

# **Eleanor Stein MD FRCP(C) Psychiatry and Psychotherapy**

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**Myalgic Encephalomyelitis/ Chronic Fatigue Syndrome,  
Fibromyalgia, Multiple Chemical Sensitivity & Related Disorders**

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## **February 2016 Newsletter**

### **1. New Web Page look for [www.eleanorsteinmd.ca](http://www.eleanorsteinmd.ca) – NOW mobile compatible.**

Please go to to see my new picture (taken by local photographer [Justin Smith](#) and the new web look assisted by local web design company [Inspired by Change](#). Even with the best of technical support problems occur on the webpage from time to time. If you encounter any difficulties with the web store or any of the links on the page please let my office know so that we can correct it. And yes the web page is now mobile functional.

### **2. Saturday March 19<sup>th</sup> 2016**

#### **Webinar on optimizing Diet and Activity for ME/CFS and FM**

This webinar, hosted at local independent bookseller [Self Connection Books](#), will feature two local professionals who are developing expertise in ME/CFS and FM. Ever wanted to talk to a kinesiologist or a dietitian who “gets it”? Here is your chance. Join us in person at SCB or online.

Cost: \$15 (\$7.50 for low income)

Registration: Self Connection Website (link to be sent soon)

**An email will be sent soon with full registration details.**

#### **Rory Hornstein Registered Dietician: Using gut bugs to be healthy and lose weight.**

Ever wondered how you could have managed to put on weight over the years despite dieting the entire time? Turns out our gut bugs may be creating oversized guts. This session will explain how microbes influence how we eat, what we eat, how we get energy from our food, protect our immune system, help us harvest calories and produce key vitamins and nutrients. [Rory Hornstein](#) will explore what we can do to cultivate and enrich the critters in our gut on the path to better health.

#### **Cory Fagan BPE(Hons), MSc: Recommendations for physical activity and training with ME/CFS and FM**

Cory and I have been working together for a few years offering the Stephens Protocol 2 day exercise testing. Cory will share what he is finding and how the results in individuals with ME/CFS compare to healthy individuals that he works with at his training facility [TCR Sport Lab](#) in Calgary.

- His topics include: “you are not faking, something is off”. Physiological data to support ME/CFS.
- Using heart rate and exercise test results to “train” optimally.
- Using cryotherapy to improve recovery from activity.

### 3. NEW Group for Edmonton Area Patients with Dr. Stein by Telehealth

Don't live in Calgary but want to attend my psychoeducational group? No Problem. I have been working with the Telehealth division of Alberta Health Services and they are able to connect me to you through a live audio/video Telehealth link. Read the section below on the Psychoeducational Group for more information on the content of the sessions.

**The first trial is being offered in Edmonton.** If this is successful and there is interest in other places I will consider expanding. If you live in the Edmonton area and are interested or know someone who may be interested please pass this on: **There are three spaces left for the group.**

**Time and Location:** Each session is 2 hours. You will meet at a Telehealth room at the Glenrose Hospital in Edmonton (room number TBA). I will be at the Rockyview Hospital in Calgary connected by video and audio link. Sessions will be held on alternate Thursdays 11:00 am – 1:00 pm and will begin March 24<sup>th</sup>.

### 4. 2 Session Art Therapy Group – One Time Only

This experience will enable you to access non verbal ways of understanding and revising your illness experience. The sessions will be facilitated by Rachela Buonincontri a certified art therapist whom I have worked with before. Rachela works with Carmen Richardson at the renowned [Prairie Institute for Expressive Art Therapy](#). I must emphasize from personal experience that art therapy can be a meaningful experience even if one is not even slightly artistic (in fact even if one is limited to stick figure drawing it can be amazing).

The fee is \$40 =. Supplies are included.

Dates: Thursdays March 3 & 10<sup>th</sup> 2 – 4 pm

Location: 1528 12th Ave SW Calgary

Open to all. **There are 2 Spaces are available to join these sessions.**

### 5. Ongoing Group Opportunities

As you know I run several different types of psychotherapy groups ongoing. I find that the benefits of group contact and therapy is significant and different than what I can offer during one one one appointments. The peer support leads to increased confidence that one can make a difference in one's health and life and the knowledge that one is not

alone. I am learning over time from participant feedback that these “intangibles” are very valuable.

Often the groups are full and have long wait lists. However at the moment there are spaces available in several of the groups. This is your chance to learn and develop. If any of the opportunities below are of interest call the office for more information.

Unless otherwise specified the groups are held on alternate Tuesdays or Thursdays at [Christ Church](#) near my office in central Calgary. Christ Church offers a welcoming, accessible, fragrance free, space with natural light.

Sessions are 2 hours long and all of the groups entail homework between sessions to maximize learning. For most of the groups you will be asked to provide information about your medical issues and your goals for participating. You will be asked to complete 3 short questionnaires before and after the group so that you can monitor your progress.

Registration for all groups are first come first served. Please contact the office to ask questions and make sure you are a good fit.

- **Psychoeducational Group:** I hold this group at least 3 times each year. The focus is learning about your condition and improving your self management skills and sense of self efficacy. This is the “entry level group” in my practice and recommended to all individuals new to my practice. We use my manual “Let Your Light Shine Through: Living with ME/CFS, FM and MCS” as a text. We keep an ongoing wait list. Each group runs for 10 sessions. The topics include:

<b>Diagnosis</b>	<b>Environmental Illness</b>	<b>Sleep</b>
<b>Pain</b>	<b>Activity</b>	<b>Diet</b>
<b>Coping/Stress</b>	<b>Alternative tests and treatments</b>	<b>Depression and Anxiety</b>

- **Coping Group:** This group focuses on the emotional challenges of coping with chronic fatigue and pain and all that it entails. We use [Patricia Fennell's](#) “The Chronic Illness Workbook” as a guide. Topics vary widely to include: working with health care practitioners, feelings of guilt, inadequacy and hopelessness, managing depression and anxiety, keeping friends, setting boundaries, setting priorities and figuring out who is the “new you”. There are 2 spots to join this ongoing group.
- **Circle of Hope Group:** This is a “step down group” from the Coping Group. Only people who have attended the Coping Group in the past may join. The group meets monthly and covers whatever issues the participants are dealing with in the moment. It is less structured than the other groups. Spaces are available to join this ongoing group.
- **Diet and Lifestyle Group:** This group meets monthly and assists participants to set goals to improve health and enjoyment of life. The focus is on setting SMART goals and maintaining hope and motivation over the long term. Participants are

very engaged and often bring information and questions for discussion. [Spaces are available to join this ongoing group.](#)

- **Curing Persistent Pain:** This is a newer group which I co-facilitate with psychiatrist Dr. Karen Tanguay. We have run the group twice now and are very excited by the results so far. In this group you will learn to use your brain (neuroplasticity) to cure persistent pain. **Yes we are using the word CURE.** We use the work of [Drs. Michael Moskowitz and Marla Golden](#) including their manual “Neuroplastic Transformation” as a guide. Some individuals in this group have gone from severe, daily pain for decades to mild, infrequent pain. A new group session will start in April and [there are spaces available to join this 8 session group.](#)
- **Dialectical Behavior Therapy Skills Group:** I co-facilitate this group with psychiatrist Dr. Karen Tanguay. This group uses Dr. Marsha Linehan’s [DBT® Skills Training Handouts and Worksheets, Second Edition](#) as a text and we follow it closely covering all four sections: mindfulness, interpersonal effectiveness, distress tolerance and emotional regulation. The objective is to improve emotional regulation – coping with the ups and downs that come with illness and life. Although the group is currently full, [we keep a wait list.](#)

## 6. Using Light Therapy to Manage Sleep, Energy and Pain

Low Level Light/Laser Therapy uses wavelengths of light (red and infrared) which are absorbed by the body and enable the mitochondria to produce extra energy (ATP). This therapy is evidence based for many injury and pain disorders. There are small studies showing it may be effective in Fibromyalgia and Depression. Clinical experience shows that for many people treated for these other conditions, sleep often improves. I am now offering the treatment to a limited number of individuals to see whether it can be of use in individuals with ME/CFS and/or FM who have insomnia as a core symptom.

We are asking those who participate to keep careful track of their sleep and activity levels using questionnaires and a Fitbit. Because this is clinical care and not a research protocol we are able to adapt the dose to individual responses which have been very diverse so far.

The therapy protocol requires attendance at my office Monday, Wednesday and Fridays for a total of 10 sessions. There is a cost of \$50/session for a total of \$500. This treatment is open to anyone with non restorative sleep and ability to attend for the full protocol. [We have 4 spots available to participate in March.](#)

## 7. Mark Your Calendars

### 2016 International Awareness Day Event

Location: Self Connection Books in Calgary and by Web Connection.

Date: Wednesday May 11<sup>th</sup> 6:30 – 8:30 pm

Topic: Neuroplasticity

Speakers: To be announced.

## **8. In Other News: New ME/CFS publication**

### **From the National ME/FM Action Network:**

In our latest issue of Quest, we told you about a new article on the diagnosis and management of ME/CFS published by Dr Alison Bested and Dr Lynn Marshall. The article was released in "Reviews of Environmental Health", a journal published by the company De Gruyter.

Upon publication, there was a fee for accessing the article. The National ME/FM Action Network contacted De Gruyter, drew attention to the importance of the article and asked if the fee could be waived. We are absolutely delighted to report that De Gruyter agreed to remove the fee for everyone. You can now access the article free of charge by clicking on this link:

["Review of Myalgic Encephalomyelitis/Chronic Fatigue Syndrome: an evidence-based approach to diagnosis and management by clinicians"](#)

## **9. Dr. Stein's Schedule:**

Dr. Stein is now booking appointments through the spring and summer. Spots are always left open for urgent requests. Please call the office to book your preferred times. Dr. Stein will be going on an extended holiday in Sept/Oct 2016.

Please remember that email is not 100% reliable or secure. I check the phone answering machine several times daily but do not always check email. If you have any urgent communication please leave it by phone.

Ellie Stein