

Getting Back to Our Roots



While this age of science and technology makes us marvel over the astounding accomplishments of mankind, where do we now find ourselves turning? Ironically, we are looking for healing in the root, the leaf, and the flower petals that have been a part of existence since the very beginning. More and more each day, we are incorporating holistic care in our treatment of patients, including therapeutic touch, massage, herbs, and a multitude of complementary and alternative medicines, known as “CAM.”

A friend of mine, Annie, suffered with diabetes for 37 years, which caused her blindness and kidney failure. In 1990, at the age of 35, she had four 4 “mini” strokes. All the doctors could offer her was aspirin, rest, and a warning about “no heavy exercise.” This is when she turned to CAM. With persistence and the will and courage to live, she researched and tried alternative therapies. Her first kidney transplant, in 1985, lasted ten years. When the kidney was removed, it was shriveled, scarred, and atrophied. The transplant doctors were confounded over the deterioration. During the transplant for a new kidney, they decided that Annie could not receive a pancreas transplant at the same time since her arteries had been so severely damaged from the strokes. Convinced that she needed the double transplant immediately, she persuaded the physicians to go ahead with the procedure despite their hesitation. Finally, they gave in, saying, “You are the best looking sick patient we ever saw.”

Annie underwent the double transplants on June 24, 1995, and almost ten years later, her organs are working as well as the day they were implanted. The doctors call her case a miracle and said Annie was one of the best transplant patients they had encountered since this procedure was perfected. Recently, when she saw her endocrinologist and

asked him how long the pancreas should last, he replied: “Only about two years.”

Annie has much to smile about these days as she pursues a career in homeopathy and naturopathy. Her story is a testimony to the powers of holistic healing, and a wonderful reminder that each new day is a gift. As we embark on nursing careers that rely so heavily on science, medicine, and technology, let us not forget that our first priority is caring for the whole person, not just the symptoms. I hope this special focus on holistic nursing provides you with valuable insights on the latest trends in this exciting area of health care. I leave you with the following anonymous historical vignette:

“I have an earache.”

2000 B.C. -Here, eat this root.

1000 A.D. -That root is heathen. Here, say this prayer.

1850 A.D. -That prayer is superstition. Here, drink this potion.

1940 A.D. -That potion is snake oil. Here, swallow this pill.

1985 A.D. -That pill is ineffective. Here, take this antibiotic.

2000 A.D. -That antibiotic is artificial. Here, eat this root.

Kimberly DiYanni
Imprint Editor