

Every spring, I rush to put my winter coats in storage, and start wearing a light raincoat. Every year, I make the switch too soon! I spend several weeks wearing a bright green raincoat and shivering. But now, it seems spring has really arrived.

This is the time many of us do spring cleaning. We may clean the salt and sand off the car and the driveway, put the afghans and winter wraps away, perhaps even hand lighter curtains. We put the snow boots in the back of the closet and rush to wear flip flops! We update our spring clothes, and perhaps add something new and stylish to our wardrobes.

Spring is a good time to consider adding something new to your practice as well. Perhaps there is a book you have been meaning to read that would support the work you do, but never got to it. I have been carrying Mistakes Were Made (but not by me) – Why We Justify Foolish Beliefs, Bad Decisions, and Hurtful Acts by Carol Travis and Elliot Aronson. It was recommended by another member at the last training I attended. This week, I intend to sit in the sun with a cup of tea and start it!

If not a book, consider starting to review a new blog or other publication, either on-line or in paper form. It only takes a few minutes a day, or every few days, to catch up on the conversation.

This is also a good time to consider whether there is a skill you want to learn, learn more about, or practice. There are upcoming opportunities for learning in New England. You can check the NHCRA website for listings.

One such opportunity comes June 2 at the NHCRA Annual meeting. We have changed the format this year. Instead of an evening dinner meeting, we are planning a full day conference. The morning includes two programs, one on ethics, and one on arbitration. During lunch we will have a very short business meeting, followed by a special program by ActingOut Improv Theatre from Keene.

The Board is especially excited to have Jane Juliano joining us for the afternoon to share her research on moral hypocrisy, moral reasoning and religious influences in mediation. The afternoon program will include the background and progression of her research in psychology, making and negotiation as well as practical applications of the information for mediators. Jane Juliano has been a facilitator, mediator and arbitrator since devoting her practice to ADR in 1993. She is an Adjunct Professor of mediation at Georgetown University Law Center and a Visiting Clinical Mediator at Harvard Law School. Currently she is completing empirical research on how religious values affect decision-making in negotiation at the Harvard Kennedy School of Government. Having her join us is exciting.

You will be receiving more information about the Annual Meeting soon, and there is further information on the website.

One last opportunity for updating your practice is the networking groups. Members in Keene, on the seacoast and in Nashua have reported interesting conversations and great opportunities to talk with others as these groups meet. If you are interested in joining one of the groups, please contact us and we can get you in touch with the coordinator in your area.

Happy spring!

Melinda Gehris

President NHCRA