



Spiritual Directions Newsletter

March/April 2009

Introducing Kim Bechtel



Facing a blank sheet of paper while deciding how to introduce myself to you is a daunting experience. Do I tell you about my failures, which have made me a much wiser person but several inches shorter, or my successes, which have led to most of my failures? You would probably find my wife and two grown sons to be much more interesting than I am, and certainly you would find my dogs to be more appealing.

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I am Kim Bechtel and I have the privilege to be involved with The Spiritual Directions Centre as its new part-time Director at an exciting point in its history. I have a background in leading and managing organizations, and I believe that spirituality and spirit-centered organizations will be the focus of a great deal of attention in the future, particularly as the world economy rises from the ashes of the corporate greed and criminal behavior of the past decade.

Many voices are being added to the growing call for ethical behaviour on behalf of organizations in the private and public sectors. Barack Obama writes in his book, *The Audacity of Hope*, of his commitment to spirit-centred leadership. Among his first actions upon becoming President were the closure of the prison at Guantanamo and the imposition of upper limits on compensation for CEO's of corporations that were receiving money from the public purse. Commentators were shocked that he was actually following through on things he promised during the election. When a media powerhouse such as Oprah Winfrey dedicates much of her television show's first week of 2009 to spiritual issues and leaders you know something significant is happening. The need for The Spiritual Directions Centre has never been greater.

The Spiritual Directions Centre has a proud record of service to the community for almost a decade. Through the energy, vision and commitment of its founder, John Griffith, and a core group of key people, the Centre has built a reputation for credibility, innovation and integrity while providing support to the spiritual needs of Albertans. It is my intention, as part of the leadership team of the Centre, to ensure that it remains a sustainable resource for spiritual energy, healing and growth for many years to come.

You are receiving this newsletter because you have demonstrated an interest in The Spiritual Directions Centre, its programs and services. We are currently undertaking a review of our programs and services to ensure that they are meeting the spiritual needs of our community. Your ideas, insights and information will be enormously helpful to me and those who are helping me with this important work. I encourage you to reach out with your thoughts and comments to me or any other members of our team. You are a valued member of our community and you may reach us at the Centre via our telephone at 403-210-2802, or you may email me at kim.bechtels@spiritualdirections.com. I look forward to meeting you personally in the coming weeks and months.

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A Personal Reflection by John Griffith Waiting For A Rebirth of Wonder

When I woke up this morning and saw the sun reflecting off the snow I remembered a line from a Lawrence Ferlinghetti poem, "I am waiting for a rebirth of wonder." I realized that my soul is also waiting for a rebirth of wonder. Several pieces of my life puzzle came together in a moment of serendipity. On the outside it was the desire for the snow to melt and spring to arrive; on the inside it was the desire for a fresh experience of my sacred calling. I saw the pattern more clearly when I connected to another piece called *The Discipline of Letting Go*. It is not just a coincidence that in my spiritual tradition the season of Lent began last week - a 40 day ritual of deep self-reflection which encourages and acknowledges the importance of human vulnerability. During Lent we are encouraged to give up something to strengthen our faith. This is most often identified as some bad habit or food. Ironically, I am aware that it is often the "successes" and the "good stuff" that keeps me from a rebirth of wonder, the gift of joy or the experience of peace.

In another synchronicity I picked up a small book called *Against Happiness: In Pursuit of Melancholy*, by Eric G. Wilson. In the first part he claims the pursuit of happiness is vastly overrated in our culture, keeping us focused on superficial things. In the second part he says it is the path of melancholy that leads us to deeper meaning in our lives. And finally, he shows how our culture divides human experience into opposites, and pushes us to be on one side or the other. However, it is in the dynamic relationship between happiness and sadness, joy and sorrow, peace and conflict, etc. that we find true fulfillment. Healing and wholeness are found when we can embrace our dark side, enter the shadow and find the hidden gift. Loving acceptance of our whole self provides the energy that carries us through difficult times and prepares the soul for the experience of new life.

For me, and perhaps for you, there is no better time than the present to take some time for personal reflection on our spiritual health and the hope we live with. Spiritual Directions has a nine year history of offering mentoring and counselling as well as courses and workshops that give you and me an opportunity to explore the deeper dimensions of our lives with other spiritual seekers or mentors.

Counselling, Mentoring and Healing Services

For more information, please visit our website at spiritualdirections.com or call 403-210-2802

Norline Johnson, BSc, MSW,

has more than 20 years experience as a spiritual mentor and counselor, she was a member of the Retreat Team at Mount Saint Francis Retreat Centre and has an in depth knowledge of 12 step programs.

Marsha Read, BEd, CHTPA,

offers individual healing sessions using Sound Therapy, Healing Touch and Energy Medicine interactive modalities.

John Griffith, BA, MDiv,

is part of the training team for Spiritual Directors at the FCJ Centre here in Calgary. He has 36 years pastoral care experience in the liberal Protestant Christian tradition.

Sylvia Polay Griffith, MEd, Registered Psychologist,

supplements traditional approaches in counselling and therapy with various energy therapies such as Tapas Acupressure Technique, Brain Gym and EFT.

Betsy Young, MA, MSW,

Is a graduate of the Pacific Jubilee Program in Spiritual Direction, with over 25 years clinical social work experience, including the field of addiction recovery and 12 step programs.

Spring Events at Spiritual Directions

We have several exceptional workshops this spring that still have spaces available. Some of them are popular, ongoing events which are regularly repeated. If you would like to have your name put on a waiting list, register, or receive more information, please call Gloria at 210-2802.

Spiritual Conversations: Conversation Café Format with John Griffith

March 16 ~ Ken Wilber: An Integral Spirituality

April 27 ~ Male and Female Spirituality

Celebrate the Artist Within with Straja Linder King,

Guided art experientials help you nurture your intuitive artist and express your inner soul through various media. Tangus, an award winning therapy dog, will be present. No art experience is necessary, and all materials are included.

March 9, April 20. Fee: \$25 per session

You Can't Give What You Don't Have with Lise Storegaard

Combining wisdom learned by living in indigenous cultures, knowledge attained by study at several universities and institutes, and her innate spirituality, Lise provides an experience of what it means to be fully alive in a world of changes and challenges. This interactive discussion circle will bring you in touch with your own sacred humanness.

Monday, March 9, Fee: \$20

Drumming Circle with Marsha Read

Traditional and recreational drumming is healing, inspiring and fun. No experience is necessary. Bring your own drum, or request the use one of ours when you register. This is a popular ongoing event which is held on the first Monday of every month ~next session April 6. Fee: \$20 per session

The Enneagram with Chaplain Mervin Hauck, BA, MA, and Angela Auger, BEd, MEd.

This full day interactive workshop will provide you with opportunities to self reflect, gain insight into and understanding into your behaviors, fears, strengths, passions, fixations...all the good stuff that makes us who we are. Enjoy your day learning the workings of this ancient personality typology while gaining wonderful knowledge about yourself and others. Saturday, May 30, 10 am to 3 pm. Fee: \$50 (includes all materials)

Sacred Drum Workshop with Dory Laboucane.

Using a sharing circle and vision work to begin the session in a harmonious state, build your personal sacred drum and rattle in this two day workshop consisting of a Saturday, 9 am to 5 pm, and Sunday, 9 am to 1 pm. Some people like to bring a favorite stick for the drum and rattle, or willow and antlers will be provided. Fee: \$225.

Medicine Wheel Experience with Dakota Eagle Woman.

We will discuss the 4 cardinal directions, animals and other information associated with the Wheel. This 3 day workshop includes walking a local Medicine Wheel, and consists of Saturday, April 18, 9 am to 5 pm, and continues with the following Saturday, April 25 and Sunday, April 26, 9 am to 5 pm. Fee: \$190 (includes traveling expenses)

Gifts of Personality and Spirituality with Sydney Craig Courtice.

Using the Myers-Briggs Type Indicator (MBTI®), you will explore the relationship between your personality type, your spiritual gifts and your spiritual intelligence. If you are not familiar with your personality type you can complete the MBTI® for an additional cost of \$35 prior to the program. Fee: \$60



STRAWBERRY TREE ART STUDIO:

Art Therapy and Counselling with Straja Linder King, MA, ATR-BC
Words are often inadequate or unavailable to express deep feelings. Non-verbal therapy externalizes that which is held within.
Individual counseling: \$125 per hour

Healing our Losses

A 4-session structured, closed group that addresses the key tasks of grieving and breaks down unproductive myths, such as "time heals". In conjunction with expressive therapies, group dynamics offer insight, companionship and authentic response to the unspeakable pain of the grieving process. Tanguis, an award winning therapy dog, will be present. 4 Monday evenings, 7 to 9 pm. Fee: \$125. All material included.

Stepping Stones

An integrated approach which supports healing for individuals facing difficult passages in life's journey, such as illness, loss, and transition. Experience healing, centering and soul restoration.. Also suitable for those wanting ongoing support after Healing our Losses and/or Kindred Spirits. Each week addresses a different theme surrounding transition. 4 Mondays, 1:30 to 3:30 pm. Fee: \$125. All materials included.

Kindred Spirits

This heart-felt evening provides both peer support and professional help in expressing feelings, whether anticipating or coping with the sorrow of pet loss. Individuals and families gather and share stories about their animal companions in a safe and confidential environment. No artwork is involved in the process. Please bring a photo of your animal companion. Thursdays, March 26, April 23, 7 to 9 pm. Fee: \$25 per session.

IMAGINAL TRACKERS INSTITUTE™

is an Arts based ecological and spiritual program of study and training for personal healing and professional development. There are 9 week-long intensives in this program. Studio One: Art Fundamentals is the pre-requisite unless previous experience is recognized by Straja Linder King. For more detailed information on certification and continuing education credits please inquire at our website www.spiritualdirections.com or at www.imaginaltrackers.com. The first two courses in the series for 2009 are:

Animal Assisted Healing

Research confirms that animals assist us both physically and psychologically. This course examines the power and efficacy of combining expressive arts and animal-assisted therapy. Participants will gain a closer relationship with animal companions through a multitude of art-based invitations, and experience the benefits of utilizing animal-assisted therapies in the open studio setting. Participants will also gain first hand experience of equine therapy at Eagle Feather Riding Ranch. Monday, March 23 through Friday, March 27, 9 am to 5 pm each day. Fee: \$545 includes all materials.

Imagery In Health & Healing

Art and creativity are relevant to spiritual development and health. An introduction to the arts as therapy, this course provides an understanding of the basic concepts and various philosophical frameworks used in the practice of art therapy. Hands-on work in art materials will be used to deepen the participant's understanding of the concepts of art and healing from these many perspectives. With an understanding of ways in which other cultures have utilized the arts in health and wellness, the participant will begin to develop a personal orientation to art and creativity in health and spiritual practices. Monday, April 27 through Friday, May 1, 9 am to 5 pm each day. Fee: \$545 includes all materials.