

Some Thoughts on the Legacy....

By Denise Anthes, RN, BSN, MBA, HTCP/I

I have always been attracted to Karla Greene's image entitled Janet's Legacy. The colors stimulate the eyes - while opposing shapes contrast and balance each other. The image of an angular, crystal foundation from which a flowing tree trunk emerges reminds me of the earth's grounding abundance. The swirling chakras flow up the middle of the tree trunk like sap carrying the life source, bringing heart-centered touch to the world. The leaves are also heart shaped and full of life, sprouting in all directions. I have a framed copy of this print, which I bring to every Healing Touch class that I teach. It is a vibrant reminder of Janet Mentgen's Legacy – Healing Touch.

Each student who takes a class with me also becomes part of that legacy. Each one adds their gifts, their insights, their joys and ah-ha moments. Each one takes away a serving of self-love and a bit of the wisdom of the ages. Each one recognizes the importance of sacred presence and takes home modern day practical applications of Healing Touch.

Using the metaphor of a tree, I see that Healing Touch has its roots in ancient hands-on-healing, its trunk rises from the foundational theories of the nursing process, its branches grow from outcome measures which blossom through both quantitative and qualitative research, and the fruits of Healing Touch are enhanced health and well-being.



Healing with touch is inherent to humanity. Ancient hieroglyphs and good old common sense illustrate that for us. Smiles and tears and caring encourage touch. Those who smile and tearful folks both appreciate and gain by the nurturing aspects of human touch.

Since the 1970s, nursing theorists have advanced the understanding of human energy interactions and multidimensional concepts of touch, healing and well-being. They have paved new roads in nursing education and reminded us of our traditions of holistic patient-centered care. They have stretched our minds to think and search and know beyond what is proven, towards the great universal connection among all beings.

Exploring these connections and how we impact one another may be studied in many ways. Qualitative and quantitative research offer complimentary perspectives and combine for a holistic approach to understanding the complexity of mind-body-spirit connections. This type of mixed-method research merges the heart of healing with the mind of science.

Ultimately, the goal of Healing Touch is enhancing well-being by balancing and harmonizing human energy centers. Healing Touch blends esoteric concepts with practical applications. What an amazing legacy Janet has left for us to continue!