

Bio: Merv Dickinson

Canadian-born, Merv completed his formal education in Canada and the United States, receiving a BA (Philosophy) and BD (Theology) from Victoria University in Toronto, a PhD (Counseling Psychology) from Boston University, and a post-doctoral Diploma in Theology and Psychiatric Theory from the Menninger Foundation in Topeka, Kansas.

Ordained to the ministry in the United Church of Canada and recognized as a presbyter in the Methodist Church of New Zealand, Merv served parishes in Massachusetts and Taranaki. The greater portion of his career, however, has been spent as a Registered Psychologist – working as a psychotherapist, training clergy and other helping professionals in the art of counselling, lecturing in psychology at universities in Toronto, and serving as a leadership consultant to public and private sector organisations in the United States and New Zealand.



The consistent theme running through his life has been his intensely personal search to understand and realise, if possible, what it means to be fully human. A year spent as resident members of the Findhorn community and eco-village in the north of Scotland was a turning point for both Merv and his wife Bella, leading them to emigrate to New Zealand in 1981.

Merv has written and posted online a number of academic papers, mostly around the theme of our deeply human need to find meaning in life. Last year, following Bella's death in 2015, he published a grief memoir titled *Conversations with Bella: A love story, a spiritual odyssey, and the gift of a broken heart*. It is available online from Amazon and the Book Depository.

Merv's three sons and assorted grandchildren are scattered throughout the world. He now lives with his partner Gayle in a retirement village in Christchurch.

Proposed title for Merv's address to the 2019 Sea of Faith conference:

“Evolving Awareness Systems and Levels of Meaning”