

Karen Welch, MA, LMFT is a psychotherapist in private practice in Southern California. She holds a bachelor's degree in Speech Communication Disorders from California State University Fullerton and a master's degree in Counseling Psychology from Trinity College of Graduate Studies. She began intensive training in Relational Neuroscience with Bonnie Badenoch in 2003. Since that time, Karen has incorporated Interpersonal Neurobiology, Bonnie's Heart of Trauma work, and the Polyvagal Theory not only into her therapeutic framework as a private practitioner, where she works with a broad spectrum of clients, but also into her role as a consultant for other mental health professionals. Karen's long-term commitment to the study of Relational Neuroscience has influenced all her relationships especially those of wife, mother, and grandmother. Exploration and integration of the embodied and relational brain within the context of relationships and the necessity of safe and caring others has become the foundation for Karen's personal, professional, and spiritual life.

"It has always been natural for me to put relationship first in therapy, but because our profession is so focused on protocols, interventions, and diagnosis, I thought there was something wrong with me. At times, I would work more from this left hemisphere way of doing things, but it never felt comfortable. When I began to learn about interpersonal neurobiology, it became clear that both hemispheres are meant to be in a collaborative relationship. Understanding how we are wounded and how we heal has helped put a stable foundation underneath the warmth of relationship so that I can easily flow back and forth between the hemispheres and meet people where they are."