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**CHRISTIAN COUNSELLING SERVICES**

**CHRISTMAS NEWSLETTER 2024**

**...Celebrating 58 Years of Service (1966 - 2024)**



## AUTUMN INTO WINTER IN CELEBRATION OF ADVENT & CHRISTMAS

The Seasons of the year in our global temperate zone – Autumn, Winter, Spring, Summer reflect the Rhythm of our lives.

In southern Ontario this year, spring and summer had dense and rich foliage in abundance... on shrubs and trees, magnificent colour change during the autumn... and climate change extending the warm days of summer into several unanticipated summer-like days into November.

The seasons' of the year reflect the seasons within our own lives. Autumn a time of ripening, a time of harvest, a time of maturing, not only as we age gaining wisdom and deepening awareness, but also a time of increasing spiritual attunement as we assess the quality of our relationships with ourselves, with others, with the natural world and with the transcendent, the divine presence beyond us, around us and within each one of us.



CCS (Christian Counselling Services) and TCPCE (Toronto Centre for Psychotherapy and Counselling Education) are intentionally both spiritually integrated programs in which the spiritual dimension is recognized and validated in the lives of our clients and our students.

What a sacred privilege to envision ourselves in the autumn of our lives. To behold, wonder and witness the presence and power of the Spirit within, around and beyond ourselves and in the therapeutic work and education in which we are involved.

We ourselves are privileged to participate in the regenerative, healing and transformative presence and power of the Spirit at work in ourselves and in our relational connections with others with whom we are privileged to interact.

Autumn is truly an awe inspiring season in our lives. We search for meaning in what we do. We are challenged by what we encounter. We see Autumn not as the end time of our lives but as a time in which we are able to deepen our spiritual capacity.

Autumn is a season of Hope. As we move from Advent to the celebration of the Christmas season, we engage the Spirit in increasingly meaningful and life-affirming ways in ourselves and the lives of those we are privileged to serve.

**- Rev. Lawrence A. Beech PhD. RP RMFTsm**

Our Mission  
To provide compassionate  
and caring psychotherapy  
honouring the whole person

## ...Celebrating 58 Years of Service (1966 - 2024)

### INTRODUCING OUR BOARD MEMBERS

*"In this section, we would like to highlight the board members of Interdenominational Christian Counselling Inc. (ICCI). Our board members provide high level oversight over ICCI's two operations, Christian Counselling Services (CCS) and The Toronto Centre for Psychotherapy and Counselling Education (TCPCE). Our board plays a very significant role, and recognizing their stewardship of time and talents for the mission of ICCI, we have decided, over the next few newsletters, to introduce them to the clients and the staff at ICCI to understand their role as a board member. This introduction is in the form of an interview, and we start with members new to the board.*

#### PATRICK WHITE

##### **In the spirit of getting to know you, what is your favourite vacation spot and why?**

My favourite vacation spot is a friend's cottage on a quiet inlet on Lake Rosseau. Some of it concerns the friend whose company my wife Elizabeth, so enjoys. Part of it is the setting, the weathered boards of the dock beside the small but traditional boathouse, the lounge chairs set up either for socializing or for reading and absorbing the dark waters of the inlet, the ancient Precambrian rock face across the inlet crowned by "the green, deep dark forest, too silent to be real" (at least, until the chain saws and power boats start to shatter the "getaway from it all" feeling.) Coming from Bermuda, my birthplace, this preferred spot may sound unexpected, but I have had a few vacations on my island home. It has always been family or work time. However, I notice the stunning vistas of multicolored sea and pink and cream beach sands.

##### **What is your favourite colour? Why?**

Full disclosure: I am red-green colour blind. I see colours but cannot discriminate nuances in faint pastel colours involving red and green in the spectrum. People see shades of green and pink, whereas I see only beige. Despite this, I hold firmly that aquamarine is a favourite. (So, back to the colour of Bermuda waters.)

##### **What inspired you to serve on the Board of Directors at ICCI?**

My inspiration for joining the ICCI Board is my firsthand appreciation of the program developed by Dr. Larry Beech for training psychotherapists: TCPCE. At the invitation of Ken Van Wyk, I became the first ICCI Board member appointed to the training program. That was part of integrating the two programs. That has worked to the advantage of both CCS and TCPCE. We call this synergy. The more intriguing question is, where will it go from here?

##### **What is your hope/dream/goal for ICCI over the next year(s)?**

My hopes/dreams for the next few years are that we will achieve a more substantial balance of virtual and in-person counselling at CCS, an increased opportunity for in-person TCPCE education, and a means of integrating interfaith counsellors into the staff at ICCI. With our updated by-laws, our Board will necessarily evolve in a manner that will facilitate thinking along these lines. This will not be easy since it entails a deep examination of what it means to be a Christian counselling service at a time when there is a deepening awareness of the understanding of the common roots of what it is to be human in our time and what part spiritual concerns and questions play in our care for one another.



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### INTRODUCING OUR INTERNS

The internship program at Christian Counselling Services is an age-old practice that has grown and developed so well and is an integral part of the agency. Our interns significantly contribute to our agency's mission "To provide compassionate and caring psychotherapy honouring the whole person." At CCS, we don't turn back anyone seeking counseling/therapy; having interns onboard helps us fulfill this need. Besides, the internship also provides hands-on practice to the students doing their internships in various CRPO approved psychotherapy training programs, including both the Toronto Centre for Psychotherapy and Counselling Education (TCPCE), and Tyndale Seminary. TCPCE is the educational arm of ICCI.

This year, six interns from TCPCE joined us at CCS. Each talented individual brings unique skills, insights, and fresh perspectives to enhance our team and help us provide quality service to our clients. They have been eager and compassionate to contribute to our mission, learn, and grow professionally. Their service has benefited our agency and supported their training and personal and professional growth.

We are excited to introduce Godfrey Benjamin, Sarah Caggianello, Jackie Gonzalez, and Rolf Nanninga, some of our interns.

- rAymond Antao

### MEET OUR INTERNS

**Godfrey Benjamin** holds a B.Sc in Mental Health Studies and Conservation Biology from the University of Toronto Scarborough. He loved mental health and psychotherapy and went to Durham College to complete his Addictions and Mental Health training. He worked at Fred Victor Centre for the last 5 years in the shelter program and recently moved to another location within his home of Scarborough. He is in his third year at TCPCE. His passion is working with people experiencing depression and anxiety and holding space for clients as they explore themselves. Outside of his work, Godfrey is an avid amateur astronomer, taking opportunities to photograph and document the night sky. He is grateful for his placement with CCS and looks forward to the journey of walking with clients.



**Sarah Caggianello** is completing her psychotherapy training at TCPCE, where she approaches therapy holistically. She has a Bachelor's Degree in Creative Industries from Toronto Metropolitan University. Sarah has also volunteered as a Crisis Responder on a hotline, gaining valuable experience in suicide prevention and crisis intervention.



Sarah is passionate about integrating spirituality into psychotherapy. She is particularly interested in working with families and individuals who have experienced trauma, grief, or shame. She enjoys gardening and caring for her two cats outside her professional work.

Overall, Sarah is committed to supporting individuals and families as they navigate the complexities of life, faith, and healing, fostering growth and well-being through a holistic approach to therapy.

**Jackie Gonzalez** holds a Doctorate in Chiropractic and is currently pursuing her RP at TCPCE. She is an avid learner and never stops 'being a student' in life and her career. She maintains a private chiropractic practice in downtown Toronto and has been there for over 12 years. She just recently got married and is enjoying married life with her husband and his daughter. She loves to travel, play piano, and be outdoors.





## ...Celebrating 58 Years of Service (1966 - 2024)

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### MEET OUR INTERNS

**Rolf Nanninga** is dedicated to empowering young people, adults, and couples who seek greater vitality but feel hindered by anxiety, stress, discouragement, and other life challenges. He is known for his calm, warm, and hopeful presence, offering a listening ear and a supportive approach that brings out the best in people, guiding them forward on their healing journeys.



With over 20 years of experience in campus ministry, Rolf has helped young adults find hope and direction as they navigate life's complexities.

Personally, Rolf is an outdoor enthusiast whose family affectionately calls him 'mountain man' — a nod to his love of mountainous adventures, his earthy beard, and his latest exploration of the 'man bun.' He is embracing his cross-cultural marriage and the joys and challenges of raising three children as they enter their teenage years.

Originally from the Niagara region, Rolf studied Kinesiology at the University of Waterloo. He later completed teachers' college and additional theological training. He has also engaged in Arrow Leadership development and is now nearing the completion of his psychotherapy training.

Known for his insightful questions and deep engagement with others, Rolf is someone you'll enjoy meeting.

The ICCI family wishes you all



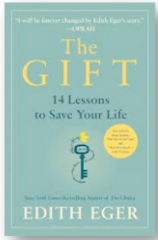
## ...Celebrating 58 Years of Service (1966 - 2024)

### OUR THERAPISTS' PICKS

*OUR THERAPIST'S PICKS" is a feature wherein some of our therapists introduce some psychotherapy-related books, good reads for therapists' and clients' physical, emotional, and mental health. Here are two good books picked by two of our therapists. Happy reading!*

**Eger, E E. (2020). The Gift: 14 Lessons to Save Your Life. Scribner**

**Edith Eger**, well known author of *The Gift* (and *The Choice*), is a psychologist and survivor of Auschwitz who shares her story of how she not only survived the atrocities of her experience, but how she has been able to rise above and flourish. Her story is one of breaking chains that trauma can create to thriving in freedom. This inspirational book walks the reader through her story of not only surviving the Auschwitz concentration camp and creating a fruitful life but how she inevitably had to encounter herself and her wounds to healing and growing from that experience. Her wisdom encourages and cheers all of us on to dig for the gold in each painful story to unearth the limitless possibilities of the human spirit. Dr. Eger provides reflective questions for the reader at the close of each chapter to help us to consider life as it is and grow in our limitless realities. *The Gift* invites and guides each reader to find meaning and purpose in the pain of wounds. This wise little lady has handed on a great gift to all who journey with her in '**The Gift**'.



- Deborah Walsh

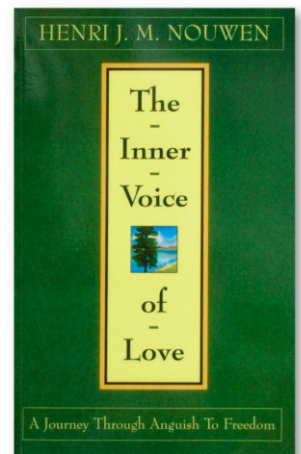


**Nouwen, H. (1996). The Inner Voice of Love: A Journey Through Anguish to Freedom. Doubleday**

My spiritual director suggested that I read *The Inner Voice of Love* by Henri Nouwen. He explained that this little book is Nouwen's most raw and intimate work. It consists of a series of journal entries Nouwen wrote during an excruciating time. He never intended to have it published but did so after the urging of some friends. While I feared it might be a depressing read, I found nothing could be further from the truth. It does deal with some dark themes, but its words are helpful and encouraging.

The author courageously confronts his insecurities and fears, addresses his inner wounds and loneliness, and confesses his confusion about his identity and purpose with deep honesty. But rather than simply wallowing in his pain, Nouwen sees his vulnerabilities as opportunities to hear the inner voice of love -God's love—afresh.

This is a book to be read very slowly. It gives the reader psychological and spiritual fodder to chew on unhurriedly. It's not just a book for people in crisis. On the contrary, it's a book for anyone who seeks to live a more integrated and centered life. While Nouwen addresses his weaknesses and struggles, he does so with kindness and tenderness. He gives us a model for how each of us may face our own struggles. He offers an excellent example of dealing with one's issues with gentleness and self-compassion rather than harshness and self-loathing. That approach has more significant potential for connecting us with God's healing love.



- Timothy Vickery

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### PARTNERING WITH US

There are a number of ways we invite you to support the life and mission of Christian Counselling Services.

**Praying:** Pray with us for God's blessing on Christian Counselling Services, our counsellors and the people we serve.

**Promoting:** Promote the life and mission of Christian Counselling Services by spreading the word about our services among your friends and in your circles of influence.

**Connecting:** Connect Christian Counselling Services with others by inviting a counsellor to be a guest speaker, teacher or facilitator on a relevant issue or topic in your workplace, Bible Study, small group or church community.

**Sharing:** Share your resources with Christian Counselling Services with a tax-deductible financial gift.

If you would like to make a donation to Christian Counselling Services, contributions may be made by cheque, credit or debit card, or by e-transfer to [admin@christiancounsellingservices.com](mailto:admin@christiancounsellingservices.com). You may also use the link to Canada Helps on our website [www.christiancounsellingservices.com](http://www.christiancounsellingservices.com). We are incorporated as a not-for-profit agency and a registered charity.

#### Staff Members:

Raymond Antao, Isabella Beaver, Joan Black, Judith Cooke, Dr. Tory Hoff, Sunye Hong, Janice Lang, Lynn Marsh, Macaria Romero, Eunjung Shin, Jon Stanley, Richard Tamas, Ken Van Wyk, Timothy Vickery, Deborah Walsh, Karen Willis, Siyoon Yu

**Interim Clinical Director:** Dr. Gloria Fiati

#### Interns:

Godfrey Benjamin, Sarah Caggianello, Jennifer Garcia, Jackie Gonzalez, Jason Lopez, Rolf Nanninga, Rod Rudd

#### Business Manager:

Alan Beattie

**Executive Director:** Jon Stanley

#### Board Members:

Peter Dale, Catherine Dirks, Anita Gaide, Patrick White

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