



Healing Touch Program comes to Mission Hospital

Part 2: Ways and Means

by Anne Boyd, MDiv., HTCP/I, DALF/I

Along with other related modalities, Healing Touch Program is now a vital part of Mission Hospital's Integrative Health Care Program. Healing Touch was chosen because it is the only energy program that is standardized to satisfy the Joint Commission (Regulatory Board for Hospitals). The director and staff of Integrative Health Care are Board Certified Holistic Nurses. The Medical Director for the program is Dr. Danna Park.

Under Director Lourdes Lorenz, Mission's Integrative Health Care Program is designed to:

1. Educate and support nurses and staff through retreats, presentations, and classes.
2. Educate the public through lectures and introductory classes.
3. Implement therapies within the hospital system through Pilot Programs and "on-call" services.

Current Main Focus – Education: Training is provided for therapies to be implemented throughout the hospital which is literally transforming Mission Hospital. (Note: In order to enhance their healing environment all integrative services are provided to patients at no cost.)

Lourdes affirms that with the establishment of policies and procedures there is a strong framework in place and the Program is evolving beautifully.

FOR NURSES AND STAFF

HOLISTIC RETREATS:

Holistic Retreats, newly initiated and designed especially for hospital staff, were launched by Lourdes Lorenz in the fall of 2008 -- proving to be vital to the Program.

Lourdes, who has a nursing leadership background, was pursuing her Masters degree in Integrative Health Care when she was hired to strategize a plan of integrative medicine for Mission Hospital. She soon set policies and procedures, instituted pilot programs, lectures and classes - created a "culture shift" for nurses, a more caring environment for nursing - and implemented integrative support for patients.

Declaring nursing "*a noble profession, my passion,*" Lourdes purports the Care of Caring philosophy for nursing. "*The nurse becomes the environment,*" she says. It's very significant. "*Sometimes we are the last person with the patient - which can affect a healing for both of us.*"

A resurgence in heart-felt nursing comes with this new program and subsequently job satisfaction - especially vital for nurses nearing burn-out. Lourdes states, "*Replacing a nurse costs the hospital \$70,000 - \$100,00. Thereby, this gives the hospital an incentive for funding our programs.*"

These self-care, team-building retreats introduce integrative therapies to the staff. Ultimately, retreats "*feed their souls, and that filters down to each patient's healing process.*"

To provide training for Lourdes, American Holistic Nurses Association (AHNA) President, Lucia Thornton (AHNA.org) led the first few retreats with her program Whole Person Caring. Integrative therapies were then offered as support. She and the program were voted "*fantastic.*"

Retreats are not mandatory. Each one lasts two days, is scheduled on varying days, and is offered at a nearby retreat center free of charge to staff (which also includes chaplains, physical therapists, respiratory staff, case managers, therapists, etc.).

These staff members are given the opportunity to retreat, refocus, renew - to network, to get in touch with themselves in a safe, nurturing environment. They are shown easy self-care steps. For example - to center while using a sanitizer. Attendees can sample from HT, guided imagery, aromatherapy, acupuncture, massage, craniosacral, and others. For some this is a first-time experience. Presenters of these therapies are all volunteers.

Cindy Barkei, HTCP (Integrative Health Care Staffer) was an attendee at the first retreat. She was recovering from recent surgery yet only slightly discomforted (she had received HT before and after surgery). *“At retreat I saw that people were amazed,”* she offered. *“They felt the retreat to be a gift given to them. No one had ever given nurses this kind of personal support.”*

Cindy continued: *“It was exciting to hear some of them share their feelings about nursing in such a comfortable, safe environment. I observed several with personal issues they could release in order to move forward.”* Many took advantage of the energy work that was offered.

Yet some attendees have been leery of the “new” energy healing, with remarks like *“I don’t believe in all that touchy-feely stuff,”* *“It’s not scientific.”* One person who participated in a guided imagery meditation declared, *“I don’t believe in hypnosis.”*

Whether accepting or not of these modalities, those who attend the retreats feel recognized, appreciated and nurtured by their experiences. It is a solid beginning.

CLASSES:

Lourdes Lorenz periodically conducts day long self-care classes for nurses; Cindy Barkei presents three-hour classes for nurse-interns; and the entire staff lectures whenever an opportunity presents itself. Denise Anthes, a Healing Touch Certified Practitioner/Instructor and IHC Staffer, has lectured to regional medical conferences, during Nurses Week, EMT week, holistic resources classes, and others.

EDUCATION - HEALING TOUCH PROGRAM:

Healing Touch classes were added by Lourdes, who hired Denise Anthes in early 2009. Denise started teaching

Introduction to Healing Touch classes and also became Coordinator for a series of official Healing Touch Program classes while fulfilling her own requirements for instructor certification. Meanwhile, I was asked to teach HT classes for nurses and staff beginning in April, 2009. I must say that to be invited to institute Healing Touch training at Mission Hospital is a cherished blessing. As Denise begins to instruct Levels 1 and 2, I will continue with Level 3.

Note: Some of the first HT students, who pay for their training through payroll deduction, were gleaned from Denise’s earlier introductory classes. Most of them have completed Levels 1, 2 and 3 - and will soon attend Level 4!

Asheville’s first Level 4 and 5 classes will be held in December at Mission Hospital. In all, 12 HTP classes will have been taught at Mission Hospital by the end of 2009.

CAM CONFERENCES:

The National Center for Complimentary and Alternative Medicine (CAM) provides another opportunity for Healing Touch through annual conferences with energy therapy presentations. (CAM is a grouping of health care systems with integrative and/or complimentary components which are scientifically being researched by the federal government to build an evidence base for their effectiveness, to train researchers, and to inform the public. (For further information: call toll free 1-888-664-6226. Web site:www.nccam.nih.gov Email:info@nccam.nih.gov

Denise Anthes was asked to lecture about HT at Mission’s first CAM conference, where her presentation included Power Point



Above: Anne Boyd (standing far right) teaching a Healing Touch Level 1 class at Mission Hospital.



Above: Denise Anthes offering Healing Touch to a health care worker attending one of Mission Hospital's retreats.

and the opportunity to teach a beginner HT technique to some 60 attendees. (Over 150 people attended the first conference - the highest group ever for nursing programs in CAM - indicative of keen interest.) Reviews were excellent. Some of those in attendance subsequently registered for Healing Touch Introductory classes, and many went on to attend HTP classes.

Denise recounts an experience she had during a breakout session the afternoon of that first conference. She, who sometimes senses Archangel Michael when she is doing HT, was offering a treatment for someone when Denise sensed an angel behind her and afterward told the client, "I feel Michael was here - but not my Michael." The patient, somewhat awed, told that it was her son Michael's birthday but he had died a few years earlier.

REACHING THE PUBLIC

Prior to working at Mission Hospital, Denise used every opportunity available to promote Healing Touch. She lectured at businesses and schools - billing energy work as "Stress Busters" - adapting the language to each audience. She sent her resume to suitable groups, offering possible topics for consideration. As word spread that she was available, she was invited to speak throughout both the community and the hospital -- which she continues to do.

IN HOSPITAL:

Currently, Integrative Health Care Staffers are on-call for all patients within the hospital who request their services. They can be seen wheeling their cases of equipment and literature

for patients and average several calls a day. The pilot units have trained Healing Touch nurses on hand who chart what therapies have been used.

FROM INTEGRATIVE HEALTH CARE STAFF:

The Integrative Health Care Staff recommends the following volunteer opportunities to offer lectures, demonstrations, exhibits, and Introduction to Healing Touch presentations for education and service companies, technical schools, massage and nursing schools, university wellness programs, church groups, retiree and women's groups, health care career days.

ADVICE FOR NURSES IN HOSPITAL:

What if you are the only one doing Healing Touch on your unit? Start with who you do know and be alert for opportunities to share in an easy, relaxed manner (not pushy or over assertive). Know to whom you're talking and use words that help them be comfortable listening to you. And it's important **to listen** to what they **say** and **don't say**. Find a like-minded person, and support each other - in and out of the unit.

- Follow up on opportunities to introduce helpful HT techniques to co-workers.
- Be patient - with yourself, with others. It's an evolving process.
- Accept that you can only change yourself and you may need to wait for others to start thinking "outside the box."

Keep doing the work and doors will open. (Cindy can attest to that! See [Healing Touch Comes to Mission Hospital: Part One](#), in last months' Energy Magazine.)

OVERVIEW:

The consensus is that as the community becomes more educated, as more nurses are trained and patients request and benefit significantly from it -- the mystery will be removed from energy therapies and energy medicine will become more comfortable for all involved to view and respect as a normal, optional part of hospital services.

(Next Issue: [Mission Hospital: Part Three - Interviews with Two Nurses and a Physician](#). (Views after three-four months of adding energy therapies -- the shortfalls, challenges and joys of bringing Healing Touch to the forefront - tips and information vital to all in the healing community.)

You are invited to send comments regarding this article, to Anne Boyd at - homelight@aol.com

About the author:

Anne, after 25 years as Spiritual study group leader, and Shaman Journey presenter, was trained in the 80's by Janet Mentgen and her core group; and became Certified as Healing Touch Instructor and Practitioner. She has been teaching since, in the U.S. and as volunteer to Romania over several years. She also teaches Life Force Healing and other energy work. And she adds Reikli Master, Hypnotherapist, and Intuitive Healer/Consultant credentials, to her practice. In 2006 she earned a Master of Divinity Degree and was ordained Minister of Peace with the Beloved Community.

Anne traveled with Janet Mentgen and an HT teaching group to Australia/New Zealand three times in HT's early years..and was inspired to draw angels; later created quilted energy pillows and gemstone pendulums.