

Who is Doing What

VWS Alumni Corner

Interview with Sean Lymworth,
Class of 1998



Grateful for my father's financial support (Kolin, owner and founder of Banyen Books), I resigned from my cushy government job at the height of the recession and enthusiastically began my training in massage therapy. My mother Bhavana has been a body worker for 20+ years and the treatments I've received from her and my many teachers inform my work today.

VWS: What did you do for work & education post Vancouver Waldorf School?

SL: After graduating in 1998 I followed my passion for photography and film, receiving a diverse diploma in Media Production from Capilano College. The hands-on, production-based nature of the program appealed to me and I hoped it would help me narrow down my seemingly endless career options. To my frustration it did not -- I enjoyed it all: documentary production, photography, audio design, multimedia authoring, website design, animation, video editing, even TV studio directing. Lacking a clear direction and able to work in California thanks to dual-citizenship, I moved to San Diego with my girlfriend at the time. After a year of working 60 hours/week at two service-industry jobs and unable to see a way to turn my media passions into work I cared enough about, I was ready to return to school. I attended Langara College for one year, in which I had as many great connections with teachers as in my three years at UBC. Knowing I could take science-for-non-science-majors courses at UBC, I spent my time at Langara studying what interested me: sociology, history, geography, and international relations. I decided on the latter, receiving a BA in International Relations (Economic Development focus) from UBC in 2006, during which I did an exchange in England. While at UBC I worked at the Chan Centre, which afforded me the opportunity to enjoy some great shows, work with a wonderful community of people passionate about the arts, and my most comical job title to date: Bar Captain. My post-graduation plans had been to photograph environmental and social injustices (and beauty, of course) in South America while volunteering; however, a completely ruptured ACL (knee ligament) changed my life. Full of gratitude for receiving surgery so quickly, I decided against backpacking around right away. Instead, I started working for the BC Government's Provincial Nominee Program (at the time part of the Ministry of Economic Development, which seemed very fitting). I started as a temp, was kept on and later promoted to Program Advisor, making me by far the youngest in the office. Unfortunately, the corporate environment and my windowless cubicle were slowly crushing my soul. Three months into the job I was already aware I was not being sufficiently challenged; I stuck with it in hopes that the Program Advisor position would be more fulfilling, in the end working there for three years. Ultimately, that job provided the environment I needed to really buckle down and do the hard work of digging deep to discover what I really needed in my work. For me, it basically took a year of solitude, as our culture specializes in distraction. Two exercises from *What Colour is Your Parachute?* were quite helpful: 1) the question "What would you like to talk about 40 hours/week?" 2) listing and prioritizing which skills one enjoys using most. Health and empowering people perceptively were my top answers; however, it took me several more months before everything clicked. I also had to cross the Masters programs I was considering off my list of possibilities; I was able to do this thanks to information interviews. My first treatment from a Registered Massage Therapist (RMT) doubled as an information interview and the weekend introductory course I subsequently took confirmed that I had found my path.

VWS: What do you enjoy most about your work?

SL: My work is to bring ease and grace to my patients' lives, generally through a combination of manual therapy and modifications to sleep position, occupational biomechanics, or other contributing factors in their lives. Understanding my patients' activities is a key aspect to my treatment approach. I get to spend an hour or more with each person, working together specifically and holistically. I work very closely with breath, in a NeuroMuscularFascial style that focuses on the quality of the relationships between all of our tissues. The human body is ineffably magnificent; there is infinite potential for learning in my work and I am ever grateful to all of my teachers.

VWS: What do you think are your greatest successes in life?

SL: It has been a long, challenging, and often difficult journey to find my work. Living with integrity has connected me with so many amazing people and I feel so blessed to now have this work to share and contribute to my communities. I am honoured to be working with Dr. Steven Read, Chiropractor, in North Vancouver.

VWS: How did Waldorf education affect your life & career choice?:

SL: Waldorf school helps young children live with magic for a wonderfully long time. My instinct at 17 was to do what I knew, art and dreams. Realizing that I didn't want to earn my living as a photographer or filmmaker, I wanted to help as many people as possible by working at the international level. Unfortunately, this did not afford me the level of feedback that I need having received so much at Waldorf. I was quite daunted by the prospect of studying science at the post-secondary level but am so glad that I did. Balance has always been important to me and my work entails a healthy equilibrium of science and magic.

VWS: What are your fondest memories of VWS?

SL: Autumn hiking trips into the Stein and Chilcotin valleys: very special high school opportunities to feel kinship with older and younger kids, physically challenging, wild nature, sweat lodges, the sense of a timeless accomplishment. School plays. Exchange in France. Snowboarding and yoga for PE. Ashland, Oregon, Shakespear festival trip. Tofino Zoology trip. Playing violin. The Grade 12 project.

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*Interview by Ronaye Ireland, for Development
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