

# Conversations & Craft



*Eagle*, by Alexander Calder, on display at the Olympic Sculpture Park in Seattle. Photo: Lara Swimmer/Esto

# 2011

## WPCA Continuing Education

We'd love your input on the continuing education opportunities we seek out.  
**Join the conversation at [wpcawa.com](http://wpcawa.com)**

*WPCA is pleased to sponsor two exceptional, upcoming continuing education events led by three of Seattle's most experienced and distinguished therapists.*

**School for Mystics'** Year 1 curriculum is comprised of three, quarter-long modules and includes readings, spiritual practices and tools to help students discern the meaning of their own mystical experiences and how to actively integrate them into their lives and their work. Admission is through interview and limited to 12 students in order to encourage each person's development and to create an intimate community of mystics who can share wisdom and support.

tion: 206-715-1870 or email: [bjfisch@mindspring.com](mailto:bjfisch@mindspring.com). Cost is \$375.00 per quarter.

### Energy Psychology

(Part 1 of 2)  
 Date/Location: To be determined

Wayne McCleskey, M.Th., will lead the first of a two part education series on Energy Psychology, effective for client issues including anxiety, fears, PTSD, anger, grief and self-esteem.

Contact Jerry Smith via email: [smithjf@comcast.net](mailto:smithjf@comcast.net) or at 253-627-1691 for more information about this upcoming event!

### School for Mystics

Sunday, Sept. 25, 2011  
 Location: Seattle (Lake Union area)

Long-time spiritual development consultant Barbara Fischer, MSW, and author/spiritual director Melissa Gayle West, LMHC, [guest lecturer] kick off the third year of their singular, three-quarter **School for Mystics** curriculum. Attendees of this 9-month program will receive **45 CEU credits** while exploring mystical experience from multicultural and inter-religious perspectives—East, West, indigenous people and contemporary neurobiology.

2011's Fall quarter begins with a 4-hour mini-retreat/dinner on Sept. 25, 2011 and continues every other Sunday, 3-6 pm for a total of 5 sessions.

Please call Barbara Fischer, Director, for more informa-

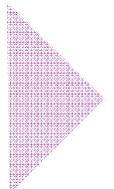
### WPCA SUMMER/FALL 2011 Calendar

Sunday July. 10, 2011  
**WPCA Board Meeting**

Sunday Sept. 25, 2011  
**School for Mystics Fall Quarter begins**

Date Coming Soon  
**Energy Psychology, Pt I**

Read our round-up of WPCA Spring 2011 CEU events on p. 2



## WPCA MISSION

WPCA advocates for persons who practice pastoral counseling or who support and affirm this ministry. We promote the common good of pastoral counselors and their practices in Washington State. We promote the spiritual, psychological, social, and relational health and well being of persons. We promote professional standards in the practice of pastoral counseling. We advocate for keeping maximum responsibility with pastoral counselors and their religious bodies.

## Spring 2011 WPCA Events/Workshops (continued from page 1)

Following are brief synopses of two of the CEU workshops WPCA helped present this Spring. Both were in collaboration with the Washington Association for Marriage and Family Therapy, and shared a central focus on therapeutic presence.

Facilitated by Barbara Fischer, MSW, attendees at the 2011 Supervision Workshop, "**Supervision as a Discipline of Sacred Presence,**" participated in small group format that allowed each to explore presence in his/her professional experience (including ways supervision can deepen spiritual growth,

using the lens of spiritual tradition in supervision, etc.) Participants considered corollaries of psychological aikido, a non-violent martial art, as applied to supervision and counseling, and partook in the annual gathering of supervisory "elders" from the Washington-wide community. Attendees earned 6 CEU credits.

Dozens of therapists attended a training workshop led by Doug Anderson, Ph.D, titled "**Woundedness & Giftedness.**" This workshop presented a whole-bodied approach to therapy, the journey of healing and its gifts in

our work. Doug highlighted works of Milton Erickson, Pema Chödrön, and Henri Nouwen to walk participants through a model of healer-patient interactions. Participants discussed how human vulnerability serves the healing process, and how therapists who "do their own work" are better able to stay with clients seeking reclaim their own wholeness.

Participants explored the practice of presence towards oneself, towards other(s), and towards the sacred via exercises in self-exploration and small group interactions. Attendees earned 6 CEU credits.

### Get to Know Your WPCA Board: Jesalyn Kimura

*WPCA encourages members to actively participate in our board. For the next several issues, we'll be featuring profiles of current board members to let you know who they are, and why they serve.*

I'm Jesalyn Kimura and have served on the WPCA board for about 10 years. I have maintained a private practice in Tacoma for the last 16 years and feel attracted to WPCA as an organization in order to keep connections with my colleagues. After the first few years in practice I noticed growing isolation. WPCA seemed like the perfect solution...a group of spiritually centered therapists with the desire to support each other and grow in their craft.

Most of these 10 years I have coordinated our continuing education program and am the liaison with the National Board for Certified Counselors (NBCC) who provide our continuing education certification. I was interested in serving on the board in this capacity because I saw a plethora of conventional continuing education courses with other organizations and hoped to promote a few non-western/non-traditional offerings. WPCA has supported this desire by offering a whole range of psychological and spiritual opportunities. I am lucky to

serve on a board with such creative, innovative and soulful people. I feel at home.

I would say that my work with clients centers around encouraging transformation and healing through self awareness. I use Buddhist practices and principals to assist clients to see themselves and their agendas more clearly. I love this style of working because I think it works well to expose our conditioning and allow a more true self to step forward. I also use a variety of trauma processing techniques. The bulk of my practice is working with people who experienced early life trauma, neglect and abuse.

I work in a tiny little house on my property and have a rather delightful 20 foot commute. I think this is fantastic as our property is on Buckley Gulch and my clients and I get to work under a canopy of maple trees. I also think this situation is ideal because I have a 13 year old son (Stenner) who I can pop in on between sessions. Having work that is fascinating, challenging, allows presence with my family and connection to other like minded pilgrims is something that I couldn't be more grateful for. See you all at our next continuing education offering.

*"After the first few years in practice I noticed growing isolation. WPCA seemed like the perfect solution..."*

#### WPCA 2010-2011 Board Members:

Jerry Smith, *President*

**Jesalyn Kimura, VP**

Desiree Turner, *Treasurer Designate*

Amanda Brandon, *Treasurer*

Barbara Bauml, *Board Member*

Terie Clement, *Newsletter & Website*

# VIEW POINTS

## The Confessional & Confidentiality: A Modern Dialogue on an Ancient Practice

by The Rev. Dr. Jerry F. Smith, S.T.D., WPCA President

Washington Pastoral Counselors Association's (WPCA) motto is, "With you in faith, hope, and love." So, how does that apply when you are trying to serve your clients and make a living?

One of the geniuses about pastoral counseling is its willingness to stand with you while you embrace some difficult paradoxes. So, where do you look for support in navigating the nearly impossible dilemmas raised by honoring the confidentiality of the people you see? On one hand, pastoral counselors draw from a most ancient, sacred, and spiritual wellspring; practices and traditions go back to pre-Christian, shamanic origins. On the other, each of us intimately touches all aspects of this current age. We face baffling questions posed by massive internet exposure and the agonizing quandaries of managed care.

Most pastoral counselors have a choice regarding the confidentiality of conversations that take place within the counseling space. Of course, state, federal, and business (i.e., the insurance industry) exert influence on just how much can remain secret, and who may breach that privacy boundary. Government often asserts that the needs of the many (e.g., homeland security) or the vulnerable (e.g., at risk children and adults) trump client confidentiality. Third-party insurers/payees also require certain private details of therapeutic conversations be disclosed. Many pastoral counselors regularly face the gut-wrenching balancing act of seeking to honor client communications while saying just enough to satisfy other interested parties.

Other pastoral counselors adhere to some version of the doctrine of the seal



of the confessional. As early as 1115 CE the Roman Catholic Church declared the seal of the confessional as law stating, "Let the priest who dares to make known the sins of his penitent be deposed", and "be made a life-long, ignominious wanderer." While this language seems overly dramatic and harsh for the twenty-first century, the principle of never revealing any part of a confession stands to this day.

Even Washington State law recognizes that any person who is designated as a confessor, by her/his religious organization is exempt from disclosing anything shared in that confessional moment.

WPCA recognizes that our sisters and brothers of high integrity, good will, and compassionate souls choose different paths with regard to client confidentiality. Many who choose to collaborate with the State and managed care entities practice the style of pastoral counseling without the "confessor" title. In doing so, they report to appropriate governmental agencies to protect the vulnerable in danger of harm, and some work with insurance companies to supplement their income. These pastoral counselors offer the graces of the practice without an official religious mandate.

Those who operate under the umbrella of a religious body claim the rights and exemptions of the confessor to reveal nothing they hear. They contend that they protect the vulnerable by encouraging those who do harm to atone for harmful deeds and make amends to their victims. Sometimes this includes supporting and/or requiring the offender in turning themselves in to the authorities.

I suggest the following:

- We honor colleagues' choices regarding how they employ confidentiality and the confessional as their circumstances allow.
- We affirm and support the viewpoints of other pastoral counselors regarding how they keep secrets and make their money.
- We open respectful dialogue about confidentiality and the confessional to advance our understandings.

I wonder if WPCA might sponsor a professional workshop (6 CEUs) to dialogue more on the subjects of confidentiality and the confessional, and of course, enjoy a fine lunch.

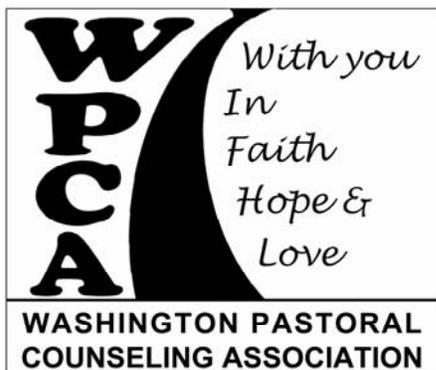
With warmest blessings, Jerry

Are you interested in:

- A. Attending a workshop on this topic with WPCA colleagues
- B. A fine lunch
- C. 6 CEUs
- D. Posting a response to Jerry
- E. All the above!?

**Join our conversation  
at [wpcawa.com](http://wpcawa.com)**

We're on the web: [wpcawa.com](http://wpcawa.com)



5236 N. 10th St  
Tacoma , WA 98406

**Washington Pastoral Counseling Association**

**Dues/Donation Form**

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone:(\_\_\_\_) \_\_\_\_\_

Enclosed is my dues of \$25 (student) or \$50 (professional member)

I would like more information about: \_\_\_\_\_

Please offer the following program: \_\_\_\_\_

Enclosed please find my donation of: \$ \_\_\_\_\_

**Send your dues to:** Jerry Smith  
5236 N. 10th St.  
Tacoma, WA 98406