

The Southern Ontario Training Group and Durham Association for Family Respite Services  
are co-sponsoring a workshop on

**THE PHILOSOPHY OF PERSONALISM,  
WITH SPECIAL REFERENCE TO PEOPLE IN SERVICE ENGAGEMENTS AND ADVOCACY  
WITH SOCIETALLY DEVALUED PEOPLE**

**Dates and Times:** Monday evening July 12, through Tuesday and Wednesday, July 13 & 14, 2010. Dinner will be at 5 p.m. on Monday evening following which the course will start at 6 p.m. and continue through Tuesday and Wednesday. Tuesday and Wednesday sessions will begin at 8:30 each day. The workshop will end at approximately 4:30 on Wednesday July 14.

**Place:** Manresa Retreat Center, 2325 Liverpool Rd., Pickering, ON L1X 1V4.

Website: [www.manresa-canada.ca](http://www.manresa-canada.ca)

We strongly encourage participants to take accommodations and meals at the retreat center.

**Presenters:** The workshop has been designed by, and will be directed by, Dr. Wolf Wolfensberger of the Syracuse University Training Institute for Human Service Planning, Leadership, and Change Agency. Several associates will assist in presenting the workshop.

**Workshop Content:** This workshop presents certain philosophical and value traditions that have been called "personalism." There are a number of formulations of personalism, but they all tend to have several elements in common, namely, they emphasize:

1. The intrinsic value and dignity of each individual human, and of humans collectively.
2. Assuming individual personal moral responsibility for oneself and one's acts.
3. What is called subsidiarity, i.e., responding to a problem at the lowest level of complexity, technology, organization, and hierarchy that can handle it.

**NOTE: This workshop goes into depth on topics that are mentioned in two other Training Institute workshops: the 5-day workshop on Crafting a Coherent Stance on the Sanctity of Human Life, and the 7-day workshop on How to Function with Personal Moral Coherency. People who have attended either or both of those workshops will find this workshop a good follow-up to them.**

Personalism as a movement arose in the early 20<sup>th</sup> century, particularly in response to totalitarian ideologies such as those of communism and fascism, and to the depersonalizing oppression of industrialized economies. The more recent advent of the tyranny of political correctness, of a media-controlled society and its computer-driven objectification, of depersonalization and centralization, is once again giving relevance to personalistic ideals. This workshop will sketch the history and nature of personalism, and identify some of its more prominent proponents and their thoughts. It will then spell out many implications of personalism, with special interpretation of how they apply to a number of issues related to service and advocacy. The material will be organized into the following common themes in personalistic thinking:

- a. Seeking to grasp the nature of entities (especially human nature), and working with it rather than against it in any enterprise.
- b. The primacy of the spiritual, not of the material.
- c. The intrinsic value and dignity of the human, and particularly of those whose very humanness is doubted or contested, and/or who are very reduced or impaired; the modernistic attacks on the value of the person, especially impaired persons.
- d. Human freedom and human uniqueness.
- e. The "relational" nature of human beings, and implications to sex, family and community.
- f. The importance of taking immediate and direct action in one's own life vis-à-vis the needs of others, without waiting for, or even putting one's hopes in, actions by organizations or the government; of forming personal alliances with devalued, rejected or needy persons; and of assuming personal responsibility for acting morally within any structures to which one belongs, regardless of the sanctions this may draw; and if need be, acting in contradiction or disobedience to authorities that de-dignify the human or try to destroy personal conscience.
- g. Subsidiarity, i.e., seeking to use the lowest feasible level of technology, complexity, or social organization.

Some versions of personalism are more religious than others. Some of the secular versions step into the domain of psychology and personality theory. Usually, we teach personalism on the level of philosophy, theories of the nature of the human, and universal moralities. In this event, we will also include some coverage of the religious thinking about, or contributions to personalism, as for instance in the work of Emmanuel Mounier. If one is interested in philosophy at all,

this should be of interest even to people who do not share the religious faith of some of these thinkers. Whatever aspects of personalism will be treated from a religious perspective, will generally be consistent with the traditional thought of both Judaism and Christianity.

However, the workshop does not get into heavy-duty or specialized philosophical territory, but stays on the level of “the intelligent layperson’s” grasp of the issues. None of our previous versions of this workshop have ever been criticized as being beyond grasp.

**Workshop Format:** There will be a series of lecture presentations, using overhead transparencies, followed by plenary group discussions; we hope to also have time for occasional guided private exercises, consisting of some questions for private reflection that we hope will help people digest the material and engage in “clarification of thought” (the personalist philosopher Peter Maurin’s term). The lecture presentations vary in length, but some last more than an hour before there is an opportunity for reflection and discussion.

The workshop does NOT have an easy schedule. Participants should expect to spend all their workshop time listening to presentations, conducting private reflection, and/or participating in plenary group discussions.

Participants are expected to attend with a serious learning set, and with a commitment to attending **all** parts of the workshop.

**Fees (all fees are in Canadian funds):**

**Tuition:** \$210. per person

For 2 –5 people from the same group or organization, tuition reduction of 15%. (\$178. per person).

For 6 or more people from the same group or organization, tuition reduction of 30%. (\$147. per person).

For further tuition reductions please contact Patty Weatherall; see “For More Information” below.

**Meals and Accommodations:** \$ 150.00 per person (Includes accommodations at the retreat centre on Monday and Tuesday nights July 12 & 13; dinner on Monday evening July 12; breakfast, lunch and dinner on Tuesday, July 13; and breakfast and lunch on Wednesday July 14). Dinner on Wednesday, July 14 is an additional \$20.00.

**Meals (No accommodations, no breakfasts):** \$ 90.00 per person (Includes dinner on Monday evening July 12; lunch and dinner on Tuesday July 13; and lunch on Wednesday July 14). Dinner on Wednesday, July 14 is an additional \$20.00.

**For More Information About the Workshop or the Accommodations:** Please contact the Durham Association for Family Respite Services - Patty Weatherall at (905)436-2500 ext. 2304 or email: pweatherall@dfrs.com

**To Register:** Complete the enclosed registration form and send it with full payment to: Durham Association for Family Respite Services, 850 King Street West, Unit 20, Oshawa, Ontario L1J 8N5 or Fax: (905)436-3587

REGISTRATION FORM

WORKSHOP ON THE "PHILOSOPHY OF PERSONALISM"  
Monday evening, Tuesday, and Wednesday July 12 – 14, 2010  
At the Manresa Retreat Center, Pickering Ontario.

If you are registering as a group, please complete one form for each person and then together, mail in the registrations with payment.

NAME: \_\_\_\_\_

HOME ADDRESS: \_\_\_\_\_

HOME PHONE: \_\_\_\_\_ EMAIL: \_\_\_\_\_

WORK NAME AND ADDRESS: \_\_\_\_\_

WORK PHONE: \_\_\_\_\_ EMAIL: \_\_\_\_\_

FAX: \_\_\_\_\_

**I enclose payment of:**

- Full tuition - \$210.00 = \_\_\_\_\_
- OR Group of 2-5, tuition - \$178.00 x \_\_\_\_ (# of people) = \_\_\_\_\_
- OR Group of 6 or more, tuition - \$147.00 x \_\_\_\_ (# of people) = \_\_\_\_\_

**Plus**

- Costs for meals and Monday and Tuesday night accommodations.  
\$150.00 x \_\_\_\_\_ (# of people) = \_\_\_\_\_
- Costs for meals only (2 dinners and 2 lunches)  
\$ 90.00 x \_\_\_\_\_ (# of people) = \_\_\_\_\_
- Cost for extra dinner on Wed. July 14  
\$20.00 x \_\_\_\_\_ (# of people) = \_\_\_\_\_

**TOTAL Payment:** = \_\_\_\_\_

**Please make check or money order payable to:** Durham Association for Family Respite Services

**Send completed form with full payment to:** Durham Association for Family Respite Services, 850 King Street West, Unit 20, Oshawa, Ontario L1J 8N5 or Fax: (905)436-3587

**Please note any food allergies:**