



Counseling Connections

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Gratitude

The holiday season is rapidly approaching (sorry for the reminder) with Thanksgiving just weeks away. Thanksgiving, as the name implies, is a time to give thanks. However, the central purpose of this holiday is often overshadowed by the delicious spread for which the holiday is known. While I definitely love eating, when the focus is solely on the food, the inherent message is one of gluttony rather than gratitude. This year I am determined to shift my focus to gratitude. Part of this shift is due to the hurricane in the northeast, which reminded me that I have a lot to be thankful for.

The effects of gratitude extend far beyond just giving thanks. Gratitude is associated with greater overall wellbeing, includ-

ing psychological, social, and physical wellness. Psychologically, gratitude is correlated with greater optimism, satisfaction, and happiness. Gratitude also has



an inverse relationship to depression and anxiety, and therefore may be a protective factor for mental health. Socially, gratitude seems to be an important component of building and strengthening social bonds. People who

practice gratitude tend to take better care of their physical bodies, and as a result experience physical health benefits like increased energy. And the more we practice giving thanks, the greater the benefits (Grif, 2009).

One simple way to get started with a gratitude practice is to take a couple minutes daily to think of a few things that have gone 'right' with your day instead of focusing only on those that have gone 'wrong'. Get into the Thanksgiving spirit and let November be a 'gratitude experiment'. See what gratitude can do for you!

V. Mattei

Grif, A. (2009). Extending the tradition of giving thanks: Recognizing the health benefits of gratitude. *Critical Care Nurse*. 29 (6), 12-18.

Nature as a Metaphor

The Nature as a Metaphor class exceeded my expectations. I wasn't sure how I felt about spending four days of my precious fall break in the woods, abandoning my cell phone and watch, my lifelines to civilization. While our group did many activities together, our primary task in the class was solitary. Pick a spot

in the woods, go to it twice a day, and see what it tells you. A simple task. I was wholly unprepared for what came from it. The first day full day, after an intense overnight rain soaked my belongings in my tent, I went to my rock perch angry, full of resentment for the class, the rain, the tent, and myself for agreeing to go on this trip. Exasperated, I

flopped onto my back and gazed up at the tall trees above me, shrouded in mist. Seeing those massive tall trees, I was reminded of being a child, clinging to my parents' legs. In that moment, I realized how disconnected I was, existing in the world without pausing to experience it. That was where my work began.

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Nature as a Metaphor continued

I returned from the trip feeling more whole, and more at ease with my place in a world that seems to have forgotten the feeling of connectedness nature can offer. My work was not easy. I sat in my forest spot wrestling with my feelings of alienation, and confronting my insistence at maintaining my comfortable modern life. It was not relaxing. However, those four days in the woods affected my point of view both as a coun-

selor, and as a person struggling to reconcile humans' place in a world we disrespect and destroy in the name of progress.



Perhaps the most important thing I learned was about the power of nature to heal. It is restorative. It is free. And if we and our clients are willing to listen, it can teach us what we already know, what cell phones, fast food, and television have allowed us to forget.

By: Zac Tompkins

Photo by: Betsy Corry

Interested in a Doctoral Degree?

The University of Akron has a CACREP accredited doctoral program (Ph.D.) in Counselor Education and Supervision. The program boasts numerous amenities, among which are a state-of-the-art training clinic, and the opportunity for assistantships. Most new doctoral students receive tuition waivers and stipends of \$11,000 annually.

For information about the program and application process, go to:

<http://www.uakron.edu/education/academic-programs/counseling/doctoral/how-toapply.dot>

Application deadline :
January 15, 2013



Announcements

LPC Presentation

On Friday October 26, 13 WCU Counseling students and faculty attended a session on the LPC licensure process in NC. Ms. Angela Wilson of the LPCANC (LPC Association of North Carolina) shared information and tips for the LPC-A process. So helpful! If you'd like a copy of Ms. Wilson's powerpoint, email a request to Lisen (lroberts@wcu.edu)

HIV/Communicable Disease Training

For Counseling students in the Substance Abuse Studies Certificate program or those interested in it, there is a free HIV/communicable disease training course (3hrs) on Monday 11/19 at 6 pm in room 349 of the Health and Human Services Building in Cullowhee (across the street from the main campus). If you're interested, please contact Dottie Greene (dgreene@wcu.edu) ASAP.

Scholarship Opportunities

Carole Hearn Curtis Scholarship

This scholarship in the amount of \$500 will be awarded to a Counseling student who has demonstrated professionalism, leadership, and a commitment to the profession. Students in internship are given preference. The deadline to apply for this scholarship is December 1, 2012. The scholarship will be awarded for the Spring 2013 semester.

Dan Saddler Scholarship

This \$500 scholarship will be awarded to a Counseling student who has shown active involvement in the program as well as in the community, and is committed to professional development. Preference is given to part-time students who have completed at least 18 hours in the program. The application deadline is December 1, 2012 and the scholarship will be awarded for the Fall 2013 semester.

Mary Deck/Break by the Lake Scholarship

This \$500 scholarship will be awarded to a Counseling student who has demonstrated a commitment to professional development through service, presentation, and community and civic involvement. Preference will be given to students in field experience, final semester, and have completed 30 hours in the program. Application deadline is February 1, 2013 for a Fall 2013 award



"Let us be grateful to people who make us happy; they are the charming gardeners who make our souls blossom." - Marcel Proust

For information and applications go to: www.wcu.edu/3047.asp

Reminders



First-year Students

Be sure to schedule an appointment with your advisor before the end of the Fall 2012 semester.

Registration

Registration for Spring 2013 classes opens on Wednesday October 31, 2012.

Liability Insurance

For students who will be in practicum or internship in the Spring you will need to have liability insurance. Insurance is included in the membership costs of the American Counseling Association (ACA) and the American School Counselor Association (ASCA).

Vote

Exercise your right to vote on Election Day, Tuesday, November 6th.

Counseling Students to Present at Conference!

The North Carolina School Counselor Association (NCSCA) will hold its annual conference next week, November 7-9, 2012 in Greensboro. Western Carolina University will be well represented among conference presenters: Four first-year students, Paige Brooks, Stacy Macke, Kim Metcalf, and Jim Taylor, and four practicum students, Catherine Cottam, Tommy Cox, Sarah Keister, and Hanna Woody, will present research posters as part of the Graduate Student Poster Presentation session, a juried event. Also, practicum student Jennifer Full will present a content session with Dr. Lisen Roberts. Stay tuned to learn about their experiences in the next issue!



2012 NCSCA Fall Conference

Professional School Counselors

Helping Students Find Their Way



Spring 2013 Textbooks

Coun 615: Counseling the Culturally Diverse, 6th Ed., Sue , Sue, & Sue

Coun 620: Counseling Children and Adolescents, 4th Ed., Vernon

Coun 624: no textbook

Coun 625: The Life Span: Human Development for Helping
Professionals, 3rd Ed., Broderick

Coun 630: Theory and Practice of Counseling and Psychotherapy, 9th Ed., Corey

Coun 633: Crisis Intervention Strategies, 6th Ed., James

Coun 665: book(s) will be determined after the semester starts (no worries, book(s)
will not be expensive)

Coun 667: Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders, 4th Ed., American
Psychiatric Association (buy an inexpensive, used version because the
DSM V will be published in May 2013)

Selecting Effective Treatments, 4th Ed., Seligman

Coun 686: no textbook

Coun 687: ACA Ethical Standards Casebook, 6th Ed., Herlihy



“Autumn is a second spring when every leaf is a flower.” Albert Camus