

EDITORIAL

Integrative Nursing Around the Globe

遍布全球的综合护理

Atención integral en todo el mundo

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Nurses and other healthcare professionals from around the world are meeting May 18 to 20, 2015, in Reykjavik, Iceland, for the first International Symposium on Integrative Nursing (<http://integrativenursing2015.is/en>). Attendees from Finland, Germany, Israel, the Netherlands, Spain, Sweden, Turkey, the United Kingdom, Canada, the Faroe Islands, Iceland, and the United States are gathering to explore how integrative nursing is being implemented in various settings and with diverse patient populations. Presentations will focus on characteristics of successful integrative health programs as well as the emerging research agenda underlying integrative nursing. A major focus is on strategies to improve the health and wellbeing of caregivers.

In 2014, I had the pleasure of co-editing with Mary Koithan, PhD, RN, a book published by Oxford Press titled *Integrative Nursing* (<https://global.oup.com/academic/product/integrative-nursing-9780199860739?cc=us&lang=en&>). This volume is part of the Oxford University Press Integrative Medicine Library series edited by Andrew Weil, MD. In the foreword of the book, Dr Weil, a luminary in the field of integrative health and medicine, noted that nurses have a critical role to play in transforming healthcare and that the principles and practices of integrative nursing have a strong theoretical base as well as the wisdom of collective experience. And indeed it was a collective who contributed to the book! Close to 80 nurses participated in writing chapters, and many hundreds more gave input along the way.

Our hope in writing the book and in organizing the Iceland Symposium was to catalyze a movement in nursing that would serve to realign the profession around core values and principles. While the essence of nursing has long been whole-person (body, mind, and spirit) and whole system–focused, in reality, the contemporary practice of nursing in many settings around the globe has become increasingly fragmented and destabilized. Nursing shortages in many parts of the world are significant, and hierarchies and bureaucracies often remove nurses from the point of care, be that the bedside, home, or clinic, replacing them with less skilled workers and filling their time with documentation and other administrative tasks.

Stress in the healthcare environment also takes a toll on nurses. The term *burnout* is used to describe workers' reaction to chronic stress and is characterized

by emotional exhaustion, depersonalization, and reduced personal accomplishment.¹ Burnout among nurses has been reported to be higher than that among other health professionals.² As noted by Khamisa et al, nursing requires the delivery of humane, empathetic, culturally sensitive, proficient, and moral care in working environments with limited resources and increasing responsibilities.³ When nurses experience burnout, it impacts their personal wellbeing as well as the quality and efficacy of patient care. Nurses experiencing ongoing stress are more likely to eat poorly, smoke cigarettes, and abuse alcohol and drugs.^{4,5} Lack of self-care is a pervasive issue that adversely impacts personal health and wellbeing, patient care, and the organization as a whole.

Integrative nursing is a framework for providing whole-person/whole-system care that is relationship-based and person-centered and that focuses on improving the health and wellbeing of caregivers as well as those they serve. It is aligned with what is being called the “triple aim” in the United States—an effort focused on improving the patient experience (quality and satisfaction), improving the health of populations, and reducing the cost of care. The principles of integrative nursing (Box) offer clear and specific guidance that can shape and impact patient care in all clinical settings.

Global Advances in Health and Medicine (GAHM) is a sponsor of the Iceland Symposium and will have a strong presence there. In addition to monitoring trends, engaging in conversations, and encouraging submis-

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Box: The Principles of Integrative Nursing⁶

- Human beings are whole systems inseparable from their environments.
- Human beings have the capacity for health and wellbeing across all dimensions (body, mind, spirit).
- Nature has healing and restorative properties that contribute to health and wellbeing.
- Integrative nursing is patient-centered and relationship-based.
- Integrative nursing is informed by evidence and uses the full range of therapeutic modalities, moving from least intensive and invasive to more, depending on the need.
- Integrative nursing focuses on the health and wellbeing of caregivers as well as those they serve.

sions to the journal, we will be conducting interviews of attendees that will be posted on the journal's website (www.gahmj.com).

If you haven't had a chance to visit the website recently, I encourage you to do so. There are videos of interviews of authors that have been published in *GAHMJ* as well as an interesting mix of multimedia offerings including the recently released National Public Radio documentary by David Freudberg titled *The Resilient Nurse* and the trailer for the recently released video documentary *The American Nurse*.

In May alone, members of the *GAHMJ* team will be attending conferences in Iceland, Italy, and Korea, and you will see reports on those events in future issues of the journal. Your feedback is always welcome, and we look forward to hearing from you or perhaps having the pleasure of meeting you in person!



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