits psychotherapy by fostering self-discovery, exposing hidden assumptions, encouraging intellectual humility, strengthening the working alliance through collaboration, and promoting client agency. At its core, the method is an effective means of revealing inconsistency, whether between beliefs and thoughts, actions and beliefs, or within a person's ethical framework itself. It may also indicate that an individual's ethical reasoning is superficial or insufficiently developed. Ethics, in this sense, need not refer to a grand or abstract worldview, but rather to everyday judgments concerning what constitutes good or bad action, and, crucially, on which side of that divide one wishes to stand.

Importantly, the aim of the Socratic Method is not to prove whether a claim is true, but to ensure that one understands its implications and is willing to commit to it. As Farnsworth states, that for "people at odds with themselves … internal conflicts may disable them from acting decisively in the world or can make them dangerous if they do" (p. 71). In this way, Farnsworth's work is valuable both for therapists themselves and for therapeutic practice more broadly.

Adopting the Socratic Method trains one in a style of thinking that is repeatable and capacity-building, rather than merely addressing the presenting problem of the moment. Finally, and perhaps most significantly, the Socratic Method aligns insight with an embodied sense of agency, such that change is experienced as chosen rather than imposed.



Book Review, continued

Strengths and Weaknesses

One of the principal strengths of Farnsworth's book is its accessibility to non-experts and non-philosophers. Much specialist writing, whether by philosophers or scientists, is rendered nearly unintelligible by excessive reliance on jargon and narrowly defined specialization. This is not the case with Farnsworth's work, which may be approached from any chapter and still yield immediately applicable insights. The prose is clear and direct a style not always associated with academic writing.

At the same time, Farnsworth's generalist approach means that the book is not written specifically for therapists, nor is it framed explicitly within a therapeutic paradigm. Consequently, it lacks concrete examples demonstrating how Socratic reasoning may be applied within the narrower context of counselling psychology. While this may be considered a limitation, particularly for those seeking a more prescriptive or "plug-and-play" approach, it also requires the reader to actively apply Socratic techniques to their own personal and professional contexts. This may well be intentional, as such engagement necessitates that readers internalize the method, reflect on their own ethical commitments, and examine whether their beliefs and actions are consistent both personally and professionally.If the aim of therapy is merely palliative symptom management, this book may hold limited appeal; however, if your aim is to accompany clients on a journey of earnest self-examination, ethical consistency, and the cultivation of freedom through inquiry, while subjecting your own thinking to the same discipline and rigour, it is emphatically recommended.

The workings of the Socratic Method may be best illustrated through a brief demonstration of it in action. In this spirit, I present:

A Dialogue

Between Socrates and Matt, a Therapy Student

Socrates: Good day, Matt. I hear you are a student of counselling psychology. Tell me, what is it that you hope to accomplish in your work?

Matt: Good day, Socrates. I hope to help people understand themselves, to reduce their suffering and live more meaningful and free lives.

Socrates: A noble aim. And tell me, how do you attempt to bring about this change?

Matt: We use various methods, such as interpretation, reflections, and sometimes therapists even give advice. And often, we use something called the Socratic method to inspire questions.

Socrates: Socratic method? I am intrigued, for the name is rather familiar. What do you mean by it?

Matt: It is a way of asking guided questions so clients can examine their thoughts and beliefs for themselves.

Socrates: So you do not simply tell them what is true?

Matt: No. We help them discover it.

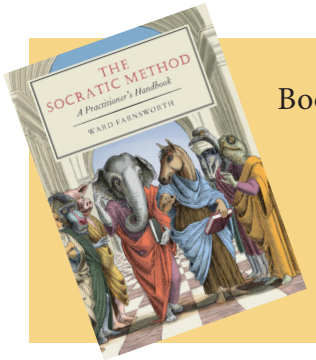
Socrates: Let us examine this. Suppose a client believes, "I am worthless." Would it not be kind to tell them, "You are mistaken; you have value"?

Matt: It might be kind, but it rarely lasts. They often reject it or depend on the therapist to keep reassuring them.

Socrates: Then your words fail to persuade their soul?

Matt: Exactly.

Socrates: But if instead you ask, "What makes a person worthy?" what happens?



Book Review, continued

Matt: The client begins to reflect. They may realize their definition is harsh or unrealistic. The therapist can also ask questions to guide a rational exploration and even challenge the client with examples that show their definition may be too narrow, broad, or even inconsistent with their other deeply held beliefs.

Socrates: And when they reach this realization, is it yours or theirs?

Matt: Theirs. Although their realizations are reached in dialogue, it is their own beliefs that become more clear. You see Socrates, we are not so concerned with finding the one and only Truth, but more focused on getting as close as possible to beliefs consistent with prized values, like the good life, justice or beauty.

Socrates: Which do you suppose has greater power over their suffering?

Matt: Their own realization. From my perspective it is to say that their own life narrative is consistent with ethical action and agency. As a wise sage once said, an unexamined life is not worth living. Have you ever thought of what it means to live a life of beauty?

Socrates: Hmmm yes, a very compelling vision. Then Socratic dialogue seems to awaken knowledge rather than implant it, much as a midwife helps bring forth a child rather than creating it. Would you agree?

Matt: Yes, though I would not feign such a comparison between myself and the noble profession of midwifery. But that metaphor that could be used psychotherapy.

Socrates: Tell me, Matt, do people always know what they believe?

Matt: No. Much of what causes distress is unexamined or assumed due to adherence to Master Narratives that govern much of our action in society.

Socrates: And can one heal or change what one cannot see?

Matt: I think not, one must first become aware of it. Freedom comes from outing these pesky rules of living and their ought's and should's.

Socrates: Then by questioning gently, you help make the unseen seen. But tell me, does this questioning ever feel uncomfortable?

Matt: Often. Clients can feel challenged or uncertain, especially in refutation.

Socrates: And is discomfort always an enemy of healing?

Matt: Not necessarily. Sometimes it signals growth. Sometimes it is even necessary.

Socrates: Just so. For when false beliefs or Master narratives are examined, they may resist, like a long-held habit being disturbed.

Matt: That is our hope. Yet if handled with care, this disturbance leads not to harm but to clarity and freedom.

Socrates: One more thing, Matt. If a therapist relies only on techniques and answers, what becomes of the client when therapy ends?

Matt: They may feel lost without the therapist, or perhaps even adopt the Master Narrative or unexamined beliefs that the therapist imparts through their work.

Socrates: But if clients have learned to question their own thoughts?

Matt: Then they can continue the work themselves. And I think this may even be true of therapists, too.

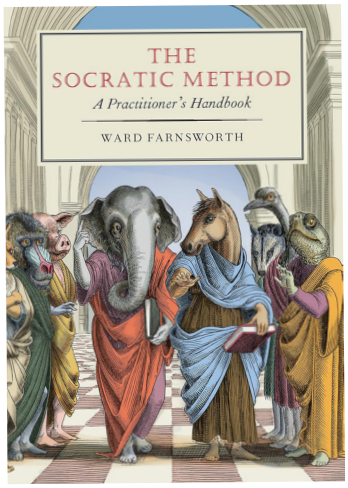
Socrates: Then Socratic dialogue does not merely treat distress: it teaches a way of living, one in which beliefs are examined, meanings are chosen, and the soul is less easily deceived.

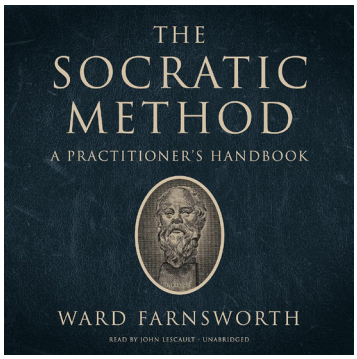
Matt: You make it sound as though psychotherapy is a kind of philosophy. One that therapists may be well-served to take up as well.

Socrates: And philosophy, my dear Matt, is nothing other than care of the soul. Is that not also the meaning of the name of your profession, of psychotherapy?

Matt: It is. I think I understand now why the Socratic method matters so much.

Socrates: Then our dialogue has served its purpose, not by giving answers, but by helping you see what was already before you.





Matthew Koczkur holds an MA in Religious Studies and is currently pursuing an MSc in Counselling Psychology at the University of Calgary. His research focuses on how spirituality manifests within post-secular psychotherapeutic contexts. In his therapeutic work, Matthew draws primarily on Narrative Therapy and remains inspired by post-structuralist philosophy to remain attentive to clients' flights to freedom.



SAVE THE DATE:

CPA Counselling Psychology Section
ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING
will be held at the CPA Convention

THURSDAY - JUNE 4th at 5:00 pm
9th Floor, Ville-Marie A
(Section Social to follow)

Listening to Survivors
Recovery-Based Messaging after Sexualized Assault



Photo by Mika Baumeister - https://unsplash.com/@kommunikation

Kavi Gandhi
University of Victoria

It is estimated that 20% of Canadians (Statistics Canada, 2026) and 23% of students (Ontario Ministry of Colleges and Universities, 2020) have survived sexualized assault (SA). Importantly, many survivors do not seek formal support, and among those who do, many report finding it hard to find resources beyond short-term support (Ullman, 2007). Among the possible explanations of why this happens, one that is critical to examine is how recovery-based messaging (RBM) resonates with survivors. RBM refers to communication strategies and content designed to support individuals in their journey toward healing, including after surviving SA. Current RBM for survivors of SA tends to focus on short-term, deficit-reduction goals with limited survivor input.

Posttraumatic growth (PTG) may help address RBM's gaps, shifting it towards long-term, meaning-centred approaches. PTG has gained traction in counselling psychology as a framework for understanding how meaningful positive change can emerge through the recovery process; importantly, PTG is not a direct product of trauma itself, but a possible outcome from an individual engaging with the process of recovery (Ulloa et al., 2016). RBM informed by PTG (RBMxPTG) could be helpful in addressing service gaps, yet survivors' perspectives on RBMxPTG have not been explored.

To help fill in this gap, our recent qualitative study asked what survivors of SA, who are current or former university students, think are important considerations for RBMxPTG (Gandhi et al., 2026). Five students between the ages of 19–30 who survived SA

provided their insights into their recovery experiences which informed the development of considerations for RBMxPTG. The participant-survivors then provided their feedback on our initial findings.

While this study is not intended to provide direct implications for psychotherapy, counselling professionals may wish to use these findings to help reflect on how they discuss recovery resources with clients (e.g. during intake conversations, when presenting psychoeducational materials). These considerations offer meaningful opportunities for counselling professionals to initiate discussions grounded in what survivors suggested could be helpful, both for creating new and reflecting on current RBM.

What to Consider When Creating Recovery Messaging for Sexualized Assault Survivors

Across the findings, one guiding principle was consistent: survivors shared the importance of messaging that supports their autonomy. This aligns with the understanding that SA is fundamentally a profound violation of autonomy (Ulloa et al., 2016). Survivors explained that messaging that implied a correct way to recover, minimised ongoing pain, or positioned survivors as passive recipients of help would not be received well. Instead, survivors encouraged messaging that considers acknowledging strength, offering options, and empowering survivors to direct their own recovery.

From our study's findings, we offer some practical considerations for counselling professionals creating recover-based messaging:

1. Hold pain and possibility together rather than leading with ideas about growth (e.g., balancing the wrongness of SA with specific growth that some survivors report from recovery). This finding aligns with key tenets of psychotherapy where growth-focused language that bypasses pain risks being dismissive.



2. Incorporate testimonials from other survivors, rather than generalised narratives (e.g., credible, specific stories). This finding suggests that survivors benefit from knowing that recovery is real, and not a theoretical or abstract idea.

3. Reflect on the importance of accessible phrasing, as trauma can affect concentration and retention, making phrases that are easy to draw on potentially more impactful (e.g., 3–7-word phrases).

4. Avoid implicitly and/or explicitly gendered language, when possible, and instead use language directed at everyone (e.g., "People who have…"). RBM may then be less likely to carry unhelpful cultural connotations or stereotypes, even when there is no intention to portray them (e.g., that SA only impacts women).

5. Validate the full spectrum of experiences that constitute SA, as well as the range of responses (e.g., unwanted avoidance, freezing) associated with it and recovery. This may be particularly important where individuals have minimised or struggled to name their experiences, especially when these do not align with some common conceptions of SA. This can help survivors identify that they might still benefit from support and how to recognise when it could be helpful to reach back out.

6. Go beyond the counselling context. While discussion of SA may be more normalized in counselling settings in ways it is not in public life, there may be value in RBM being expressed and represented in community spaces (e.g., across campus), not only in formal support environments.

Shaping Recovery Messaging from Survivor Perspectives

By listening to student survivors, the considerations constructed by our research offer practical insights to consider when developing or refining RBM, and especially RBMxPTG. These findings are not meant to be followed strictly, but rather to promote specific thoughtful discussion: ultimately acting as initial guidance for counselling professionals to shape recovery messaging in ways that reflect the people they support.

About the Author

Kavi Gandhi is a graduate of UVic's Counselling Psychology Program, who now practices as an RCC, BCEHS Paramedic, and occasionally instructs at UVic. Kavi enjoys all the stereotypical West Coast sports, and continues to claim he will learn how to play an instrument.

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We are accepting nominations for the following CPA Counselling Section Executive Positions (Terms beginning - July 2026)

Chair-Elect:

The Chair-Elect is available to carry out duties assigned by the Chair or requested by the Executive Committee or the general membership. In the absence of the Chair, the Chair-Elect will preside at meetings. The Chair-Elect position is typically a 3-year commitment, and they spend 1 year in each of the following positions: Chair-Elect, Chair, and Past Chair.

Secretary-Treasurer:

The Secretary-Treasurer prepares and maintains the minutes of general meetings and of the Executive Committee. They work with the CPA Head Office to maintain an up-to-date list of members. They are responsible for the care and custody of the Section funds and any other assets of the Section and for making payments for all approved expenses. The Secretary-Treasurer position is typically a 2-year term, renewable for a second term.

Student Representative:

The Student Representative serves as a liaison between student members of the Section and the Executive and posts approved messages to the Section list serve. The Student Representative position is typically a 2-year term.

Newsletter Editor:

Working with the Section's executive team, our Section's newsletter editor collects and reviews information and produces our Section's national newsletter. ***Kaleidoscope*** is published several times per year, and is distributed by the executive through our Section's website, blog site and/or list serve. Experience with InDesign or other creative tools is helpful, and training will be provided.

If you have any questions, or if you'd like to nominate yourself or a colleague for one of these positions, please contact Danika Overmars

Please note: During our Section's AGM (June 2026 @ the CPA Convention) nominations will announced and new nominations will be taken 'from the floor'. Elections will be held at the AGM, and nominees do not need to be in attendance. Results will be announced through our list service and *Kaleidoscope*.

Thank you for keeping our Section vibrant & engaged!

SOUND CORNER

by Sonya Flessati, PhD., R.Psych (AB)



In my work counselling work on a post-secondary campus, I typically supervise a counselling psychology practicum student between September to April. It's an energizing part of my work. Students ask amazing questions about therapy, clinical issues, and the mechanisms of change. I am appreciative of the opportunity to be a part of their journey and being able to see the evolution of their clinical skills, their engagement in reflective practice, and their integration of theory and practice. I always feel that through our supervision I grow as well. This past year, my practicum student and I have had conversations about the area of trauma, and I have identified this topic as an area in which to expand. In my search to grow, I have been listening to some podcasts focused on trauma and have found the following podcasts to be very informative. So, take a moment to listen. If you have a podcast you've listened to and enjoyed, please reach out and share. I would love to hear what's in your sound corner. Drop me a line at sflessati@mtroyal.ca.

Podcast: Therapy Chat

Childhood Trauma and the Mind/Body Connection with Dr. Gabor Maté (Episode #194; 40 mins; Aug 15, 2019) &
The Stress-Health Connection with Dr. Gabor Maté (Eipsode #336; 47 mins; June 24, 2022)

These two episodes feature conversations between host Laura Regan and Gabor Mate. The episodes focus on how childhood trauma, childhood loss, and attachment is linked with one's physical and mental health and well-being later in life. Dr. Mate explains how early experiences in these areas can shape our personalities, how we relate to the world and the physiology of our brains and bodies.

Podcast: Therapy Chat

The Impact of Developmental Trauma in Adulthood (Episode 465, 44 minutes; Jan 13, 2025)

In this episode, Laura Regan interviews Dr. Janina Fisher, an international expert on the treatment of trauma. Dr. Fisher discusses the relationship between complex trauma and borderline personality disorder. She shares how her approach to therapy can facilitate the healing of attachment and trauma. If you are interested in other podcasts featuring Dr. Janina Fisher, I would also recommend The Healing Trauma Podcast episode entitled The Living Legacy of Trauma (34 minutes; Broadcast October 18, 2024). Dr. Fisher discusses the living legacy of trauma, a term she coined to describe the legacy of trauma that impacts clients' feelings, body, beliefs, and ways of relating in the here and now.

Podcast: Wired for Connection: A Polyvagal Podcast

Dr. Peter Levine on Somatic Experiencing, Polyvagal Theory, and Healing Trauma (42 minutes; Jan 16, 2026)

Host Travis Goodman interviews Dr. Peter Levine on his approach (Somatic Experiencing) to working with trauma. Dr. Levine shares how trauma isn't just about having memories about past events. He explains that the impact of trauma manifests in the dysregulation of the nervous system. Dr. Levine shares how Polyvagal Theory fits with his Somatic Experiencing model.

FROM THE EDITOR

It feels somewhat unreal to say it - but 2026 marks my tenth year serving as the Counselling Psychology Section's newsletter editor. When I inherited this position from my esteemed colleague Michael Huston (who also served for a ten-year term), I didn't realize what I was in for. Not only have I curated useful InDesign layout skills, I've also had the great privilege of working alongside some outstanding practitioners and educators, graduate students, and CPA staff. I've made friends and extended my understanding of our field immensely. Highlighting award winning projects, interviewing counselling psychologists, and featuring relevant articles has meant that I've been on the front lines of our profession. I'm not feeling done with it yet, but I am interested in mentoring someone new to come into the role. Perhaps it's you??? It's a rewarding role and I'll set you up for great success. Please contact me at jbmiller@mtroyal.ca.



Janet Miller, PhD., RPsych.

COUNSELLING PSYCHOLOGY
SECTION OF THE CPA

CANADIAN PSYCHOLOGICAL ASSOCIATION

SOCIÉTÉ CANADIENNE DE PSYCHOLOGIE

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CPA Counselling Psychology Section
Newsletter submissions: jbmiller@mtroyal.ca
Apr 2025

KALEIDOSCOPE

Newsletter of the Counselling Psychology Section
Canadian Psychological Association

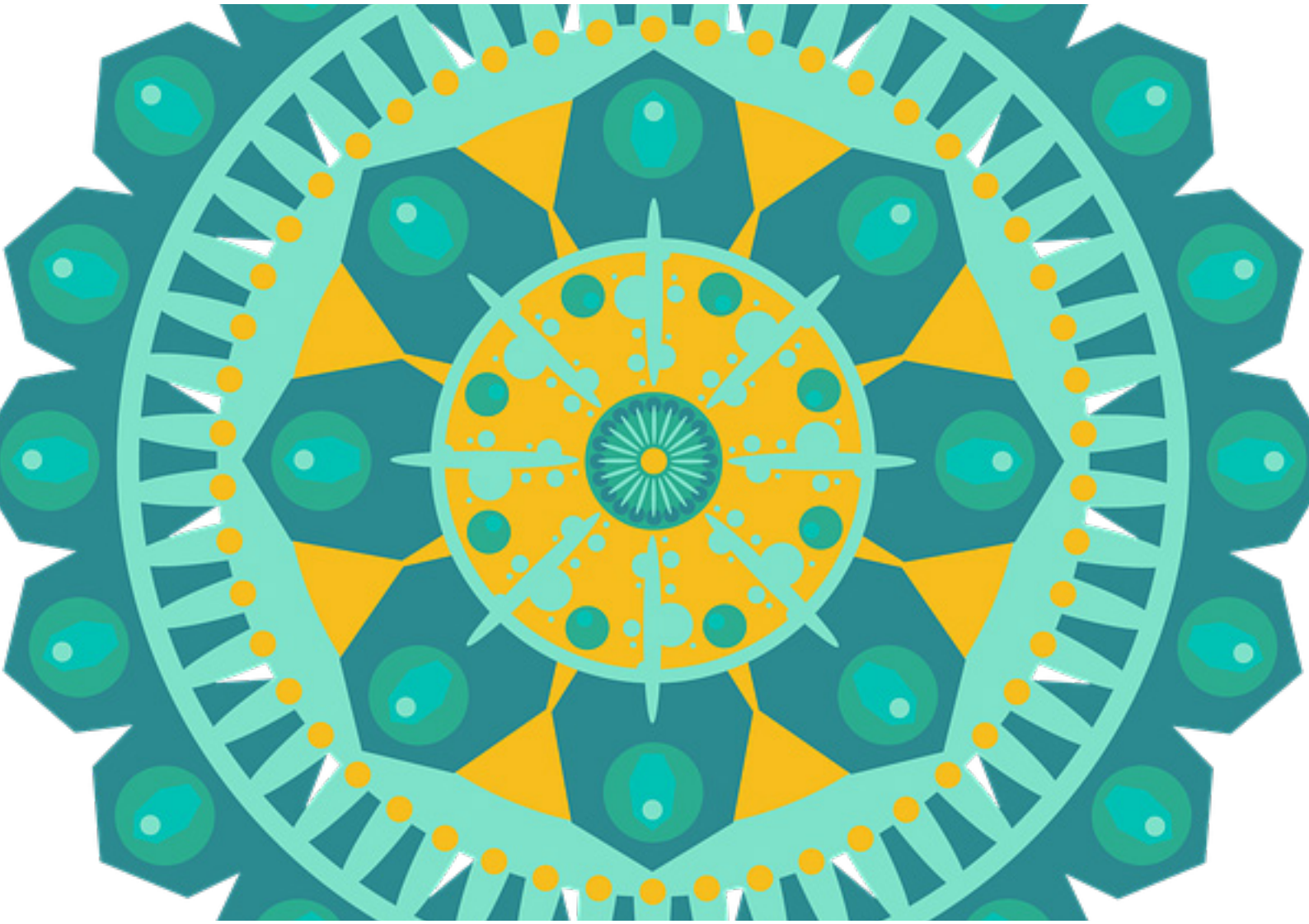


Photo by Brecht Denil on Unsplash

Questions, comments, suggestions or feedback? Please contact us:

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