

# on "Meaning, Spirituality and Post Traumatic Growth in Life-threatening Illness and Bereavement"

**One-day Workshop** 

<u>Trainer</u> Dr. Mary L. S. Vachon, PhD, RN University of Toronto, Canada

## 16 June 2014 (Monday) in Duke of Windsor Social Service Building

Life and death are natural and fundamental to human beings. A person might have spent one's whole life searching to understand the meaning and purpose of this unique life, or, by the end of the journey, be still afraid of marching to the mystery of death. Does connection to spirituality make a difference to one's life? What growth could have been experienced after a life-threatening episode due to illness to oneself or one's significant others?

As caregiving helping professionals, how shall we handle the life-threatening illnesses and deaths of our patients/ clients and accompany them to complete their life journeys in peace and dignity? How might we walk with them through the life-threatening illness and facilitate post traumatic growth in them and their families. Professional skills may not be sufficient without compassion. Let us explore the topic with Dr. Mary Vachon, a cancer survivor and psychotherapist, who will conduct this workshop in a first person perspective with professional view.

#### Personal Experience of Having Life-threatening Illness

When Dr. Mary Vachon was heading to speak in Hong Kong for the first time in 1996 about such subjects as "Breaking Bad News, Women with Cancer, Stress and Anticipatory Grief", she was diagnosed with stage 4 Non-Hodgkin's Lymphoma and given a 25% chance of survival. As a psychotherapist working with people with cancer and the bereaved for over twenty-five years at that time, the experience taught her a great deal.

#### Workshop Content

This workshop will explore the lessons that she learned and will draw on her continuing clinical experience and review research in the areas of meaning, spirituality and post traumatic growth in those facing life-threatening illness and bereavement as patients, family members and staff. Dr. Vachon writes extensively on occupational stress, burnout and compassion fatigue in professional caregivers to those with life-threatening illness. In this workshop she will also explore how we as caregivers can also experience post-traumatic growth in our work.

### About the Trainer:

Mary Vachon, PhD, is a nurse, clinical sociologist, psychotherapist, educator, and cancer survivor. She is currently a Psychotherapist in Private Practice, Professor in the Department of Psychiatry and Adjunct Professor in the Dalla Lana School of Public Health at the University of Toronto and Clinical Consultant at Wellspring (A Lifeline to Cancer Support).

Dr. Vachon is the author of "Occupational Stress in the Care of the Critically ill, Dying and Bereaved". She has published over 170 scientific articles and book chapters and delivered over 1,600 lectures around the world on topics related to bereavement, occupational stress, life-threatening illness, palliative care, survivorship and spirituality.

She has written the chapter on "The Emotional Needs of the Dying Person" for the 4 editions of *The Oxford Textbook of Palliative Medicine* and the chapters on occupational stress in many textbooks in supportive care, oncology, palliative care and palliative nursing.

She is the recipient of many awards including:

- Mara Mogensen Flaherty Memorial Lectureship Award of the Oncology Nursing Society for Excellence in Psychosocial Oncology in 1985;
- Dorothy Ley Award for Excellence in Palliative Care from the Ontario Palliative Care Association in April 1997;
- National Hospice and Palliative Care Organization's 2001 Distinguished Researcher Award for her contribution to the field of palliative care from the beginning to the present;
- Lifetime Achievement Award of 2008 from the *International Journal of Palliative Nursing*.

#### **Details of the Workshop:**

- **Date:** 16 June 2014 (Monday)
- Time:9:30am 5:15pm(9:15am registration starts)

Venue: Auditorium, 1/F., Duke of Windsor Social Service Building, No. 15 Hennessy Road, Wan Chai, HK

Early Bird Deadline Extended: <u>3 June 2014</u> Registration Deadline: <u>12 June 2014</u>

Accreditation from Professional Bodies (HKPS-DCP 6 points/ day; CME In progress)

#### **Registration: (Meaning, Spirituality and PTG in Life-threatening Illness and Bereavement)**

Please return the completed form with a cheque made payable to <u>United Christian Nethersole Community</u> <u>Health Service</u> and mail to United Centre of Emotional Health and Positive Living (Kowloon Bay), 2/F, Block A, Lee Kee Building, 55 Ngau Tau Kok Road, Kowloon, Hong Kong. Please be noted that the registration fee is non-refundable.

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Fee:	Category		Standard Fee	Early Bird (3 June)
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