



# NLCPA



Newfoundland and Labrador Counsellors' and Psychologists' Association

June 2012

## Letter from the President

Dear Membership,

Finally, it's time to blast that favourite June song "School's Out for Summer!"

It has been another very successful year for NLCPA. We are busy planning our Fall Conference and AGM. We are delighted to announce Dr. Jeffrey Kottler as our main presenter. The conference theme is: Everybody has a Story... The title of Dr. Kottler's presentation is: Stories We've Heard, Stories We've Told: Life-Changing Narratives. We will be providing you with more deets in our conference brochure.



We have several special projects that we have started to work on:

- ⇒ We are going to create a document that highlights each counsellor and psychologist who are members of NLCPA. All members will be asked to provide a short bio and pic, provide their favourite counselling techniques/questions and identify their favourite professional resource. All submissions will be entered to win a prize. More details will be provided in September. Who knows – there might be an opportunity to win an iPhone 5 !!
- ⇒ We are going to start some working groups and create some single-page fact sheets that provide a quick overview of common disorders, strategies, and resources.

The CCPA conference in Calgary was a very positive learning experience and networking opportunity again this year. We have provided some reflections and some pics within this newsletter. Newfoundlanders and Labradorians were recognized for their accomplishments. Leslie Pope, CCPA Student Representative, received the Lynda Young-Husband Scholarship and the CCPA Travel Grant. Jacqueline Synard received two research awards. Congrats to Leslie and Jacqueline!!

We would like to congratulate Trent Langdon on becoming the President of the School Counsellors Chapter of CCPA. We wish him all the best in his new role and NLCPA looks forward to working with Trent in this new capacity.

For some of our colleagues, "School's out Forever!!" A number of our colleagues are retiring! We would like to congratulate Ann Coombs, Isabelle Dyke, Elaine Kufudi, Karen Mitchell, Helen Moulton and Mandy Tucker. We wish you all the best as you enjoy a new stage of life.

On behalf of the executive, thank you for continued support.

Happy Summer!

  
Peggy Hann  
President (NLCPA)

# NLCPA Annual Conference and AGM

October 24 -26, 2012

Capital Hotel, St. John's, NL

Conference Theme: **Everybody has a Story ....**



**Stories We've Heard, Stories  
We've Told: Life-Changing  
Narratives**



## **Jeffrey A. Kottler, PhD**

Jeffrey A. Kottler is one of the most prolific authors in the fields of psychology, counselling, and education, having written over 80 books about a wide range of subjects during the past 30 years. Some of his most highly regarded works include *On Being a Therapist*, *The Client Who Changed Me*, *Creative Breakthroughs in Therapy*, *Learning Group Leadership*, *Bad Therapy*, *Changing People's Lives While Transforming Your Own*, and *Changing Peoples Lives While Transforming Your Own: Paths to Social Justice and Global Human Rights*.

Jeffrey has worked as a teacher, counsellor, and therapist in preschool, middle school, mental health center, crisis center, university, community college, and private practice settings. He has served as a Fulbright Scholar and Senior Lecturer in Peru (1980) and Iceland (2000), as well as worked as a Visiting Professor in New Zealand, Australia, Hong Kong, Singapore, and Nepal. Jeffrey is professor of counseling at California State University, Fullerton and President of Empower Nepali Girls, an organization that provides educational scholarships for at-risk children in Nepal.

Website: [www.jeffreykottler.com](http://www.jeffreykottler.com)

# Jeffrey Kottler Presentation

CCPA, Calgary, May 26, 2012

## "On Being a Master Counsellor: Practicing What You Preach"

Based on the interviews conducted with the most notable theorists and practitioners, this talk explored what it means to be a model of personal and professional effectiveness. Among those attributes and skills identified, one consistent factor is the willingness and commitment to "walk your talk," that is, to apply in your own life what you most consistently teach to your clients. Kottler explored the nature of reciprocal change in therapeutic relationships, especially with regard to how our clients can become our greatest teachers.

What is Mastery? How long does it take to become a Master? 80 per cent of MBA students and 93 per cent of professors rate themselves "above average." 98 per cent of American students rate themselves "above average."

What criteria do we use to rate therapists? What personal qualities are important? Are we walking our talk? What is our strength of character? What are our belief systems? Who we are as human beings is just as important as what we do.

- Reputation in the community
- Selection by peers for recognition
- Reports by clients
- Whether the therapist has a full practice
- Evaluation by supervisor

After viewing pics of famous therapists Kottler referred to "What doesn't matter..." Theoretical orientation, preferred interventions, professional discipline, degree or licensure, years of experience, amount of supervision, continuing education...

When working with a client you must find out how you are doing

- systematic assessment of outcomes
- solicit meaningful feedback from clients
- making adjustments according to what is working or not working

We must ask our clients questions. How are WE doing so far? What are some things you'd like us to do more often? What are some things you WISH we would do less often or not at all?

As therapists it is important to acknowledge mistakes & failures. Your failures do not define you. What can define you is not learning from mistakes. Resilience, forgiveness, recovery and willingness to re-invent themselves is important. How involved are people in the growth & evolution of their own development? Think of a time you overcame a chronic, intractable problem that plagued you for years. We should be addressing secondary gains that keep people stuck. Think about emotional arousal. What sticks with people? Think about hitting bottom. Being ..... Or feeling lost. Feeling understood. The client FEELS understood.

Who are master coaches? In order to have a master coach there must be a really close trusting, supportive, relationship. The master can provide honest feedback in brief doses.

A true master has a smorgasbord of qualities. They have found their own voice (our heads are crowded with other voices). He or she can "Walk the Talk." He or she can practice what they preach. A true master is good at "Being a role model."

Kottler referred to "the privilege" we have to be in this profession. He referred to humility, not judging, and to the importance of trust. A master therapist would rarely feel like master a master therapist.

# Jeffrey Kottler Presentation

CCPA, Calgary, May 26, 2012

## "Changing People's Lives While Transforming Your Own"

One of the greatest joys of our work is the opportunity to learn from our clients as they teach us about struggle, resilience, and sometimes despair. There is a reciprocal influence that takes place in the relationship in which we are sometimes impacted as much as our clients. In this session there was an exploration of ways that our clients can be our most valuable teachers, not only about counseling but about life in general. Based on interviews with the world's most well-known theoreticians, as well as field experiences around the world, the session illustrated the significant factors that lead to life-changing growth.

Counsellors can have such huge burdens associated with changing peoples lives. The role of the counsellor has been expanding over the years. Some have narrow views of reciprocal influencing. There can be blurred boundaries, countertransference, co-dependence, projection, over-identification, loss of control & composure, compassion fatigue, vicarious trauma. It is important to think about the ways we are touched by the people we help. Our clients often impact us as much as we change them.

It is important for us to learn about "stillness." Kottler told a story about a Buddhist nun who he had worked with who had a huge impact on him. He ended up writing about her. She had a gentle stillness about her. While working with her he ended up stuck on a plane. All the other passengers were highly frustrated and complaining and sighing. Kottler asked himself how his client would handle the situation. She would relax and say: "Great, I have 15 unscripted minutes, what will I do with this extra free time?" The client taught him so much about being fully present in the moment.

Who is the client who most influenced your professional development? Who is the client who most impacted you personally (the gifts the client gives us)?

What most often impacts counsellors?

- human contact, love & caring
- the empathic transcendence
- the spiritual connection
- it's electric
- therapist's emotional arousal
- indigenous healing
- high levels of arousal

The relationships are unique. We are witnesses to profound change. Sometimes we are beyond challenged. Sometimes, we have an intense relationship with clients for 45 min. There are no interruptions. We do not give that time to family. After it is over, we feel grateful for what was learned.

Reciprocal changes in helping relationships

- look for the growth (what did you learn this week)
- talk about the learning
- process the experiences
- honor the work!!

Submitted by:

Peggy Hann

School Psychologist, Eastern School District

President (NLCPA)

## Play Therapy in Schools

Expressive arts therapies such as dance, drama, art, music, and play, use an expressive media to achieve therapeutic goals. Since play tends to be natural and comfortable for children, play therapy is a good fit for school based interventions. There are numerous theoretical orientations within the field of play therapy, each with its own system of beliefs and associated techniques. Chances are, if you are currently practicing a particular school of therapy, there is a corresponding school of play therapy.



Don Chafe

Most counsellors leave graduate school with a good understanding of basic therapeutic technique but few have had the experience of having that knowledge and skill translated in a way that facilitates meaningful work with children. The developmental differences between the adult population we learned about in our courses, and the children we work with in schools, is quite dramatic. Below is an example of how to transform a current skill into a skill that can more efficiently facilitate therapeutic change with children.

Counsellors in training are introduced to Client Centered Therapy early in their program and taught that this approach provides skills to develop meaningful therapeutic relationships with their clients. They are taught to reflect the content and feeling of their client's communication as a way to form an empathic bond. This process requires a fairly advanced mastery of language on the part of the therapist as well as the client. It is easy to see the difficulties that might arise when we try to use these time honoured techniques with a five year old. So how does an adult use language to form a therapeutic bond with a young child? How do we transform the skills we already have to work with this population?

Step one is to realize that the language development of a young child is very different than that of an adult. Abstract thought is not yet present. The capacity for introspection and analysis is only starting to develop. We can, however, use our language and the language of the child to build that empathic therapeutic relationship. We first need to understand that the language of children is play.

Step two is to find a way to reflect that language in a way that promotes a therapeutic relationship. In play therapy that skill is called tracking. It makes sense both theoretically and experientially that if we give children some toys they will start to play. If we consider play as language then the sequence of play is the same as a client statement. That play statement can be reflected, or in our case tracked, in the same way as a verbal statement. Let's say for example a child takes a little plastic figure which he identifies as a boy and another which he identifies as a dog. He has the boy run over to the dog, kick it, and give a loud angry shout. We can track this interaction at a content level by saying "The boy kicked the dog". We can track at a feeling level by saying "The boy seemed very angry". We can combine the two levels and say "The boy seemed angry and kicked the dog". As in talk based Client Centered Therapy we can choose what to reflect and how to reflect it. As in talk based therapy, it is the consistent accuracy of these reflections that develops the meaningful client-therapist relationship.



If we remember back to graduate school and that first psychotherapeutic methods class where we learned to reflect, we will also remember that it was the first of a long list of skills we were required to master. Likewise, tracking is the very first of a long list of skills to learn as a play therapist. For those of us that work with children, these new skills are well worth the time and effort. If you are interested in learning more about Play Therapy check out the links below or contact this writer at [donchafe@esdnl.ca](mailto:donchafe@esdnl.ca).

Canadian Association for Child and Play Therapy: [www.cacpt.com](http://www.cacpt.com)

Play Therapy International: [www.playtherapy.org](http://www.playtherapy.org)

Association for Play Therapy: [www.a4pt.org](http://www.a4pt.org)

Submitted by:  
Don Chafe  
School Counsellor, Swift Current Academy

# Eating Disorders and Emotion-Focused Therapy

While Eating Disorders (ED) are one of the most difficult disorders to treat (Halmi et al., 2005), recently, there have been promising results from using emotion-focused therapy, or, EFT (Wilson, Grilo, & Vitousek, 2007). A shift from pure cognitive behavioural therapy (CBT), EFT asks clients to become in tuned with their emotions in order to find the root cause of their eating disorders.



At the CCPA conference in Calgary this past May, presenters Michelle Emmerling, Maggie Brennan and Rochelle Major from the University of Alberta, explained how eating disorders were often a direct response to emotional concerns. They explained the thought processes of persons with anorexia nervosa (AN), bulimia nervosa (BN) and binge-eating disorder (BED):

AN – I will restrict my body and mind to numbness so I don't have to deal with high levels of emotional distress

BN – When I binge eat, I push down my feelings. Vomiting, laxatives, and extreme exercise help purge all of my unwanted emotions

BED – Binge eating comforts and soothes me when my emotions are hurtful

Building off recent work by Dolhanty and Greenberg (2007), the presenters conducted group counselling sessions with six women with varying eating disorders. Sessions ran for 13 weeks; once a week for two hours. The facilitators generated discussions around: stages of change; relaxation training; mindfulness; distress tolerance; and affect regulation.

Using a version of Gestalt's chair technique, the facilitators would ask participants to address their critical selves – the part of them that negatively associates body image and self-worth with food. Emmerling, Brennan and Major noted clients needed to "feel it if you want to heal it."

The biggest obstacle recorded was asking the participants to separate themselves from their critics. At first, many of the women looked across the room at the empty chair and told the counsellors that they believed everything their 'critical selves' had to say. However, once separation was obtained, the results were very positive. The group environment also allowed women to recognize the critical voices of others which, in turn, helped them find the self-criticism in their own voices.

As a final homework assignment, the women were asked to write letters to their critics, explaining what they had learned about themselves and how this would change their perception of their EDs. The following are two excerpts from the letters of the participants:

*Dear Critic:*

*"You have tried to convince me that your representation of events is 'hard fact' or 'reality' rather than just one possible version of things. Your version has been particularly unkind, vicious even. But as I've talked with you I've begun to see your version of things doesn't always make sense – in fact, it borders on nonsensical."*

*Dear Critic:*

*“I can still hear you right now laughing at me, because even though my glorified view of anorexia as success has shifted, I still feel compelled to follow its rules. You’re saying, ‘what does it matter if your view of it has shifted, if it’s not going to effect a change in your behaviour?’ You need to realize that it DOES matter. That just because the behaviours haven’t magically disappeared, my experience of them is so much different in a way that will hopefully facilitate the process of wanting-to-want to let them go.”*

For more information on EFT and the treatment of Eating Disorders contact: William Whelton, Assistant Professor, Educational Psychology, University of Alberta [wwhelton@ualberta.ca](mailto:wwhelton@ualberta.ca).

Submitted by:

Krystal Pardy

Graduate student, Memorial University



## Who Has 20 Minutes to Eat a Raisin?

Mindfulness. The hot topic surrounding this year's CCPA conference in sunny Calgary caused many a folk to sit and 'be mindful' of how 'mindless' lives have become. We gulp breakfast coffee at the kitchen sink; answer e-mails on cell phones during meetings, and surrender morning exercise or a newspaper peruse to slam the snooze sound interrupting la la land.

One statistic that struck home was the amount of time our thoughts actually existed in the present. A study conducted at Harvard University gave random individuals old school beepers and when they sounded, participants were asked to note whether their thoughts at that moment were in the past, present, or future. Astoundingly, 40% of the time, people were focusing on the past, 50% of the time thinking about the future, and only 10% of thoughts were in the here and now.

Sorry...was wondering about what to make for supper...

Being mindful can be extreme but for the many of us who aren't ready to 'get off the grid' there are simple ways to enjoy life to its fullest...now. Mindfulness doesn't have to give you a headache: there are little things each day to help us centre, take in our surroundings, and breathe.

Acknowledging five deep breaths, finding pleasure in the people and things that are immediately awakening your senses, engaging in the fun activities you used to love as a kid. These are all mindful ways of living. Without searching for a reason, without stopping conversation to Google the answer, mindfulness happens when you take a moment to slow things down.

Of course, while writing this article, I Googled mindfulness and found that "the first component [of mindfulness] involves the self-regulation of attention so that it is maintained on immediate experience, thereby allowing for increased recognition of mental events in the present moment. The second component involves adopting a particular orientation toward one's experiences in the present moment, an orientation that is characterized by curiosity, openness, and acceptance."  
(<http://onlinelibrary.wiley.com/doi/10.1093/clipsy.bph077/full>).

The here and the now. Whatever it may hold.

And while there are most definitely not enough hours in the day, this seems doable. Even without philosophy or religion: sans Carpe Diem, or Que Sera, Sera – you are exactly where you are supposed to be. Enjoy!

To help you get back to you:



Submitted by:  
Krystal Pardy  
Graduate student, Memorial University

# Mindfulness: Awaken to the Beauty of your Life

*"It's not that mindfulness is the "answer" to all life's problems. Rather, it is that all life's problems can be seen more clearly through the lens of a clear mind."*

*Jon Kabat-Zinn*



Within the last 10 years, mindfulness has quickly moved into the mainstream of behavioural medicine, psychotherapy, and counselling. Mindfulness is a way of learning how to purposefully pay attention, with acceptance and kindness, in the present moment. This workshop by Jenny Rowett, M. Ed., CCC, included a discussion of the seven attitudinal foundations of mindfulness with experiential practices designed to help participants cultivate their own daily practice of mindfulness meditation. The session concluded with insights on the transferability of the informal practice of mindfulness to the counseling relationship. It is possible to create a new sense of aliveness, appreciation, and gratitude for your life by reconnecting with your senses and the beauty of your life, exactly as it is in this moment, through the formal and informal practices of mindfulness.

Mindfulness training is the process of cultivating non-judgemental awareness of one's moment-to-moment experience. One learns to develop this awareness by paying attention to breath, physical sensations, thoughts and feelings. Mindfulness meditation strengthens our capacity to be present and experience our lives more directly and fully. It allows us to "own" each moment of our experience--whether pleasant or unpleasant--in all of our actions, such as eating a delicious meal or experiencing pain in the body.

With mindfulness, we can relate to our experience with less anxiety and fear. We begin to develop a friendly and caring attitude toward ourselves and have more choice about how we relate to our experiences. Mindfulness brings greater balance, acceptance and ease into our lives. Mindfulness assists us to reconnect with our sense of wholeness, regardless of what we might be facing. Mindfulness can be helpful to those living with the stress which accompanies work, relationships, childhood trauma, mid-life transitions, chronic pain or illness. It can help us to experience inner resources of awareness, relaxation and balance.

The cultivation of mindfulness is a powerful addition to counselling. It is effective both as a preliminary step before beginning counselling and as an adjunct to the counselling itself.

Mindfulness expedites the counselling process in the following ways:

- discerns between *pain* and *suffering*. Pain is just pain; suffering is largely self-imposed.
- helps us to reduce our own suffering.
- increases the ability to tolerate strong emotions. Hence, difficult feelings are not so overwhelming; "A feeling is just a feeling and I won't die from it."
- interrupts the pattern of getting "stuck" in difficult emotions. This has the effect of helping to contain strong feelings, rather than intensifying them.
- reduces fear, cultivating acceptance of difficult feelings or material.
- helps to break repetitive cycles by simply experiencing, rather than expressing or acting.
- cultivates non-identification. All painful feelings are seen to be transient, and an individual can choose not to be defined by their pain, nor be swept away in the identification. ("I" am not a panic attack!)
- develops the ability to perceive the components of painful states, such as sensation, emotion, thought or feeling. Painful states cease to be "real", but metamorphose into a shifting field of experiences.
- supports boundary formation by suspending the familiar narrative, or story-line. We become habituated to the story that we *know*, and it often stirs us up.
- helps to distinguish between the *experience* and the *idea* of what is happening.
- cultivates patience. Ups and downs are seen to be part of unceasing change.
- promotes understanding our barriers to motivation--protection, boredom, resistance or aversion. We can distinguish between "disliking" and "I don't want to!"
- assists with experiencing one's body. Often the events which bring people to counselling have disenfranchised them from their somatic reality. This is particularly true with early abuse and neglect.

Mindfulness emphasizes the inner experience. Counselling engages the experience in relationship. Both aspects are often necessary to negotiate the difficulties that bring people to counselling. Mindfulness expedites the process, making it easier, faster and more effective. Mindfulness in the context of therapy is simply a useful set of skills to learn, along with many others.

Mindfulness counseling and training has been proven to reduce stress, improve concentration, enhance productivity and effectiveness, improve your ability to more skillfully manage emotions, as well as a multitude of other physical and emotional benefits. It has been proven to be effective in producing positive changes in a variety of common difficulties or disorders such as stress, low mood, chronic sadness, anxiety, depression, chronic pain, and a wide variety of other presenting problems.

Mindfulness is a paradox – it is both easy and difficult. It is easy in the sense that you have all the necessary equipment to practice mindfulness with you at all times and it is difficult because much of our world and habits militate against it.

Submitted by:  
Paula George  
School Counsellor, Leary's Brook Junior High  
Vice-President (NLCPA)

# Congratulations to our Retirees!



**Mandy Tucker**  
**School Counsellor, Beachy Cove Elementary**

Mandy Tucker is retiring after 24 years of working in education. She is retiring from Beachy Cove Elementary as a school counsellor. She previously worked as special education teacher, core French teacher and counsellor at Holy Cross School in Holyrood. Mandy also worked in Norris Arm, Lewisporte and Campbellton for a year as a counsellor and itinerant assessor. She worked for one and one-half years as consultant with Student Support Services Division, Department of Education. Mandy started teaching in Grand Falls-Windsor at Grand Falls Academy as Work/Study Teacher, core French teacher and School Counsellor. Prior to working in education, Mandy worked at numerous jobs but mostly as clerk-receptionist to the executive secretary in provincial/federal government positions and with Newfoundland and Labrador Hydro.

Mandy recently shared Mr. Bill Barry's High Five from *The Real Games Series* in her retiring message to all of her students at Beachy Cove Elementary. In saying this, she is happy to say that working as guidance counsellor has been her 'dream' occupation. Mandy grew up in St. Philip's and is very happy to end her work in education in her home community. The road where she grew up biking and playing with her friends has been the road she has travelled on to work with students from kindergarten to grade 6 at Beachy Cove Elementary. She has "followed her heart" and can say that she "focused on the journey" as she left her work as secretary to pursue university studies in order to work in a helping profession. She will fondly remember all those with whom she has worked and those who she has helped and who have helped her on her journey (Helping Hands). However, "change is constant" and the time has come to retire, a time that Mandy hopes to "continue learning" as she spends more time with friends and family and enjoys more time painting, gardening, travelling and spending winters in a warmer climate.



**Karen Mitchell**  
**School Psychologist, Eastern School District**

Karen has worked as an educator for 29 years. She began her career in as a Physical Education Teacher at Bishop Abraham Junior High. She completed a Post-Graduate Diploma in Human Relations and Family Life at McGill University. She was employed as an Educational Therapist at Booth Memorial High. She worked as a School Counsellor at St. Edwards (Brigus), Holy Cross (Holyrood), and Roncalli High (Avondale). She worked as a School Psychologist in the Spaniard's Bay area of Avalon West. For the past ten years, she has worked as School Psychologist in the Avalon East Region of Eastern School District. She has been the "social director" for the Avalon East crew and she has brought much laughter and spirit to the group. She has made huge differences in all of the lives that she has touched. Over the years she has travelled the miles with a WISC kit in hand and a huge smile on her face. Her skills at triangulating data, summarizing key issues in meetings, supporting and listening will be truly missed. We have had her "Retire-a-Palooza" and we have sung and danced and we have wished her well!

For many years, Karen was a Sessional Lecturer at Memorial University. While working in the earlier years she owned and operated a bar and restaurant (McGregors) and she owned and operated a bar and grill (The Rose and Thistle Pub). She was known for her excellent culinary skills and especially remembered for her curly fries. She claims she only served the alcohol there. She also completed contract work for Unified Family Court. When asked about retirement plans, she quickly responded with: "Plans to do nothing!" She will travel a lot and work very little. Karen is very known for her humour and said: "Just because I have the time, I won't be ironing my sheets!" She will be "doing life to the fullest!" She will be busy gardening, walking and socializing!! She will cook lots and she will be busy managing her rental properties. Karen will still enjoy "Fry"-days but she claims she will enjoy Mondays more!! Congrats on your retirement! Happy Trails!

## NLCPA Executive

**Peggy Hann, President**

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**Michele Davis, Jennifer Abbott, Paula George, Tamar Kelly-Duff, Connie Newhook, Peggy Hann**

**Save the Dates:**

**NLCPA's Fall Conference & AGM**

**October 24-26, 2012**

**Colleague Retirements**

Please submit retirement notifications and/or articles to  
Michele Davis (Communications, NLCPA) at  
[michelledavis@esdn.ca](mailto:michelledavis@esdn.ca)

**Contribute to the NLCPA Newsletter**

- ✓ What's happening in your region?
- ✓ What book peaked your interest recently?
- ✓ What's some good news from your school community?
- ✓ What's your favourite counselling/psychology resource?
- ✓ What did you learn from a recent PD session or webinar?

Please submit articles to Michele Davis (Communications, NLCPA) at  
[michelledavis@esdn.ca](mailto:michelledavis@esdn.ca)

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**Note:**

If there are any errors, changes, or omissions, please contact the executive.



## Canon Moments from the CCPA Conference in Calgary (May 24-27, 2012)



### **“The Newfoundland Contingent”**

Lesley Pope, Dr. Glenn Sheppard, Paula George, Krystal Pardy, Trent Langdon, Peggy Hann, Jacqueline Synard



### **CCPA School Counsellors Chapter Executive**

Mike Leier, Trent Langdon, Shelly Skelton, Margaret Cain, Janice Graham-Migel





Have a happy and safe summer everyone!

Be mindful, peaceful, soulful, and self-full...

