

## **“Reflecting on the Journey”: 21 Years of a Parent Weekend Retreat**

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This presentation will provide information about “Reflecting on the Journey”, our weekend parent retreat which we have conducted for the past 21 years, for parents of children or family members with ASD. The retreat has been designed to provide a relaxing and supportive environment for parents to reflect on, explore, and share the rewards and challenges of raising a child with ASD. There are opportunities for relaxation, discussion, social support networking, making new friends and learning from other parents in a beautiful country setting. The format is that of a retreat, and is different from a conference or short support meetings. The retreat is a unique and cost-effective model that has been demonstrated to mitigate the unique stressors associated with autism on marriages and family life. It also provides parents an opportunity to share the unique joys and potential for growth related to having autism in the family.