



# Finding the Jewels Within the Treasure Box of Healing Touch

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I am a nurse, so my original intention was to write an article for nurses. However, if you are not a nurse, please keep reading because what I hope to share with you has universal importance for all healers - from all walks of life. Feel free to replace the words “*nursing*” and/or “*patients*” with other terms that resonate with your life situation. My intention is not to complicate, but rather to bring clarity to your awareness and support to your journey -- so that you will find practical and effective ways to apply Healing Touch, and other energy medicine modalities, in your personal and professional lives.

For nurses, the content of this article is most likely something that you did not learn during your nursing education. When you see a familiar term such as “Nursing Process”, I assure you that I am not going to lecture you on theoretical concepts from your academic past. Rather, with an open mind and open heart, I hope that together we will rediscover and connect with a few of the many treasures found along the path of Healing Touch.

I have been teaching Healing Touch since 2005 and 70-80% of my Healing Touch students are nurses. Over the years, this is a question I hear often in my classes: “*So, now that I have learned Healing Touch, can I start using it in my nursing practice?*” Although I welcome this enthusiasm and desire to apply Healing Touch in their practices, my initial response is not a simple, enthusiastic, “YES!”.

First, we must remind ourselves to STEP BACK and release any anxiety or anticipation associated with the pressure of “doing” Healing Touch. By shifting the focus from the act of “doing” or “giving”, my intention is to first create space for each of us to appreciate and better understand the depth of what Healing Touch offers. Remember, especially at the beginning of your study of Healing Touch, stepping back (before providing Healing Touch) to be in a grounded and centered state provides a powerful healing presence and gives space to co-create a healing environment with your patients.

Learning Healing Touch is like opening a treasure box. There are so many wonderful jewels in Healing Touch, some are obvious while others are hidden or overlooked. As an instructor I find joy in guiding students through a treasure hunt as we search to uncover those often-overlooked treasures. To begin, I would like us to focus our attention on the **Healing Touch Sequence** as this will help us shine a light on our path as healers.

Healing Touch teaches us to follow a **10 Step Healing Touch Sequence** to develop and organize every Healing Touch session. In many ways, this resembles the **Nursing Process**, a universal concept taught in “Nursing 101” which consists of the following five steps: Assessment, Problem Identification, Goal Setting, Intervention(s) and Evaluation. By using this logical sequence, nurses learn to organize their nursing care while focusing their attention on their patients.



## Finding the Jewels Within the Treasure Box of Healing Touch

Similarly, the **Healing Touch Sequence** asks us to assess, identify health issues, set goals, intervene and evaluate. When comparing the **Nursing Process** and **Healing Touch Sequence**, we uncover two jewels of Healing Touch, which help to shift our paradigm of healing from “doing” to “being.” It is through the process of practitioner preparation (centering, grounding and attuning) and healthy boundary setting (ground and release of client) that we learn to stay present, honor our human connection and respect the ability of every patient to heal. (See the comparison diagram on page) Let’s explore *Practitioner Preparation* and *Ground and Release* in more detail.

must care for ourselves first - before taking care of others. Being centered and grounded in the present moment, allows us to align our outer and inner worlds -- while attuning provides the opportunity for genuine connection with our patients/clients.

In addition, *centering and grounding* reminds us of the power of the “mirroring effect.” In clinical situations, when a nurse or practitioner is centered, grounded and in the present moment, the patient/family member will most likely be calmer and more receptive to care. The opposite may be true as well. When a nurse is not centered and grounded,

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### Practitioner Preparation of Centering, Grounding and Attuning

(Step 2 of 10 Step Healing Touch Sequence - see chart p. 34)

Practitioner preparation is built-in self-care for all nurses and healers! Through the process of centering, grounding and attuning before Healing Touch intervention(s), nurses learn to acknowledge and honor their being, while learning to take care of themselves before taking care of others. “Self-care” is a frequently used term in the nursing field, but it carries the underlining implication that it happens away from work. For example, when nurses mention self-care, it is often associated with taking a long vacation, getting a massage, taking a hot bath with candles and wine, etc.

However, the Healing Touch Sequence reminds us that self-care must be woven into our practice as healers every time we do our work and thus becomes a way of life. This approach places self-care at the center of our being. It reminds us that we are our highest priority and remain the only constant in our lives. We

patients/family members may feel anxious or even fearful.

I learned the impact of the “mirroring effect” while working with older adults with dementia. People with dementia become confused and agitated at times when they “feel” discomfort or uncertainty in the environment. When in this state, it becomes difficult to reason with dementia patients as they have lost the ability to process information due to their illness. As a result, it can create a frustrating situation for both the patient and the nurse.

Over the years, I have learned that being centered and grounded helps cognitively impaired patients maintain a calmer state and makes our interaction meaningful - despite their confused state. Patients with dementia serve as a mirror, reflecting back to us our inner state with great accuracy. In fact, they are some of the best teachers of the “mirroring effect” and I am grateful for the lessons they taught me. I have learned that it is the presence of a



centered and grounded nurse that becomes the true gift to a patient.

## Grounding and Releasing

(Step 8 of 10 Step Healing Touch Sequence - see chart p. 34)

*Grounding and Releasing* the patient after a Healing Touch intervention is the second Healing Touch jewel on which we will focus. This step reminds us of the importance of grounding patients after Healing Touch sessions to ensure the person is fully present in his/her body and in the current moment. The other important concept in this step is letting go of your patients at the end of a session by *releasing*. This important step helps to create healthy boundaries between you and your patients, enabling you to continue your life work without being overwhelmed by the challenges of others. It is a great antidote for stress and burnout. By releasing your patients after you complete your nursing care, you will be able to maintain a healthy professional boundary to support your patients and yourself.

When I look back at my own career as a nurse, I often wish that I had learned this concept of “releasing” as a nursing student. I remember entering my profession with a stern sense of responsibility and unrealistic expectation that my profession was about fixing. I felt the well-being of my patients was dependent upon me and thus a reflection of my nursing care.

Here is one example: One day after ending a long shift at the hospital, I left with an unrelenting feeling of being pulled back to a patient’s bedside along with a sense of guilt for leaving the patient behind. I remember thinking about that patient when I was at home eating dinner that night. Before I began studying Healing Touch, I thought these feelings were signs of a caring nurse. I was unaware that this was unhealthy behavior and a sign of poor boundaries. Over time I began to realize that releasing patients was an act of true kindness and respect for each person’s ability to self heal. Trusting that each patient can find their own strength and path to healing is the greatest support that we can offer.

Nursing Process	10 Step Healing Touch Sequence
Assessment	1. Intake or Update
<b>2. Practitioner Preparation</b>	
Assessment	3. Pre-Treatment Energetic Assessment
Problem Identification (Nursing Diagnosis)	4. Health Issues
Goal Setting	5. Mutual Goals
Nursing Intervention	6. Healing Touch Interventions
Evaluation	7. Post-Treatment Energetic Assessment
<b>8. Grounding and Release</b>	
Evaluation	9. Evaluation and Feedback
10. Plan	





### *“Remember the power of your intention”*

One of the most effective ways to release a patient is by setting the intention to let go of the person, trusting the person will find his/her own balance and power within. Through the use of imagery, you may find it useful to use the image of “Catch and Release”. After a fish is caught, we can release it back into the water trusting that the fish will swim away with renewed strength and well-being. The fish can return to its natural state of being and able to swim freely on its own. This act of releasing may also remind us to let go of our ego. Remembering that all healing is self-healing. Along with letting go of our expectation of outcomes, we can free ourselves from the potential energy block that often stems from our ego. With a freed spirit, we as healers, can continue our work with joy -- with a reminder that letting go is a gift not only to our patients but also to ourselves.

These two steps within the Healing Touch Sequence, *Practitioner Preparation* and *Ground and Releasing*, are some of the greatest treasures of Healing Touch. I strongly believe that understanding and embracing these two concepts, along with continued practice, will help to create a solid foundation for your work as a nurse/practitioner and healer.

Back to the original question: **“So, now that I have learned Healing Touch, can I start using it in my nursing practice?”**

My answer is an enthusiastic “YES”! At the same time, my advise to you is this:

Rather than focusing on techniques, take time to focus on centering, grounding and attuning when beginning to work with your patient/client and ground and release at the conclusion. In this way you will be able to incorporate Healing Touch into your nursing or student practitioner practice.

If you are lucky enough to find the treasures of Healing Touch in your life, may you grow with this life-sustaining awareness to be the best nurse/practitioner you can be. I look forward to reconnecting with you on this path of healing. €