

Counselling services

The information contained in this article is from an interview with Dr. Fred Horsley, Psychologist and Director of the UNB Counselling Services and was taken from the *Mind-Body Connection*, CHSR-FM.

The Counselling Services are available to all students from UNB and St. Thomas. They were developed over ten years ago in response to the needs of students. For example, of the 10,000 students on campus, roughly 10% will have some psychological problems that are serious and require services to help them in this area. This really points to the fact that students are human and are experiencing some of the same problems or concerns found in larger society.

The mission of the University is to provide an environment where the "whole person" can be developed - academic excellence can be promoted. People usually do not drop out of University because of their inability to do coursework. The majority of students who drop out leave because of personal or emotional problems. Our job is to intervene during these times.

The services available encompass a wide range of needs. There is a 24-Hour Crisis Service. If someone were to call after the regular hours, the Security could be contacted and staff would be available to see an individual who was experiencing a crisis. This was a result that problems do not always occur between 8:30 and 4:30 pm.

Other services include personal and career counselling. The Career Resource Library is open and available to students to assist them in decisions regarding their academic and career needs. The Librarian is available to help students research any area they are interested in.

As well, workshops on Self-Improvement such as "Assertiveness Training", "Stress Management", "Communication" are available to suit the needs of students as they change from year to year. Support groups for people who are "Survivors of Sexual/Incest Abuse", "Eating Disorders", are all formed according to students' needs.

"Sexpectations", which is a talk around Rape Awareness is also given on Campus as part of the Counselling Services, and has been well-received.

These services are all part of the education/prevention component aspect of the services. The number of students coming to the counselling centre have increased. It seems that there has been an increased awareness and an acceptance by students to take an active role in their mental health by being open to services. Previously, there used to be a "stigma" associated with seeking help, but this has been reduced greatly, and students are more aware of the need to seek help as needed. The individual is no longer being viewed as "defective", but in fact can be empowered by taking charge over their own needs - of which positive mental health is one.

University life has many stressors as a result of such factors as economical and other problems that are part of the larger society.

Some of the more common concerns that student come to counselling services regarding, include:

1. Information seeking - regarding careers, universities, etc. Testing and workshops are available to students to help with these decisions, as well as individual counselling being available.

2. Emotional Upsets - these are usually developmental in nature and are a result of moving away from home, form their families, value differences, developing intimate personal relationships with others, etc. Workshops on "Assertiveness Training", as well as individual counselling being available.

3. Unpredictable Life Events - A lot of things happen to us on life's journey - these include: death of a loved one; a relationship break-up; memories of past abuse resurfacing; etc. Groups as well as individual counselling are available to students to help them through these times.

4. Psychological Disorders - These include - panic attacks, phobias, clinical depression, suicide attempts, drug and alcohol abuse, etc. Specific interventions are used for each of these needs. Sometimes, students may be referred to other services in the community that may be more suited to help them with their needs.

Besides Direct Services, Indirect Services, in the form of Supportive or

Preventative Services are available. For example, a student may need help with an Appeal concerning academic suspension, etc. This may be made on compassionate or other grounds, and we are there to assist students in this process. Many students in the middle of a crisis, are unable to do well on an exam, and may be exempt from that particular time of writing.

Students who have learning disabilities are being helped through various programming at the Counselling Centre. This would not be possible without the support of both the administration and professors at UNB and STU.

Proctors are given training during the summer on a yearly basis to help them with their task ahead of them in the fall. As well, Peer counsellors are given training as part of their program in preparing them to work with students.

Dr. Horsley said other staff available at the Centre include:

Dr. Reg Craft, Psychologist - He

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than a "cardboard heaven". Warhol became exceedingly wealthy as a result for his insightful "insults".

Even more astonishing was a recent report about "poverty". It revealed that poverty - cultural, moral, spiritual - was now beginning to strike upperwardly mobile urbanities, those with annual incomes in excess of \$100,000. If we stop for a moment to reflect on what we do to find fulfillment, completion and happiness as human beings, then we are indeed at some point talking about a God or gods.

False gods have a history of (re)creating people in their own image. Our present course of destructive consumerism, sexual licence, and massive environmental rape seems to give clear indication that all of us dance at least a few steps to the beat of the god of unrestrained individual freedom and prosperity.

The nature of our own spirituality, in this age of materialism, determines our response to the predicament in which we presently find ourselves. Our spirituality also determine how we define that predicament.

There is a movement afoot towards a post-materialism, born out of the acknowledged spiritual vacuum of post-industrial consumerism. It has been loosely cast as the New Age Movement, a rather eclectic conglomeration of varied interests. While the content may be new, the form bears a strong resemblance to a spirituality that has a lengthy history. It reveals evidence of that age-old human attempt to recreate for themselves a new heaven on earth. But the result is often no more than a spiritual grab-bag of eccentric personalities and questionable movements. Some modern celebrities, in quiet desperation, have resorted to "channelling" for profound messages from the "beyond", to rescue their spiritually bankrupt state of affairs.

There are others who seek salvation not from the "beyond", but from the very thing which has given them life in the first place: Mother Earth. Only by a renewed sensitivity, appreciation and regard for our "Mother", the planet that feeds, nourishes and sustains us, it is stated, will continued existence be possible. Mother Earth Spirituality affirms that we for too

long have abused the earth by treating it as a thing, not as a living spiritual entity much like ourselves. Admittedly, much is very positive about this reorientation. But blurring the distinction between Creator and creature leaves us a God completely absorbed in Mother Earth. Does God not only stand outside of or apart from what God has brought into existence?

And, what about the God of our Judaeo-Christian heritage. True, the religion surrounding this deity has fallen on hard times. Many churches are suffering, not only from a "greying" syndrome and an accommodating malaise, but also from liberal, feminist and human-centred pre-occupations.

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controls, high interest rates, deep cuts to government spending, privatization of state enterprises and changes to foreign investment regulations."

The net effect of things like SAP (a bitterly appropriate acronym) is the further impoverishment of Mexico's poor. John Dillon has estimated the jobs that could be lost at over 700,000. Wealthy Mexicans, said Dillon, "invested so much in U.S. banks and real estate that their holdings are now estimated to be worth as much as Mexico's entire external debt." Dillon said in addition that the U.S. push "to negotiate a N.A.F.T.A. is part of a strategy to make permanent the structural adjustments forced on Mexico by its foreign creditors." As a part of the Structural Adjustment Program (S.A.P.) imposed by those foreign creditors, assistance to farmers was jettisoned. This, combined with higher interest rates has hit Mexican farmers hard - the result is rural depopulation. If agriculture ends up in the N.A.F.T.A., it is predicted that large property owners will gobble up smaller farms, with the choicest farmland going to agribusiness concerns, which will likely produce mainly for the export market.

Mexico's creditors include Canadian banks, and under the proposed N.A.F.T.A., those creditors will receive interest on past loans with the likelihood that the principal debt will never be discharged. Under the N.A.F.T.A., the investment which is

Mind-Body Connection by Janet McGeachy-Hansen

has an interest in Stress Management, as well as individual counselling for students in personal and career areas.

Larry Finkelman, Psychologist - Works with individual and career Counselling. He has developed the Proctor Training Program and has had a leadership role in the Sexual Assault Survey, as well as Couple Counselling, Communication, Assertiveness Training, etc.

Karen Treves, Social Worker - Moved from Toronto, where she has worked in the University Hospital. She has experience in Eating Disorders, and a number of other medical problems. She has many therapeutic skills and is the only female staff counsellor.

Marilyn Rees, Administrative Secretary - Keeps our office moving smoothly on a daily basis.

Jenny Goguen, Receptionist - Ask Jenny for an appointment if you would like to see someone. If it is an "emergency" let her know, and she will arrange for you to be seen right away. Just let Jenny know.

Janelle Jimore, Career Library Assistant - Will help students research any areas of interest to them.

If you would like to talk with someone about a situation or personal problem you are experiencing, contact the Counselling Services at UNB at 453-4820. There is a 24-Hour Service available to help you with your needs.

looking for stability, authority, meaning, and moral right from wrong. Might they be telling us something? My guess is that it is something of this order: human rights balanced with human responsibility faithfulness in marriage and self-control outside of it, focus on family and community, and stewardship of the earth's scarce resources.

I would add one more element: an understanding of what it means to be created in the image of God, rather than concocting our own image of God. My guess also is that this leads not to oppression or patriarchy, but a freedom and liberation that most of us hardly dare trust.

likely to predominate is that of the multinational corporations following the beacon of VERY CHEAP labour to Mexico.

Some of Mexico's workers earn as little as 50 cents per hour, and two thirds are women. There would be jobs created under a N.A.F.T.A., the problem is that even under the best case scenario, the influx of foreign capital would never pick up those who are now unemployed. Added to these presently unemployed must be added those rural campesinos who would be dispossessed, compounding the problem of the burgeoning urban poor.

Under President Salinas of Mexico, said John Dillon in quoting a Mexican academic, "a very clear, conscious technocratic decision has been made by Salinas and his advisors to include only half of Mexico's population in a dynamic process of economic growth. The economic model they have chosen means that by the year 2000, 50 million Mexicans would be left to languish as a reserve of cheap labour, assuring that wages remain low for years to come." The issue of a new trade deal with Mexico is by no means simple.



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