

## ND Spotlight: Dr. Glenna Morris, ND

Dr. Jennifer Salib Huber BSc, Pdt, ND

Dr. Glenna Morris, ND owner of Balance Naturopathic Health Centre in Halifax, Nova Scotia knows all about maintaining balance in her life as a busy naturopathic doctor and new mom to five month-old Isabel. I sat down with her to chat about her path to becoming an ND, and how she achieves balance in her life.

While a student at St. Francis Xavier University in Antigonish, NS, Glenna knew she was looking for a health care profession that addressed both the mental and physical aspects of wellness. She wanted to provide a service that would empower patients to make positive changes towards their health. After briefly considering nursing or kinesiology, Glenna continued towards her degree in human nutrition. After a fateful encounter with Dr. Lois Hare, ND in Berwick Glenna knew she'd found what she was looking for

"After just a few hours shadowing her in her clinic I knew naturopathic medicine was exactly what I was looking for. The way she was able to address her patients' whole health was what really impressed me."

After graduating in 2001, Dr. Morris returned home to Sydney, Cape Breton where she worked alongside a massage therapist, and a chiropractor. After they both left the province, she opened her own small clinic and practiced in Cape Breton for another two years.

In 2004, she opened Balance Naturopathic Health Centre in Halifax. Why 'Balance'? Glenna because she wanted a simple, easy to remember name that people from all walks of life could relate to as a concept. She wanted to attract the individuals who were already aware of naturopathic medicine but also wanted the name to catch the attention of those who were unfamiliar with naturopathic medicine.

But running a multi-disciplinary clinic has its challenges.

"The biggest challenge is the management aspect. Building a cohesive team requires one to be flexible, patient, confident and able to see things from many different perspectives. The administrative support that each profession requires is varied so deciding what the front desk staff needs to prioritize can be a challenging task. To run a large clinic the owner needs to be able to continuously step back and look at the whole. Different practitioners may have different needs and expectations so being up front from the very beginning of each relationship will save time and energy in the long run. The owner must be able to wear different hats throughout the day without the transition taking away from their focus on their practice. Finding a team that works well together and has the same philosophy is extremely helpful but takes perseverance. Each individual in the clinic needs to be a team player in order for the clinic to thrive as a whole".

I asked Glenna what is the most challenging aspect of being an ND.

"Right now the most challenging aspect of being an ND is juggling my career with being a new mom! On the other hand being an ND while having a small baby has allowed flexibility

that I wouldn't have had in many other professions. In general the most difficult aspect of being an ND is balancing the time given to reading/research as well to patient hours. When I am with my patients I start thinking how much I would like to increase my availability to see more patients, but the same thing happens when I am reading naturopathic information. I start thinking how much I would love to have more time to research. I think it is a great sign that I love to do both. That is why being a naturopathic doctor will keep me happy for many years to come."

When all is said and done, Dr. Morris wouldn't change a thing. She is grateful for everything she's learned during the last few years and has been able to apply this knowledge to all areas of her life. Some changes have included downsizing her clinic by approximately 50%, in order to allow her to spend less time managing, and more time practicing.

Last, but not least, I asked Glenna for some parting advice to new practitioners.

"I have worked by myself, owned clinics that were as small as three people to as large as seventeen. I think the most important thing is to know where you want to put your time and energy. Before you do make a big decision, break things down and decide what you want to spend most of your time doing. If it is practising then keep it small or even work by yourself. If you find practice is not enough for you and you want to be more involved with managing and the business side of things then try expanding, but do it slowly step by step and don't take short cuts. In the long run it will be worth it. Learning the skills that it takes to run a clinic with multiple people (both practitioners and office administrators) takes time.

"After graduation is when most of the learning takes place. Continuing education is essential to keep your practice flourishing. Conversing with colleagues will keep you refreshed and keep you advancing your skills. Having a conversation with my mentor, Dr. Kumar Biswas, ND both inspires and challenges me to continually add to my skill set.

"Above all be true to yourself in the work environment you choose just as you would in your personal life. Your work environment needs to be supportive so that you will thrive in your work whatever you choose to spend your time doing. Of course, being a naturopathic doctor, I want to add that you must be sure to take care of yourself in mind, body and spirit. Don't wait until you have nothing left to give. As my friend and colleague, Dr. Sarah Baillie, ND shared with me, take regular time off. Don't wait until you have nothing left to give to take a break, be proactive and stay healthy."