

Launching Your Counselling Career ©

Prepared for Membership of the



BC Association of Clinical Counsellors

Enhancing Mental Health All Across Our Province

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A note from your Member Services Committee:

Duncan Shields, Chair. (March 2005 to November 2007)

"We make a living by what we get; we make life by what we give" – Anon.

Each activity that our Association pursues falls directly from two of our founding "Fundamental Purposes". The first of these is to develop and advocate for the profession of counselling and the interests of our members. The second is to regulate the practice of counsellors and to provide a mechanism for public accountability.

At first glance, these two purposes might seem to be in contradiction to one another: to protect the public's interests through regulation, and promote our own interests as well. This apparent contradiction does not exist when we recognize that the interests of our members are best served when our profession receives recognition for providing a high standard of service and professionalism and for being accountable to the public we serve.

To effectively promote and position ourselves as a professional organization, we must ensure the RCC designation is second to none and is recognized as such. To achieve this we must all strive to deliver the very best professional service we can through best practices, integrity and ethical decision-making in all of our professional endeavors.

As you develop your professional counselling career, I encourage you to see yourself as an ambassador of our profession and the BCACC. The impression you create in every contact with the public is the foundation upon which we all either build, or fail to build, meaningful and constructive relationships with clients, our communities and our government and business partners. Your success and professionalism contribute to the success and professionalism of our membership.

A professional counselling career can provide many rich and rewarding experiences and I hope that you will pursue your career with excitement and courage. It is with thanks to Claire Sutton for her tireless volunteer effort in developing this tool, that Member Services has the pleasure of offering this resource to our members to assist in building and developing your practice.

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Claire worked in the field of EAP / EFAP for over 15 years in positions that ranged from clinical counsellor to the National Director of a leading BC EAP Provider. She is currently an EAP/Wellness consultant and educator. Claire can be reached at csutton@clairesutton.com and you can visit her website: www.clairesutton.com

LAUNCHING YOUR COUNSELLING CAREER

Introduction

This booklet is designed to help both new and existing counsellors develop a viable and satisfying professional career. As professional counsellors we help many of our “stuck” clients acknowledge their difficulties, and then we coax them toward generating possible opportunities. Awareness of these new opportunities and the realization that such opportunities are within reach, give our clients hope and optimism to take the necessary steps to pursue desired goals.

In preparing for our own careers, we too need to acknowledge our strengths, our weaknesses, our fears, the realities of our personal lives as well as the cultural and economic times of our society. It is only by doing so that we can create a vision for an evolving career. Understanding that our careers evolve over time is essential for success in our professional lives.

As counsellors we are, by nature, givers, and, by profession, healers. Therefore, it is very important that we strive to model wellness by understanding how success in our professional lives is linked to our awareness and pursuit of a work/life balance. It is imperative that we ‘walk the talk’. With this deeper understanding we can craft our careers, making them happen, rather than letting our careers happen to us.

My objective in writing this booklet stems from: i) the excitement I have had in crafting my own career; ii) networking with both clinical and other professionals who are happy and thriving in their careers; and, iii) my experience in helping and coaching many counsellors to develop a career that works well for them. However, the impetus for writing this booklet also comes from meeting with and hearing from many credentialed counsellors who are either struggling to develop a career path or who are unable to move forward in their careers.

We do our best work with clients when we are in a state of comfort in both our personal and our career lives. As counsellors we are in the privileged position of helping people change and live more fruitful lives. Let’s make sure that we maximize the potential of our own knowledge and professionalism so that we too are living more productive and satisfying lives.

I sincerely hope that the ideas put forward in this booklet may give you some insight to spark the necessary self-reflection for you to take charge confidently of your own career.

**Claire Sutton, M.A., RCC, CEAP
Vancouver, B.C. – August, 2007**

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1. Due Diligence

To put it simply, your ‘due diligence’ is how you conduct yourself professionally as well as how your conduct reflects back on you, on the members of your profession, your clients, and on your network. Being aware of ‘doing your due diligence’ is about projecting your authenticity as a professional. It establishes your commitment to the essential career/business values of accountability, responsibility and trust. Therefore, ‘doing your due diligence’ is synonymous with building your reputation for honesty, integrity and best practices.

In launching your career, ‘doing your due diligence’ begins with accuracy and honesty in your professional presentation. ‘Due diligence’ not only refers to the work and educational experience that you highlight, but it also refers to your diligence in presenting a flawless resumé and cover letter in terms of spelling, grammar, consistency in format, etc. Your resumé and cover letter together are a company’s first impression of you. It describes who you are professionally and, for the experienced interviewer, allows them also to see how much you will be able to stretch. Therefore, your resumé (both content and presentation) symbolizes, on several levels, the work that you will do for your potential employer or referral resource and the clients that you will see on their behalf. An error in spelling or grammar on your own resumé could signal to the interviewer/recruiter a carefree or even careless approach in your professional manner and, for that reason alone, they may not even consider you for the position.

Doing your ‘due diligence’ means preparing well for any possible interviews, such as reviewing the company’s website, related websites or other available information. It is necessary to take the time to thoroughly understand the position for which you are applying. Reviewing literature on interviewing skills is an excellent idea and could help in reducing ‘interviewee-anxiety’ (*recommended reading: the latest edition of: What Color is Your Parachute*).

When launching your career, doing your ‘due diligence’ refers to returning calls on time and being on-time for appointments and interviews (at least 10 minutes early). Waiting for an interview can bring on some nervousness, and being prepared for the interview can certainly reduce the anxiety. It is important that you be in the position of waiting for the appointment rather than the interviewer to be waiting for you. If need be, visit the interview location a few days before so that you know where to park your car or what bus route to take.

Doing your ‘due diligence’ is about planning your career and taking responsibility for it. It is making sure that you have allocated time for professional development as well as time to build your clinical hours. With regard to knowing your longer-term plan, doing your ‘due diligence’ is doing what you need to do to get there. Doing your ‘due diligence’ is being familiar with your clinical association, the ethical guidelines and the terms of your professional insurance. Doing your ‘due diligence’ means respecting where you are currently in your whole life and knowing

where you want to go. In addition, very importantly, doing your ‘due diligence’ means maintaining your own mental health as well as your overall health.

2. Creating a Vision.

Creating a vision for our careers implies that we are challenged to visualize, and then articulate, a longer-term vision, a more focused vision and an immediate plan of action. The longer-term vision is the image that we have of ourselves as confident, successful and settled in our career or, at the very least, confident on our career path. The more focused vision is considered to be within a 3 - 5 year time frame and the plan of action is immediate. Another way of seeing this is that the longer-term vision is opaque, the 3 – 5 year vision is clear, and the immediate steps to undertake are crystal clear.

A vision gives us focus and direction. Such focus and direction allow us to have flexibility in adjusting, or simply fine-tuning, our vision along the way. Such focus and direction give us also control over our career destiny. However, at the start of any career, or a shift in a career focus, the benchmarks (specific time frames) can be as short as 3 – 6 months. These short and long-term benchmark projections focus on all of the following: core business (what we do for a living); marketing and/or employment-seeking techniques; continued professional development; back-office requirements (administration, office systems, expenses etc.); and on the revenue that we expect to receive.

When entering the realm of self-employment (i.e. private practice), a vision, with the necessary benchmark projections, is extremely critical. Once the vision is clearly, or even somewhat clearly, in place then the steps to the desired goal can be pursued. We are continuously improving upon the clarity of our vision and therefore changing or tweaking the steps along the way. This booklet will address private practice as well as other career options.

3. Career Options:

It is reassuring for many counsellors to know that there are many career opportunities within the counselling field. These opportunities exist for new graduates, counsellors new to the city, or for those ready to shift focus. Career opportunities are vast and varied. The solution is to actively seek them out – be proactive and be flexible. For instance, such opportunities appear in full-time and part-time positions; salaried; time-limited and monthly or hourly contracts. Other career-enhancing opportunities emerge through professional development, facilitating continuing-education workshops, volunteer positions and/or peer-support group meetings.

A career evolves over your working lifetime and takes time to establish for it to have a ‘goodness of fit’ unique to you. Understanding the *bigger picture* of one’s career is a great advantage, instills confidence and provides an optimistic outlook. We can consider the bigger picture as the opaque vision, and then move toward the clear vision that is within sight a few years down the line. Once we have an idea of where we would like to be in our foreseeable future, we can zero in on the crystal-clear vision, which outlines the immediate steps that will propel us into action. If we think only in terms of immediate action towards finding a job, without the thought of our career future, then we could remain stuck in a position that we have outgrown.

When considering any career opportunity, generate a list of all the pros and cons of the position. As you make this list, generate as many questions as possible that will help you define your choice. That is to say, what is it that the “position” is offering me, what am I offering the position, what is the work involved, where will the clients come from, do I feel over or under qualified, will I be stretched to further my potential, what are the benefits, what are the drawbacks, does it fit my current lifestyle, what is the (projected) income and what are the possibilities?

Much reflection, planning and focus, on both immediate goals as well as longer-term goals are needed in building a career. Many begin this process while in graduate school. Once “official” (i.e. in possession of a graduate degree, registered with a regulatory board), and having obtained the necessary liability insurance*, the concentration is then on the steps toward career realization.

Career realization begins with wanting to put into practice the academic theory acquired and doing so within the framework of earning a professional income. While mindful of the professional code of ethics, counsellors will be working within the parameters set out by the agency or the organization that employs them or contracts with them, or within the realm of their private practice, or some combination of the above.

The immediate action plan for many new graduates is to acquire as much experience as possible. In other words, they do whatever they can do to properly build up their clinical hours. They take the time to seek out varied clinical experiences such as: one-on-one clients, group facilitations, teaching, intake experience, team meetings, supervision, clinical administration, volunteering in the counselling field, professional development, networking, etc.

Past experiences in different careers contribute, either directly or indirectly, to one’s current career. Knowledge is transferable and success has been defined as “the uncommon application of common knowledge”. That is to say, when we can use our experience and learning that is unrelated to our current field and apply it to our present work. Therefore, for seasoned counsellors the depth of knowledge, insight and overall wisdom that develop over time as well as the ways this intelligence is used define the professional’s uniqueness and his/her competitive advantage. Competitive advantage is very important in our field, as it is in any

profession or workplace. The services that we are selling include who we are and how we differentiate ourselves as professionals.

After graduation, new graduates are launched once again into a transition, an interesting one, and one that must be navigated fully – that of establishing a new career. For many graduates entering the counselling field, it is important to understand the concept of *building* a career. The main focus initially may be to acquire clinical experience by engaging in many clinical hours while receiving adequate on-going supervision. For these graduates, the focus initially is on the experience they will receive and not on the income that they will receive. Many counsellors have 2 or 3 contract positions on the go that make up full-time work. Variety can be challenging and exciting, and may offer a creative work-week schedule that will be more conducive to a flexible lifestyle.**

Given that your career evolves over time, it is important to invest the time in building your reputation in the field from the beginning. The steps to take to build one's professional reputation are: to log clinical hours, to acquire on-going supervision, to continue professional development, and to engage readily in professional networking.

A salaried practitioner is in a position to see lots of clients (some days, too many). This experience is immeasurable in terms of the variety of clients, the team experience, figuring out the clinical work that you like and do not like, and learning professional boundary-setting. Many salaried positions are deemed “entry level” for new counsellors and the salary can seem minimal. These positions are not forever. It is accumulating the experience, not the money, which counts first in your career.

The process of successfully launching a career is to be given the same energy, focus and time as one would give to a full-time salaried position or a full-time private practice. This process is called “working both at your business and in your business” and it is a process of which successful private practitioners never let go of.

It takes experience, in terms of energy, focus and time (including networking) not only to reach where you would like to be but, more importantly, to understand where you would like to be. There are many people who appear lucky to have found an excellent position or to have built a wonderful practice, but luck is often defined as “the place where hard work and opportunity meet”.

Career options that are available are often seen in Saturday's Vancouver Sun; on the BCACC email weekly announcements; word-of-mouth from friends/colleagues in the field or at networking events, and also on the websites of some of the various agencies. Some of the counselling positions posted would be with: hospitals, health regions, alcohol and drug agencies, transition houses, counselling agencies (such as Family Services), private practice associates, Employee Assistance Program Service Providers (in-house and external), and more.

** Even in paid positions that include your liability insurance, it is necessary to ensure that that insurance covers your entire scope of practice.*

*** Although experience is emphasized more than money with new graduates entering the counselling field, this thinking is different and takes on deeper insight should a new graduate or any counsellor launch a private practice. Private practice fees set the tone for our profession. (See private practice section – italics.)*

4. Private Practice

Counselling in a private practice setting is often the only option many new graduates think of once credentialled. This option may be front and center because it has a certain allure of control, flexibility and independence. However, real life examples suggest that many aspects related to a workable private practice need to be considered carefully by counsellors prior to opening one on their own. Additionally, counsellors are needed elsewhere, i.e. in agencies, hospitals, academic settings etc. where they would have the ability to work with a team, stretch professionally and eventually lead as well as make advances within the counselling profession.

If you do wish to enter private practice, a thorough self-assessment is first and foremost in the process. Although private practice takes many forms and can certainly evolve to suit the practitioner, it takes planning and time to build. It takes rigorous self-discipline and patience and not everyone has the personal make-up for a career in independent employment.

When launching a private practice one is acknowledging that one is entering the field of self-employment and, therefore, running a small business. The general consensus is that it takes approximately 3 years to build a viable private practice. Many counsellors have done it in less than three years and many others are struggling to make ends meet 5 years after their launch.

Counsellors who are struggling in this domain are not un-skilled, but have probably chosen this path without being aware of all the steps involved that need to be thought through prior to launching their own practice. As with addressing any challenge, awareness of the steps or the details involved is insightful and essential knowledge that can determine the ultimate outcome.

There are many issues involved in setting the stage for a prosperous private practice, such as office location, referral resources, marketing strategies, fees, hours of operation etc. It is important to think through what private practice will look like for you and how you will transform your vision into a reality, i.e. a sustainable practice.

Private practice takes time to build. Its initial start-up phase can be anxiety provoking, both professionally and personally, i.e. to be in a position of waiting for clients to seek your services. If you are not logging hours during this “waiting period”, your skills can become rusty, your confidence shaky, and your reputation will not be advanced. For many wanting a private practice, the short-term aim may be better focused on the experience gained rather than the ultimate dream pursued (thriving private practice) or the money accrued.

What does a viable practice look like? A private practitioner understands the concept of working both at the business and in the business. Working with your clients is only a part of your work. The other very important part is to work constantly at building your client base, staying on top of your professional development, and differentiating yourself as a clinical professional. It is often the result of the various experiences gained prior to private practice that enables a counsellor to better differentiate and define his/her vision of private practice.

It can be difficult for new graduates to launch a practice straight out of graduate school unless they are coming out of school with experience, a specialty or an established reputation. Even with a specialty, a private practice alone may not be enough to generate needed income in the beginning years. Today’s clients are much more “therapy-savvy” than even 5 to 10 years ago. These clients ‘shop around’ and many want proven experience in addition to the therapist’s credentials. If you are coming out of graduate school with a specialty and relevant related experience pre-graduation, then you are in a much better position to confidently develop a private practice, if this is indeed what you would like to do. Many such graduates have done so and have done so very well.

Launching a private practice means to have a plan in place. First, acknowledge your personal goals, and then take the time to write out a thorough business plan. A business plan is a summary of what you hope to accomplish, how you plan to accomplish your goals, and when. It is a plan, a map of how you are going to get to where you want to be. Formats for business plans are available from accountants and banks or government websites on small business. The chapter on Samples & Checklists in the “Complete Canadian Small Business Guide” that I recommend in the resource section has thorough information on creating a business plan.

Building a practice means working full-time at making it work. It is important to spend much of the time working to build your business while clients begin to trickle in. Working in a salaried position while you build your practice is a good way to go, yet takes much energy and long hours. The building of your practice could be getting the ‘tired’ you and not the ‘best’ you. A good idea is to have a part-time job or reduce your salaried job, if possible, to ½ or ¾ time so that you have good energy to put into the start of your private practice.

The setting up of a private practice can be very costly unless you plan effectively. There are many locations and types of office to consider. Some sleuth work is

needed here. It is possible to rent space by the hour, the week, the month or the year. It is important for good business to appear professional and not scattered, so planning properly is imperative. There are parameters for home offices that must exist to maintain the highest ethical standards of confidentiality and professional boundaries should this be your choice. Know that some resources may not refer to home office locations.

Another aspect to consider when you begin a private practice is: do you run it as a sole proprietorship or do you incorporate. It is best to get legal advice here if you are undecided. Very simply put, a sole proprietorship refers to the individual who operates a business under his/her own name (or a trade name). For tax purposes, the business income and the personal income are deemed the same. A corporation or limited company is a legal entity separate from the owner. The liability of the company is limited to the assets of the company. The company would pay corporate taxes and you would pay personal taxes having taken a salary from your company. *(Please educate yourself more on the differences between sole proprietorship and incorporation.)*

A career in private practice can be challenging, exciting and extremely rewarding. Take time to plan efficiently and effectively, beginning with your own self-assessment for readiness. Understand whether your current vision of a career in private practice is your opaque or clear vision and then outline the steps accordingly.

It is important to take note that private practice fees set the tone for credibility and professionalism of our professions. Clients are seeking help based on the private practitioners' credentials, knowledge and experience – all three. Doing your 'due diligence' plays a very key role here with regard to experience and fees. Lowering your private practice fees impacts the counselling profession as a whole. On the other hand, charging the going rate as a new graduate or inexperienced counsellor, without benefit of supervision, could also hurt the profession as a whole. So, if you are entering private practice – whether as a new graduate or simply making a transition in your career - make sure that you have a plan to succeed in place which includes a peer supervision group or private supervisor, and be clear to your clients if you are new to the field.

5. The Power of Networking

Networking is absolutely essential to build your career whether in private practice or in a salaried position. Although many people are not comfortable with networking, it is an essential element of marketing and career building. Most people could do more of it and everyone could get better at it. It does become easier the more networking events that you attend.

Stated previously, your career evolves over time. Therefore, the more people you know and the more people who know you, the larger your circle of referrals grows. Networking and following-up with people that you first meet are essential components to building a successful career.

Of all the marketing possibilities, the most effective one is “word-of-mouth”, recently coined “social marketing”. It cannot happen unless you are skilled at networking.

Networking, in terms of building your career, can happen in social, educational and/or professional events. Make sure you are able to describe what you do confidently. Should you be in a position of looking for work, speak positively about where you are currently and what you are looking for. It is first impressions that can make a great and lasting impact. Be authentic.

As clinical counsellors, there are always opportunities to network...conferences, professional development training, BCACC meetings, EAPA Chapter meetings, the monthly café meetings, book launchings, open houses (companies, agencies, professionals), health and wellness trade shows, continuing education courses, breakfast meetings, social activities etc. If you find yourself a bit anxious to start the networking process, volunteer your time at one of the events, if possible. It may be easier for you to connect with others if you have a task to do, such as sitting at the registration desk, or the BCACC sponsorship booth. When you attend these events, you are doing so with a dual purpose in mind, i.e. to attend the event or take the training course and to meet several new people at the same time. In meeting new people and engaging in conversations with them your goal would be to reconnect with them (within days or weeks) for coffee or lunch. Always have business cards available, even simple ones with your name, credentials and telephone numbers. When you meet someone and you know you would like to follow-up with them, ask for their card and permission to call them. (*Coffee is much less expensive than lunch and if you are doing the asking, pay for both coffees.*)

There are several good books out there on positive networking. Make sure you have one in your library for constant review on how you can network better.

6. Marketing is Not a Four-letter Word

Marketing is the tool that makes your business work. It is important to figure out what are the most efficient and cost-effective marketing techniques that will work for you. Good marketing is what will bring your clients to your door and make them gladly pay for your services. As counsellors you are not selling a product, you are selling a service, and you are selling yourselves (your professionalism, your attitude etc.). The art is not so much in the selling as it is in having clients want to ‘purchase’ your services. Make sure you are good at what you do, and market what you’re good at.

Word-of-mouth or social marketing is the most important form of marketing, and if you are competent and diligent at what you do then people will spread the word. Business cards that look professional are essential. Think about who you would want to attract in your professional practice and then choose appropriate marketing techniques, i.e. brochures specific to referral sources or a website that is focused and clear. Give a course, and then you can position yourself as an expert on a specific topic and have your name featured in the promotional material. Advertising in publications can be very costly, so make sure you are reaching a target group that is right for you.

7. EAP / EFAP – What’s it all about ?

EAP: Employee Assistance Program

EFAP: Employee & Family Assistance Program

The field of EAP is exciting, challenging and ever-evolving as we experience the early years of the 21st century. EAP / EFAP can provide excellent experience, insight, revenue and security to clinical counsellors wanting to enhance their careers. Those who benefit from EAP work are those counsellors who truly understand the essence of EAP. Sadly, those who are unhappy about the field are often those counsellors who do not fully understand either its essence, or the parameters of the work involved, or the opportunities that exist within the field.

An EAP / EFAP is a specialized benefit in place for both the employer and the employee. EAPs are in place for the purpose of helping the employee return to work fully-functioning. If the employees are fully-functioning, then there is an increase in productivity and profitability for the employer organization. The troubled employee may be at work, but is usually functioning well below capacity. The premise from which EAPs work is “A healthy employee is a working employee”. The EAP benefit is paid by the employer, or shared between the employer and the union, and fully supported by both labour and management.

The essence of Employee Assistance as stated in the EAPA journal is : “the application of knowledge about behaviour and behavioural health to make accurate assessments, followed by the appropriate action to improve the productivity and healthy functioning of the workplace”.

The essence of EAP highlights the fact that the work that EAP professionals deliver deals very much with crisis management. In other words, when EAP clients seek service, they seek it at a time when their current coping mechanisms no longer work. EAP counsellors need to work effectively and efficiently within the brief-therapy model, within the EAP core competencies and adhere to the highest ethical standards of confidentiality.

Employee Assistance Programs developed out of the alcohol and drug issues in the workplace that were brought to light in the 1970's. From the alcohol and drug issues, EAP evolved into helping the family members (EFAP) of the alcohol and drug abusers to deal with the direct and indirect consequences of the abuse or misuse. EAP / EFAP naturally evolved even more into dealing with any personal or work-related concern impacting an employee or family member. Given that today we are in the information-technology age within a graying society, as well as a very diverse society, the myriad of issues brought forward by EAP clients are vast and varied compared to even 10 years ago. Again, EAP / EFAP is ever-evolving.

Professionally, EAPs evolved into accepting only Master level professionals to deliver the clinical work. Further evolution suggests that such EAP professionals will continue to require more specific EAP training in terms of clinical interventions, workplace awareness and societal trends.

Successful EAP counsellors understand the parameters and the core competencies of EAP and either help or lead the client toward resolution of the issue(s) that impede their productivity. It is important to note that EAP is a business and that the EAP program is operating within a budget. Therefore, if a program is running within a budget, then the counsellors doing the work (whether salaried or contract) are mindful of the session limits of the program. For instance, if a client is allowed up to six sessions in the EAP contract and the counsellor seeing the client is able to do the work in 3 sessions, then the counsellor is doing his/her due diligence by using only the needed amount of sessions. If an EAP counsellor (especially a contract counsellor) is always using the maximum number of sessions per client referral, then there is a high probability that the EAP provider will cancel further referrals to that particular counsellor. In other words, EAP is brief and every session counts. (See *Insights Winter, 2003.*)

In summary, a well-run EAP is an extremely good investment for both the employer and the employees of an organization in that it contributes to a healthy, productive and profitable organization. A full service EAP deals with any behavioural or risk management issue that can affect an employee or an organization as a whole. Clinical counsellors who are doing EAP work are dealing with employee-clients and/or their family members and are working within a brief therapy model with varying session limits. Clinical counsellors who continue to derive a significant portion of their income from EAPs keep abreast of the on-going evolution of the EAP field, which includes an overall understanding and appreciation of the business/working world and the role of Employee Assistance Programs.

The EAP field offers variety, experience, and opportunities to enhance your professional career.

There are many ways of finding an entry into the field of EAP, either as a full-time or part-time salaried employee or as a contract counsellor. If you are going to do

the work, be knowledgeable about the field of EAP / EFAP. Understand its essence and the skills needed to do the most efficient and effective work possible.

8. Summary

A successful counselling career evolves over time. Planning effectively is essential for all-around success. Such success also involves acknowledging where you are in your personal life.

A successful career is sustainable when it is a “good fit” for our unique lives. Understanding the ‘whole life approach’ is conducive to effective planning, maintaining a balanced lifestyle and sustaining a challenging and exciting career.

As outlined in this booklet, there are many opportunities available that can offer counsellors options in crafting their careers. On-going networking is helpful for many reasons, from making connections to obtaining insight on the breadth of opportunities that exist.

You have invested greatly in your education and choice of discipline. Make sure such an investment rewards you personally, professionally and financially.

It is often difficult for counsellors to recognize their own uniqueness (experiences, strengths and passions) and then market it to their advantage. If you have difficulty creating a vision for your successful and satisfying career, get help. A professional practice or career counsellor/coach can help you clarify your next steps.

APPENDIX:

I. Resources

There are many resources on the market that highlight various aspects needed to launch a career. Spend some time in your local library or favorite bookstore to review the ones that interest you. I have listed several excellent ones below.

Books:

The Complete Canadian Small Business Guide (Douglas & Diana Gray)
The Frog and The Prince, Secrets of Positive Networking (Darcy Rezac)
Feel the Fear and Do It Anyway (Susan Jeffers)
What Color is Your Parachute (Richard Bolles)
Rich Dad Poor Dad (Robert Kiyosaki)
The Red Book: Directory of Services across the Lower Mainland

Websites: www.strategis.ic.gc.ca/ic_wp-pa.htm (Industry Canada)
www2.vpl.Vancouver.bc.ca/redbook (The Red Book Online)
www.bceapa.com www.eapa.org www.easna.org

II. Testimonials

In this booklet, Claire Sutton highlights a comprehensive and holistic approach to managing a counselling career, guiding new professionals to effectively integrate work responsibilities with their other important life roles. I particularly appreciated Claire's pragmatic focus on short term goals and specific action steps, without losing sight of a longer term career vision. Claire's rich experience and leadership in the field shines throughout this booklet – readers will feel like they've had a private coaching session with a professional who really understands the diverse work within the counselling field. A must read for new counselling professionals, I'd also highly recommend this booklet to other counsellors who are feeling stuck or overwhelmed in their careers and ready to make some changes.

Dr. Roberta Neault, CCC, RRP
Life Strategies Ltd., Coquitlam, BC
www.lifestrategies.ca

Claire Sutton put together a fantastic summary that every young social worker and counsellor should read & understand. Claire's holistic framework really summarizes the

various counselling careers. In her booklet she looks at professional mental health careers with a business slant. In my opinion Claire's information provides a more realistic framework for young professionals looking at the different kinds of mental health careers available. This is a great summary that needs to be shared.

Ron Sparrow, MSW, RSW
Vice president, Source Line Inc.
www.sourceline.ca

In the many years that I have known Claire Sutton, I have respected how she creatively integrates empathy and authenticity with her responsible and pragmatic approach. She models the dedication, integrity and competence necessary in our work. As helping professionals, we benefit from guidance on how to be most effective. Claire's booklet is a "must read" guide for both new and existing counsellors.

Gloria McArter, PhD
Registered Clinical Counsellor
Registered Marriage and Family therapist
Certified Canadian Counsellor
www.gloriamcarter.com

This is an excellent overview for counsellors whether they are fairly established in their careers or right at the starting point. I have known Claire for many years, and am impressed by her business insights, successful enterprise, and effective marketing of her professional services. I would highly recommend her booklet.

Douglas Gray, LL.B
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