

There is so much to say about the 2017 Vermont AMTA Educational Weekend at Lake Morey that I almost don't know where to begin. But first and foremost, please let me express my deepest gratitude for the scholarship that allowed me to have this wonderful experience. It was an honor to have been selected for what I consider an integral part of my career as a massage therapist – continuing education and meeting fellow practitioners.

Two of my lifelong dreams have been to practice massage therapy and move to Vermont. It was beyond comprehension that I would be able to accomplish both, especially when the massage therapy goal was met in Connecticut and I could not bring all of my clients with me. Fast forward to last year when my husband and I decided life was too short to not be where our hearts wanted to be, so we sold everything, packed up and headed north. Massage therapy was not off the table (bad pun) but I resigned myself to the possibility it would be a few years to rebuild and connect with a new AMTA chapter. I could not have been more wrong.

From as early as 2016 when I reached out to the chapter on Facebook, to when I was given Laura Bull's name as a possible contact/mentor-everything has serendipitously fallen into place. I now see some clients privately, but more importantly, was given the opportunity to work with Laura in her already successful practice. I believe wholeheartedly that it is because I am where I am meant to be.

And nothing illustrated that more than the weekend spent at Lake Morey. From the moment I arrived, I felt welcomed. I was nervous that I would not know anyone, but within about an hour, I was meeting so many new people, helping with nametags and goody bags and feeling connected to "my tribe".

I thoroughly enjoyed the weekend of classes with George Russell, not only for the wealth of information, but because I was able to spend significant time getting to know some amazing therapists. I still consider myself a novice as I have only been practicing for three years and in that class alone, there was well over ten decades of experience. There were emotions that welled up for me, but I knew I was in a safe place to be vulnerable, ask questions and not feel foolish.

I love the comradery of the Vermont Chapter, from the gentle ribbing to the all-out hysterical jokes that are all in good fun. The mutual respect and willingness to help a fellow therapist truly made it feel like a family to me. I went from driving up in my car with sweaty palms to hugging several new friends and not caring that it was after 6:00 PM on a Sunday evening with a two hour drive ahead of me.

Once again, I want to thank the Vermont Chapter of the AMTA for allowing me to grow and learn as a therapist where I have always wanted to be. I am already registered for next year and look forward to all the chapter has to offer.