

Perspective

June 10, 2015

Colette Hoff, Editor



Upcoming Events

Relationship Group – Tuesdays – 7:30pm

[Open House, HRL 2015, July 20](#)

[Sahale Summer Camp, June 22](#)

[Celebration for John Hoff's 80th, July 5](#)

Definition: *The relationship of aspects of a subject to each other and to a whole, a viewpoint or vista*

Life can only be understood backwards; but it must be lived forwards. Soren Kierkegaard

Tragedy and comedy are but two aspects of what is real, and whether we see the tragic or the humorous is a matter of perspective. ~Arnold Beisser

We don't see things as they are, we see them as we are. ~Anais Nin

If we are truly to gain perspective when something shakes our foundations and turns our world upside down, we must carefully choose the **lens through which we view our experiences. Only then can we truly honor what we feel in our bodies, minds, and spirits and what, in their infinite wisdom, they might want us to know about our pain, joy, suffering,** and depression and means turning our world right side up. ~ Caren Goldman from *Healing Words*

Nothing's beautiful from every point of view. ~ Horace

The Village eView

On-Line News of the Goodenough Community System:

The American Association for the Furtherance of Community

Convocation: A Church and Ministry

Mandala Resources, Inc.

Sahale Learning Center

The EcoVillage at Sahale

Every man takes the limits of his own field of vision for the limits of the world. ~Arnold Schopenhauer

You are responsible for choosing your own perspective. Having perspective is a lot like owning an attitude you have. Your perspective and your attitude toward other people is something we are usually quite secret about. ~John L. Hoff

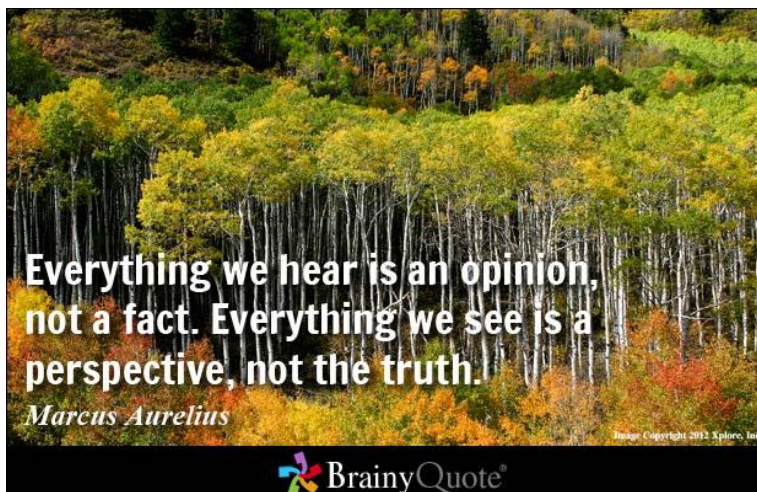
One person's craziness is another person's reality. ~Tim Burton

From **Carl Sagan**, *Pale Blue Dot: A Vision of the Human Future in Space*:

Look again at that dot. That's here. That's home. That's us. On it everyone you love, everyone you know, everyone you ever heard of, every human being who ever was, lived out their lives. The aggregate of our joy and suffering, thousands of confident religions, ideologies, and economic doctrines, every hunter and forager, every hero and coward, every creator and destroyer of civilization, every king and peasant, every young couple in love, every mother and father, hopeful child, inventor and explorer, every teacher of morals, every corrupt politician, every "superstar," every "supreme leader," every saint and sinner in the history of our species lived there-on a mote of dust suspended in a sunbeam.

The Earth is a very small stage in a vast cosmic arena. Think of the endless cruelties visited by the inhabitants of one corner of this pixel on the scarcely distinguishable inhabitants of some other corner, how frequent their misunderstandings, how eager they are to kill one another, how fervent their hatreds. Think of the rivers of blood spilled by all those generals and emperors so that, in glory and triumph, they could become the momentary masters of a fraction of a dot.

Our posturings, our imagined self-importance, the delusion that we have some privileged position in the Universe, are challenged by this point of pale light. Our planet is a lonely speck in the great enveloping cosmic dark. In our obscurity, in all this vastness, there is no hint that help will come from elsewhere to save us from ourselves.



The Earth is the only world known so far to harbor life. There is nowhere else, at least in the near future, to which our species could migrate. Visit, yes. Settle, not yet. Like it or not, for the moment the Earth is where we make our stand.

It has been said that astronomy is a humbling and character-building experience. There is perhaps no better demonstration of the folly of human conceits than this distant image of our

tiny world. To me, it underscores our responsibility to deal more kindly with one another, and to preserve and cherish the pale blue dot, the only home we've ever known."

And another very different perspective by **George Carlin:**

We're so self-important. So arrogant. Everybody's going to save something now. Save the trees, save the bees, save the whales, save the snails. And the supreme arrogance? Save the planet! Are these people kidding? Save the planet? We don't even know how to take care of ourselves; we haven't learned how to care for one another. We're gonna save the fuckin' planet? . . . And, by the way, there's nothing wrong with the planet in the first place. The planet is fine. The people are fucked! Compared with the people, the planet is doin' great. It's been here over four billion years . . . The planet isn't goin' anywhere, folks. We are! We're goin' away. Pack your shit, we're goin' away. And we won't leave much of a trace. Thank God for that. Nothing left. Maybe a little Styrofoam. The planet will be here, and we'll be gone. Another failed mutation; another closed-end biological mistake.

We can complain because rose bushes have thorns, or rejoice because thorn bushes have roses.
~Abraham Lincoln

The world is a tragedy to those who feel, but a comedy to those who think. ~ Horace Walpole

"If you look the right way, you can see that the whole world is a garden." Frances Hodgson Burnett, *The Secret Garden*

Some people see the glass half full. Others see it half empty. I see a glass that's twice as big as it needs to be. ~ George Carlin



Perhaps nothing helps us make the movement from our little selves to a larger world than remembering God in gratitude. Such a perspective puts God in view in all of life, not just in the moments we set aside for worship or spiritual disciplines. Not just in the moments when life seems easy. ~Henri Nouwen

Nature helps me with perspective

Kirsten Rohde

While staying recently on the Oregon Coast I could look at the waves rolling in for long periods of time without ever feeling bored – there was never a repetition and my mind just kept taking it in. Looking far out to the horizon too – no land in sight. I would wonder what was on the far side of that ocean where land would be seen again. I've heard that resting our eyes on the far horizon like this puts our brains into meditation. Then when my sister, Katie and I were in the



coastal forest I took a picture of Katie in front of one of those really tall trees. That's perspective!

I can keep trying to let my mind be open to the largest view or think with the biggest perspective I can let in. And I'm coming to terms with the fact that I can't ever predict events and when they'll happen. The news is full of predictions – political, polls, scientific, weather, numbers – yet at the moment when a big specific event happens and exactly when it happens it is sudden information to us. Maybe if I relaxed into a broader perspective, like keeping a more meditative perspective on life, I wouldn't have to be so worried about what if's. For example, as much as I knew that my brother's life span would possibly be shortened by his illness, there was no way to know any specifics. Until the specific day and time that he died. Then everything sort of comes to a sharp focus with intense feeling. I'm now working to take in that even though his life was cut short, he still did have a very good life – when his whole life is put into perspective.

Wise people can say with perfect equanimity that dying is also part of life. I'd like to be there but really I'm not quite there! However I can begin to see

that resting my eyes on the nature that surrounds me helps me take in all parts of life more peacefully. At least that's what I'm aiming for. After all the tree that I'm looking at today could crash down in a storm this winter. That shouldn't take away from the gift of a lovely tree today.



*When mindfulness is quick enough,
the student will experience
the moment of consciousness itself.
He will see one mind-moment
arising and vanishing in clear detail.
This is to witness the truth of experience,
undistorted by delusion.*

*It is a glimpse of ultimate reality.
~Cynthia Thatcher
(?? to 2013, Philosopher, Writer, Buddhist teacher)*

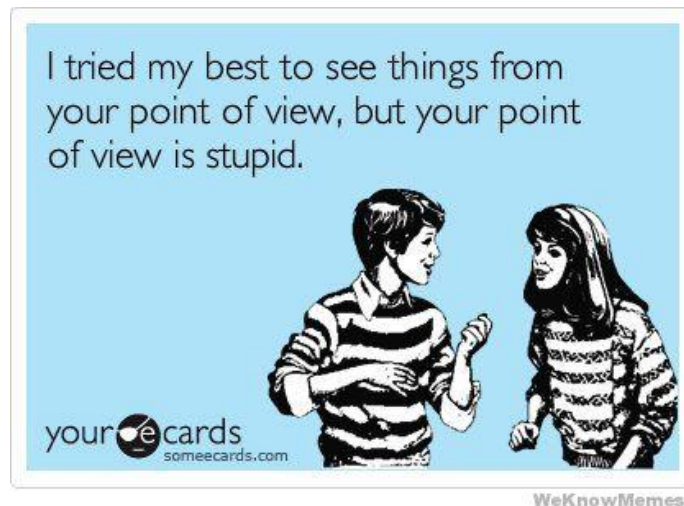
John and Colette Share Their Perspective on Community

John Hoff

When editor, Colette first asked me to write something about our perspective of community life I turned back to her for what became a long conversation that presents our perspective.

For hundreds and thousands of years of human history, people have lived in communities and have supported each other's lives and discerned together a viable future. A function of community has been to support a view of humanity that improved (to the measure that cooperation prevailed).

Colette and I found ourselves affirming our commitment to the importance of community life in the development of good human beings. We appreciate how much living and working with community has developed our own souls and has given us a reason for commitment to service. Community is a perspective that focuses on the importance of relationship and cooperation at both personal and social levels. Community provides a set of principles and programs that support human development. We value your support and encourage you to continue to support the communities in your life.



Be Here Now

Bruce Perler

Last week I wrote about how its been; 5 years now into living our choice to relocate from Seattle to Tahuya while keeping city employment and building our rural lifestyle. I've thought of this as a first phase of a longer term change, an experiment in simplifying some aspects of life while allowing more complexity in others. Living in an emerging eco-village is fulfilling a long time dream and, this version is more rich and complex than the one I began picturing in my mid-twenties. Simpler living - closer to; the earth, our food choices, the animals of the valley and friends with which we tend the land of Sahale is deeply satisfying. This is a complex simplicity, rich with relationships, interesting

problems to solve and a growing sense of purposefulness. The more I live this way, the more I want for the balance of my life to move toward our rural community which supports Sahale's vision.



And, most every Monday morning and Tuesday evening, I'm on a ferry heading to or from Seattle. The ferry ride helps the sometimes unpleasant transition for me. By the time we exit Rich Passage it becomes visible in the distance, a crust of concrete and sparkles of steel and glass crouching on the edge of the water in front of the Cascade Mountains. By mid channel the Space Needle and Smith Tower are obvious and so is the

brown dome of smog that is present most of the year. This week our trip was a bit slower due to an aircraft carrier ahead of us. It was a good Monday for a slower trip and, by the time we reached downtown I was ready to roll off into intense traffic, armored up for a true road warrior experience.

For the most part, I can enjoy the experience in town although I'm so ready to be gone by Tuesday afternoon. As the ferry pulls away from Coleman dock and the mechanized growl and glow of Seattle slips into the background, sky, water mountains and lush green become the dominate features. I love the site of the city slipping back into its proper perspective.



Back at home, our living space is slowly being improved. This year a new shed is providing a small workshop and space for tools and storage as well as office and library for Irene. We've found a local builder who put up a shell in a day from a prefab'd kit, and are finishing it ourselves with wiring, insulation etc. This welcome new space will also allow us to be consolidating our storage area in Belfair to one unit. Downsizing really does take time.

Put the shed here, please.



Sometimes I get impatient with the process of change, forgetting that its about the journey much more than the arriving. Someday I will no longer be working in the city and will be operating a small



business or two from my country village along with others also practicing at their life's work, creative endeavors, and simplified lifestyles. This all feels very important, vital to the sustainability of our community and a valuable statement and example of integrated, planet sensitive intelligent living.

And, nothing is certain. Be here now.

My mother passed at 59 and I'm already 52. Be here now.

Many of my dearest friends are in their 70s and 80s. Be here now.

I risk my hide each time I armor up and head to the city on my motorcycle. Be here now.

"Be here now." says the voice of real knowing inside me. There is only now.

And on it goes.



The deAnguera Blog: Tent Up 2015



The Big White Tent got set up again for the 13th year! That's quite a record. As you can see from these shots we are quite skilled at it.

As any good circus crew will tell you, raising the big top is one of the most important jobs. Everybody gets involved, even the performers. The big top is where the action is.

The same is true for Lab because all the plenary sessions will be held in this tent as well as any performances. Assembling all the heavy poles and covering them with the big canvas skins required a lot of coordination.

Once again Norm Peck was our able leader who knew how to break down a task and assign people. I always admire folks who can do this because it is not one of my strong points. I am glad somebody else is able to

make the necessary decisions. Norm and I were joined by Jim, Douglas, Neale, Russ, Phil Buchmeier, Josh, Pharaoh, Evelyn, Jerry, Gordon, and Tod. Thanks for joining the task. Our very good meals were provided by some of the women who gathered to extend the work of their weekend.

I have always thought tent raising is the true test of how well our community can work together. This is true teamwork with nobody competing with anybody else.

When I think of all the hard work ahead of us just to keep Sahale going such as mowing, painting, and other maintenance tasks I am glad we can accomplish them together. We can count on getting them done. We have learned to rely on and trust each other.

The physical work can be hard but fortunately we don't do it all the time. In areas where a lot of centenarians live, a moderately physical work life is actually quite healthy. These areas are rural with farming being a primary occupation. They include the Caucasus region as well as the Andes in South America. These areas also tend to have a strong sense of community often going back many generations. Guess we are rediscovering some very old traditions.

The Goodenough Community came about because many of us realize something was lost with the disappearance of traditional ways. It can also be a way of addressing our increasingly sedentary office lives by introducing a certain amount of physical work.

I don't believe it is possible to be human without community. Community offers a sense of belonging found almost nowhere else. Our lives outside the Community tend towards isolation. Most social activity in my experience has been very superficial and there was a time when I was satisfied with that.

Now I am no longer satisfied with superficial relationships. I want people I can be real with. I think the work life tends to drive us all away from each other. As I have found through experience, the results often are depressing.

People like John and Colette Hoff can show us the way back to a working traditional life in community. We can learn to trust each other again instead of giving ourselves away to our ruling elites. That is perhaps the most revolutionary thing we can do.



My greatest action shot: Tod Ransdell pulling the straps for two tent skins together.

Come to Celebrate John's Journey!



John Lawrence Hoff

It's your 80th Birthday!

We're going to celebrate on

Sunday, July 5,

Sahale Learning Center

Games and Play at 3:00

Dinner at 5:00 p.m.

RSVP

You are welcome to celebrate the 4th at Sahale. Come anytime beginning Thursday July 2. The Tahuya Day Parade begins at 1:00 Saturday, July 4.

Email hoff@goodenough.org with your plans.

Themes for Village EViews

We have been putting out this on-line newsletter for many years. We have agreement among us that it could be improved by having more stories and personal information from our lives. We are encouraging you to help us by suggesting words that might serve as useful anchors in your life, something to help you ponder and reflect on your own thoughts. For instance, we will appreciate your ideas, dreams, brief messages and concerns you want us to know about. The Village eView has a purpose to encourage communication among us and to make sure that ideas and concerns get talked about in our everyday lives. As a community we continue to learn that the path to a better community involves communicating more. Help us! Consider taking a pause and write out words you would like more clarity about. This summer we are going to be talking about words that are key in describing our community and its purpose in our lives. We welcome your contributions. Thanks for helping!

Future Themes:

June 17, Voice

June 24, Seeing

July 1, Gift

Notice the perspective in this article:

Submitted by Bill Kohlmeyer

14 COMMON MISCONCEPTIONS ABOUT PEOPLE WHO GO TO THERAPY

By Sahaj Kohli / Posted: 05/20/2015

Perspectives and conceptions are speaking of our personal experiences and needs and that is why it is important to understand and own up to our viewpoints.

No one ever hears a friend say "I have a doctor's appointment" and immediately thinks that they must be rich or weak or crazy. It's generally the *right* and *less stubborn* thing to see a professional when our body is injured or feels "atypical."

But if someone wants to see a therapist for their mental health, people aren't as uncritical.

I talk very openly about the fact that I see a therapist. While my friends and family are mostly supportive, they, along with the general population, still ask questions or make comments that remind me that going to therapy is not as *normalized* or as *acceptable* as I had hoped.

I know my loved ones mean well, and I consider myself lucky; but there's still that millisecond between saying the variation of words "I see a therapist" and the polite (albeit usually misinformed) reply where the stigma lives. All the immediate thoughts and questions translate to a slight change in demeanor and discomfort reflected in their eyes.

This stigma lives in the darkness of this millisecond, along with the overshadowing fear, lack of awareness and basic ignorance. Its complexities need to be broken down and broken apart so we can start from the beginning and rewire our thoughts on mental health and therapy.

So in an attempt to shed light on the truth about seeing a therapist and raise awareness, here is a list of 14 things you shouldn't assume about people who go to therapy:

1. We're weak.

Going to therapy is actually a very courageous and strong thing to do. I've had people tell me that it must be nice to spend only an hour per week "dealing with my problems." *It is nice*. It's also the most emotionally exhausting hour of my week. One has to be open to facing every corner of their mind and heart and be completely, unabashedly open about fears, truths and experiences in order to really get the most of what a therapist can offer. That requires strength -- strength to explore your own

emotional and mental limits and boundaries, strength to be guided in directions you wouldn't go and strength to learn and actively seek a better place.

Continued page 19

A little more room left in Sahale Summer Camp! Help us fill space for 6 more campers!

June 22 to 28, 2015

Irene Perler



The campground at Sahale is being prepared for our 10th Annual Summer Camp and the staff are all preparing for a variety of activities and experiences, which we use to deepen our circle of friendship for the week.

We are very excited to continue with themes about friendship and enjoy such things as evening campfires and stargazing; playing Frisbee in the meadow; learning about fish, frogs and snakes; swimming in the river; singing songs and learning about our own thoughts and feelings.



If you know anyone **aged 9 to 12** who may still want to join our camp....please send them to our website www.goodenough.org and better yet, have them contact me personally at irene_perler@hotmail.com and I'll enjoy orienting them and getting them registered.

Send a child to camp

Irene Perler

Each year, for the last 9 years, Sahale Summer Camp has enjoyed a program rich in culture and learning for campers and camp staff alike. This year, our tenth, the theme is Friendship again, because it is the best theme we can keep learning from. There are skills to learn that help make friendship fun, fair, creative, meaningful and playful. Young people can learn about older people and older folks enjoying finding out what young people think and feel.

Our community has a deep investment in the next generations and in family life. It is a vision and mission to pass on learning about relationships, family life and self-development. Our summer camp program does that very naturally through the week of camp life and it also works with the parents ahead of time to help them learn more about their parenting goals and hopes for their children.

Consider a donation to the Goodenough Community Scholarship fund, which supports families who want to send their children to summer camp, and may need financial assistance. Our camp fees are very reasonable in order to make it accessible, and a little help goes a long way to make our camp experience a diverse and welcoming one.

Please feel free to donate on-line with a note about scholarship fund, or you may send a check to:
Goodenough Community

Box 312

Tahuya, WA 98588

Thank you for considering this way to make a difference!

Available for Rent: A Private Suite at 3610 SW Barton St.

Very large walk-in closet

Beautiful bathroom with large soaking tub and lots of cupboards

Large bedroom with lovely west view of Puget Sound

While we shared space at the Community Center for a couple of months, we are again looking to someone to share space in the Fauntleroy neighborhood. The rent is \$950 per month including utilities and a beautiful shared kitchen.

Call Colette 206-755-8404

The 2015 Human Relations Laboratory, A Perspective on Development

John and Colette Hoff

In this summer of 2015, as I prepare for our Sahale Summer Camp for 9 to 12 year olds, I find myself wanting to talk to them about their own development: “It appears that human beings around the world and over all time have tried to improve themselves by learning to do things better and to be an admirable person—keeping one’s promises, being law-abiding, being of service to others, and managing their emotional life. Human beings get a great deal of satisfaction as one of the benefits of trying to be a good person and even a better one than they are now.

I like being surprised, and I usually am when I am talking to children and youth about our common desire to be good people and to do good work. They get it! It is easy to tell from their questions and statements that they prefer the idea of improving themselves over the experience of being uncaring and insensitive or undeveloped. They tell me they want to grow up and long to be recognized as a good person. Most of us are so made that to be learning and improving is valued more than laziness and insensitivity along with a lack of concern for morality. At our Human Relations Laboratory we are going to be approaching the same theme, although by the time we are in our late twenties and thirties, our own conscience and society has struck a contract with us to be responsible and hard-working citizens in a community of mutually-responsible people.

In HRL 2015 we will be reviewing our lives beginning with early attempts at self-improvement—learning to relate and learning to make moral decisions. Participants will be encouraged to ask good questions of each other and to share their inner life.

We are looking for people to join us in researching prevailing attitudes and attempts by institutions to encourage honesty and hard work. Other people will be researching the role of moral development in human evolution. If you are interested in helping us learn and demonstrate what it means to be a good person in this day and age, let Colette or me know of your [interest at hoff@goodenough.org](mailto:interest@hoff@goodenough.org)

Human Relations Laboratory

August 9 to 15, 2015

A Path from Stuckness to Freedom

Seven rich days of experiential learning and social creativity within a community environment

Sahale Learning Center

Kitsap Peninsula

Register soon at www.goodenough.org (Space is limited)

360-275-3957



Useful for your marriage, a resource for your family and a kick in the pants for your personal development.

News from Members and Friends

By Elizabeth Jarrett-Jefferson

Birthdays & Anniversaries & Special Announcements

■ **Norm & Susan Smith Anniversary** – June 14 – Congratulations, Norm & Sue

■ **Happy Birthday, Nan Krecker Scott-** June 15

Engaged!

Brittany Smith & Vince Pettit recently announced their engagement to be married. Brittany, daughter of Hal Smith, Hollis Ryan and Paula Armstrong, will wed Vince at a time to be announced.

Congratulations, Britt & Vince!



Congratulations to the Upcoming Graduates



Chris Benner-Kenagy, son of Richard Kenagy and Lee Benner, will soon be graduating from **Central Washington University (CWU)** in Ellensburg.

Chris will be graduating with a psychology major. He will be working this summer working on a research project with a professor before he graduates, having enjoyed analysis and statistics this past year. He then will be starting a job with College Access Now, an AmeriCorp position that helps students with little support get what they need for the process of getting into college. He will be working with 30 students at Nathan Hale HS where he went to high school. *Congratulations, Chris!*

Kathleen Buchmeier will graduate from CWU on June 13 with a degree in Anthropology and a minor in Native American studies. Kathleen's parents, Phil and Rose, will be hosting a party on June 20 and you are invited (**see below**). Congratulations, Kathleen!





Gillen Martin, daughter of Kate Martin, will graduate in June from Arcata High School, Arcata, California. Gillen plans to attend Brown University (Providence, Rhode Island) in the fall. Congratulations, Gillen!

Brynn Zebold, daughter of Ryan and Liz Zebold, will be graduating on Friday, June 12, from Burlington-Edison High School. In September, Brynn will be moving into her dorm at The Evergreen State College, Olympia, where she plans to study creative writing and art. Brynn hopes to become an

author. Congratulations, Brynn!

If you have news about yourself or other friends or family, please email [Elizabeth!](mailto:Elizabeth@...)



You are invited to a graduation celebration

Honoring

Kathleen Rose Buchmeier

June 20th 2PM to 6 PM.

Refreshments will be served

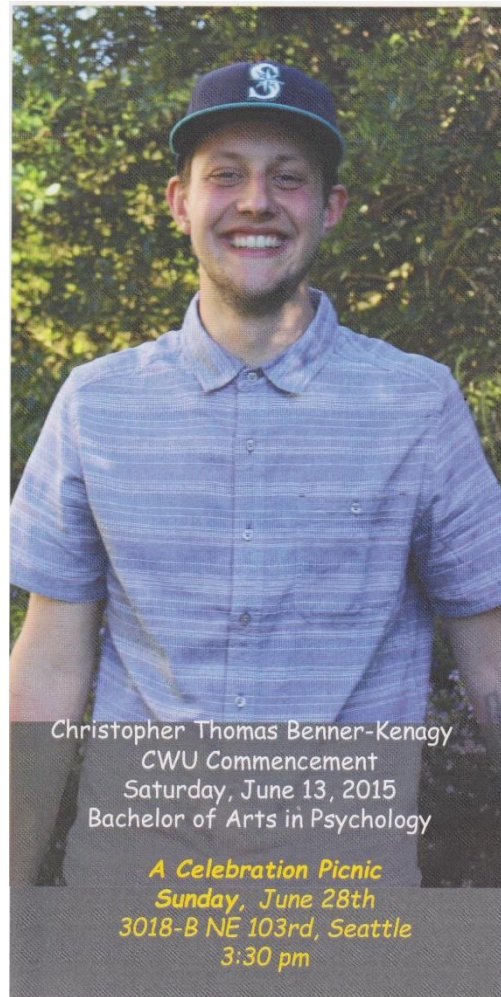
Toasting !

Where: Philip and Rosemary Buchmeier's

9033 13th Ave S.W.

Seattle, Wa. 98016

RSVP 206-764-0193



Cultural Programs & Events in 2015

For the Goodenough Community, cultural life is an arena for creative expression. All programs and events are open to the public. We welcome your interest and participation.

Over thousands of years human communities have organized not only their work life but also their relational and cultural life. The Goodenough Community organizes its cultural life around encouraging human development—through our programs for men, women, committed couples, families and around age groupings. Cultural programs usually encourage maturity, responsibility, and the development of valued relationships. Some of our programs bring everyone together with a seasonal emphasis. Following, are program offerings for the next period on our calendar.

Programs & Events in 2015

Third Age Gatherings

The Conscious Couples Network

Family Enrichment Network

The Men's Culture

Women's Culture

Human Relations laboratory

Sahale Summer Camp

Relational Weekend, page

Third Age Gathering

Joan Valles

The Third Age group is for older adults, approximately age 60 and older, who are interested in exploring the issues of living well aging and supporting each other in this “third stage” of life.

Sept 18, October 23, and November 20 are the remaining 2015 dates.



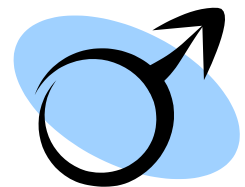
and
while

Third Agers meet at the home of [Phil, Joan, Barbara, and Jim](#) in West Seattle. Gatherings start at 6 PM with potluck supper. An RSVP is always helpful – either by phoning us at 206-763-2258 or by emailing me at joanvalles70@yahoo.com

Men's Program

Theme: Friendship among Men

The men of the Goodenough Community had a great weekend this spring and are planning a weekend this fall. Please let [Bruce Perler](#) know of your interest.



Sahale Summer Camp for 9 to 12 Year Olds

June 22 to 28, 2015

<http://www.goodenough.org/camp.htm>



Human Relations Laboratory

August 9-15, 2015

A Path from Stuckness to Freedom

Sahale Learning Center

On the Kitsap Peninsula near Belfair

Register soon (Space is limited)

www.goodenough.org (360) 275-3957



Sponsored by

The Goodenough Community –

An event designed to encourage human development

- This event can inspire your own desire to be a better person.
- Whether you are focused on personal mastery or trying to improve your relationships, you will find this learning/training event will facilitate your growth.
- The Lab context provides opportunities to practice interpersonal skills and experience community formation.
- Former attendees have referred to the Lab as transformative and rejuvenating.

We offer the opportunity for social creativity in play, drama, dance, music, song and conversation. Each day will include time to explore the magical land of Sahale.

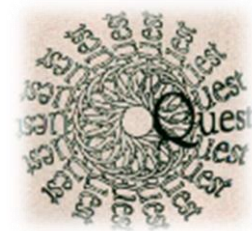
To register: www.goodenough.org or call (360) 275-3957 to discuss your interest.

Quest: A Counseling and Healing Center

Our belief is that mental and emotional health is a prerequisite for spiritual well-being, collaboration, and the expression of compassion. Quest's counseling and education programs, open to all interested individuals, focus on empowering individuals, couples, and family groups to be happier and be more effective in relationships

. Call John (206 963-4738), Colette (206-755 8404).

Currently, John and Colette are now visiting with clients at the new community center , 3610 SW Barton Street, Seattle 98106 as well as Sahale.



Continued from page 11

2. We're crazy.

Whether a therapy-goer is suffering from a mental illness or seeking help for overwhelming feelings/thoughts, "crazy" is *never* an appropriate term and only increases the stigma that causes some people to never seek the help and peace they so very much deserve and/or need.

3. We're wasting our money.

We all spend our money on and prioritize things that are important to us. The way one might spend money on a personal trainer to help them reach or maintain a level of physical fitness, I see the money I spend on a therapist as an investment in my health and my personal development.

4. We're rich.

Yes, therapy can be expensive, but there are a number of ways to pay for therapy. Most therapists, in my research, are willing to work with clients on a sliding scale if insurance isn't an option, and a lot of companies and schools provide (sometimes a certain amount of) free sessions to employees/students.

5. We don't have a healthy network of loved ones.

Going to therapy can't be conflated with the idea that a therapy-goer doesn't have solid relationships. Therapy is not a replacement for friendship, and a therapist is not a friend. Friendships are two-way streets, which can cause a very biased view of experiences and circumstances; therapy is a one-sided relationship with a professional who has the skills and expertise to guide and help you through your struggles and needs.

Furthermore, seeing a therapist does not mean that someone has a bad relationship with his or her parents. Yes, at a young age we learn basic skills and views on relationships, our needs and the world, but not everything that happens for the rest of our life can be pinpointed to our relationship with our parents. Which leads me to my next point...

6. We talk about you.

Don't ask us what our therapist knows about you. Most likely, you never even come up, but even if you do, it's none of your business. Also, don't ever degrade our feelings in a conversation or argument by saying something along the lines of, "You're probably going to tell your therapist about this, aren't you?" Therapy is a sacred space for people to talk about their relationships and feelings about whomever and whatever. If we do bring it up to our therapist, there's good reason; it's not a gossip session.

7. There was a very clear, definitive breakdown or experience leading us to therapy.

There's usually always a catalyst for change. Whether it's a traumatic experience or strained relationships or being overwhelmed in daily life, there are a number of reasons why people seek out therapy. There's not a readily available list of answers to choose from that makes it "OK" to see a therapist. This confines therapy-goers to certain labels and boxes. It's *always* OK to see a therapist, and it's important to note that the reason for being in therapy can evolve -- maybe starting because of a certain experience and evolving into the exploration of another situation.

8. We're in a bad "place."

One does not *need* to be in a "bad" or "dangerous" place to see a therapist. As mentioned in the previous point, there's usually a catalyst for deciding to go, but it could be a culmination of experiences or feelings, too. I'm a happy, healthy 20-something professional whose work, relationships and hobbies are not suffering, and I happily attend my therapy sessions every week. Why? As I've said, the reason for

being in therapy evolves and at this moment, I still feel like I have so much to learn about myself, how I handle certain feelings and situations and my needs.

9. There's a set time frame for being in therapy.

There's a lot of good debate surrounding the appropriate length of therapy. But personally, I've been in therapy for six months and counting -- I'm very happy with my therapist but do believe that there will come a point where I won't have to go as frequently. I have a friend who has been going for over two years, and I know someone who went for two months, twice a week for guidance through a traumatic experience. The length of therapy and the frequency of visits is something one works out with their therapist, having full control of whether or not to stop at any point.

10. We can't let go of things.

Therapy isn't synonymous with being unable to let go of the past. Often, being able to tackle present struggles requires us to discuss past experiences, but that doesn't mean we are harboring our past, it just means that we have to revisit it to really dissect and understand certain connections and underlying problems we are having presently.

11. You should feel sad for us... or scared of us, or any emotion that you wouldn't have felt before we admitted to being someone who goes to therapy.

This just enables the stigma surrounding seeking help. Don't look at us or talk to us differently because we've admitted to seeing a therapist. There's no shame in seeing a therapist and there's nothing wrong with seeking help or guidance from a professional. If you *have* to feel an emotion, be proud of us. Applaud us on our choice to work on ourselves and cater to our mental well-being.

12. We're on medication.

Due to a quick fix mentality our society has learned, it's common for people to assume that therapy-goers are also on medication. But this isn't always the case and not all of us are on medication. Yes, there are illnesses that warrant the need for medication, but therapy provides people with the coping and problem-solving skills needed to live a healthier, happier life.

13. Our therapist tells us what to do and what to think.

Don't ever counter something we've said with a snarky, "Oh, did your therapist tell you that?" Seeing a therapist doesn't mean we've relinquished control over our own thought process and feelings. We're still human beings who, at the end of the day, will rely on our own basic instincts and knowledge to make decisions and choices we deem fit. A therapist is there to help us uncover our strengths, work through our struggles and help lead us to a healthier, happier life not tell us what to do.

14. Our therapist can help you/your friend.

***While I commend** anyone who is looking and wants to see a therapist, therapists are not one size fits all. It's important to search directories and filter for your needs and wants. I'll admit that it's hard. Finding a therapist is exhausting in itself and can feel very daunting for anyone who is already hesitant. However, a lot of therapists will provide a brief consultation, and most will also be receptive to an email exchange so you can figure out if they will be a good fit for you.

My hope is that by breaking down these common misconceptions of people who go to therapy, we'll be one step closer to being a society that seeks help when we want and need to without stigma... and that I can talk about seeing a therapist as seamlessly as I can talk about my doctor's appointment next week.

**The Goodenough Community was formed by people who valued inner work and social support for people doing inner work, therapy and advanced education.*



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http://www.huffingtonpost.com/sahaj-kohli/misconceptions-about-therapy_b_7286204.html?ncid=newsltushpmg00000003