

UTILIZATION OF THERAPEUTIC COMMUNICATION AS A WIDGET FOR SPIRITUAL AND ENERGY CARE: A HOPE FOR THE 21ST CENTURY NURSING PRACTICE

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ABSTRACT:

Diseases, illness, injuries, mental and physical problems are all caused by disturbance in the energy field. Once these disturbances can be corrected a person can come back to a state of health. The spiritual nursing care or energy healing can be provided through therapeutic communication. Therapeutic communication is holistic and patient centered, and engages the totality of the patient's condition – environmental, spiritual, psychological, as well as physiological elements. The practice of therapeutic communication helps to form a health-focused and stress-reducing collaborative relationship; its primary goal is the establishment of trust in order to create a healing exchange between nurse and patient. Spiritual life force energy works to heal and harmonize all the energy systems in all parts of the body. Spiritual life force energy goes to the root of whatsoever part that needs healing at the time of its application. This article seeks to illuminate the foundation for spiritual-energy care nursing, the interconnectedness of therapeutic communication and spiritually guided life force energy, the principles of life force energy, establishing nurse-client relationship for energy healing and the role of nurses in energy care.

Key Words: Spirituality, Nursing, Energy, Therapeutic Communication, Client Care.

INTRODUCTION:

The theory of the science and unitary irreducible human beings (SUHB) has influenced nursing to consider a person as a whole entity when planning and implementing care. Based on this theory, human beings have a capacity for abstraction and imagery, language, thought sensation and emotion^[1]. According to SUHB, energy is fundamental unit of living and nonliving and this energy are infinite, hence irreducible and indivisible. Two energy fields exist; the human field (HF) and the environmental field (EF). More so, the unitary human being is irreducible, indivisible, and multi-dimensional energy fields identified by pattern and manifest characteristics specific to the whole that live in an environmental field that is also irreducible, indivisible, identified by pattern and is integral with human field^[2]

Therefore, the unification of both EF and HF forms a unitary universe which is not homeostatic as there is no stasis in the universe open system, either equilibrium as there is no reversal nor adaption as both HF and EF co-evolved^[3]. The openness of the unitary universe allows for integrality. Thus integrality and pan dimensionality of the unitary universe is the bases of "deep interconnectedness". Deep interconnectedness provides the bases for paranormal experiences like; distance healing; healing power of prayers; therapeutic

touch; out of body experiences; déjà vu; intuition; telepathic experiences and mystical experiences.

This science of Metaphysics and the understanding of Metaphysics through Epigenetics; has brought about major breakthroughs; between the interaction of human energy or our spiritual side and the physical body. This new understanding will bring about the greatest advancement in Health Care and Human Consciousness over the next 30 years. The reality of our spiritual side together with the advances in scientific research into all the minute details of DNA, genes and chromosomes of the physical side of human beings will inform and enlighten scientists and spiritualists alike as they begin to understand and research the relationship

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between the human energy or spiritual and divine aspects of humanity and how they alter the physical structure of our DNA, genes and chromosomes through the science of Epigenetics^[4]. We have for almost a century gone along a chemical path forgetting totally that we have a divinity that is pure Life Energy. This divine or spiritual side of us is more important than the physical because all diseases or sickness whether physical or mental first appears as a disturbance in the spiritual and life energy side of us before it manifest in the physical^[4]. Therapeutic communication is holistic and patient centered, and engages the totality of the patient's condition – environmental, spiritual, psychological, as well as physiological elements^[5]. It involves the EF and HF of a unitary human being. The practice of therapeutic communication helps to form a health-focused and stress-reducing collaborative relationship; its primary goal is the establishment of trust in order to create a healing exchange between nurse and patient. In a properly functioning relationship, the patient communicates his or her experience, and shares necessary data, thoughts, and feelings with the nurse who listens carefully to the patient's expression of physical and holistic needs. Ideally, the result of this reciprocal exchange is the formulation of an unique, mutually-designed but patient- managed treatment plan^[5].

Therapeutic Communication is one of the most valuable tools that nurses have to build rapport or trust which is crucial in spiritual care need. This trust allows the nurse to provide spiritual care alongside the other needs of the clients. This means that the nurse allows the patient to feel secure enough to share information, such as his/her feelings, frustration, pain, happiness, or improvement.

Consequently, this article seeks to focus on the need to utilize therapeutic communication strategies to enhanced the deep interconnectedness between the EF and HF our clients through a purposeful nurse –client relationship

THERAPEUTIC COMMUNICATION A FOUNDATION FOR SPIRITUALLY GUIDED LIFE FORCE ENERGY:

The purpose and goal of the nurse is to provide physical, psychosocial, and spiritual care to empower patients to recover health through a variety of self-healing techniques involving direction and exchange of spiritual forces or energies^[6]. Among the greatest scientific discoveries of the 20th century was that the entire known universe consists of energy and matter, and the void in between. Neither energy nor matter can be created nor destroyed; they may only be transformed^[7]. Since it is that energy which neither be created nor destroyed that constitutes life, then the energizing spirit of the human being is the same as the

energizing spirit of the sun, the tree or the bird. It can neither be created nor destroyed; it can only be transformed within and between living things.

Human beings are energy being exchanging energy from the HF and EF. Universal life energy which has being called Reiki is an ancient laying-on of hands healing technique that uses the life force energy to heal, balance the subtle energies within our body. The patient who is ill is believed to carry low energy content. Diseases, illness, injuries, mental and physical problems all are caused in part by disturbance of in energy field and once these disturbances can be corrected a person can come back to a state of health^[4]. The nurses are believed to be carriers of energy that could balance the energy level of their patients. Nurses could also function in removing the disturbance in the human energy field where the natural healing of the body begins. Universal life force energy addresses the physical, emotional, mental and spiritual imbalances. The nurse practitioner is a vessel that supplies healing energy. The energy flows from the nurse body through the palms of the hands while touching the recipient's body or while talking verbally to the client. The idea is energy communication. More so, it can be guiding the patients to reach a level of deep interconnectedness where the paranormal experiences are felt. At this level of deep interconnectedness the energy balance is attained.

Life Force energy can be realized through prayer, meditation, deep contemplation, ritual dance, etc. Our awareness of it often becomes heightened in times of high crisis when the normally constructed façades of our experience become cracked open to reveal a deeper reality within. It is both outside of us and inside of us^[7].

This energy is among us. We sense its presence through love, through compassion, through humility, through sacrifice. The sensing of that energy, the perception of that life force as being real, the feeling that there is something greater, deeper, more profound out there among us and in here within, the nagging sense of trying to find your way back to some place imagined as "home" what we call spirituality^[7]. It is an awakening comprehension of the interconnectedness of all manifestations of life energy that animates the potential for a growing spiritual development within each and all us. It is the recognition that this energy exists, that it is real, and that we can know it even if we cannot find the words to describe it adequately. It is not only within each of us, but also between and among all of us that the universality of the spirit may be comprehended^[7].

The process of creating and sharing meaning through an ongoing interplay between perception and

expression is what we call “communication.” We construct meaning of the impressions we have of the world through our minds. We also make meaning from and through the inner voice (i.e., our perception of the Life Force) that speaks through our hearts. Communication is not only a rational process, one of the minds, but it is also a process of filtering what we sense through our emotions, which is the realm of the human heart. Both mind and heart are always interacting as we engage the world, a vital mixture of both “up from the body” and “down from the spirit” experiences^[8]. It is in the spaces between these, “the interpretive in- between those empirical manifestations (of consciousness) and their localized interpretations”^[9] where the Life Force can be comprehended.

In the active creation of meaning, perception, both within and without, precedes expression. From our time in the womb throughout our lives and on into death, we attempt to comprehend life’s problems and challenges, to question them, to share our experiences with one another. Communication is grounded in this quest to ascertain and to share meaning, within ourselves, with and among each other^[7].

Communication media, then, are the means through which we can perceive, express and share meaning. These media can be anything: radio, television, computer, people, objects, symbols, signs, our perceptions of our pasts, our telling of stories who were are, where we come from, why we are here, where we are going. The holistic nurse’s communication ensures that each individual experience the presence of the nurse as authentic, caring, compassionate and sincere. This involves more than offering therapeutic technique such as responding, reflecting, or summarizing. It however involves deep listening or listening with the heart. It is done with conscious intension without preconceptions, busy-ness, distractions or analysis^[10].

THE PRINCIPLES OF LIFE FORCE ENERGY:

The Life Force Energy is of the Creator, it permeates our universe and everyone/everything within it. Its limitless abundance can be accessed and used to create balance and wellness in every aspect of our lives. Just as there is "Medicine" with its various specialties, there is "Spiritual Healing" with its various modalities. Just as there are different radio frequencies, the same is true of healing energy.

Spiritual life force energy makes direct contact with and stimulates your Inner Healer, that part of your Self that knows exactly what you need to be healthy in every way. Because it's guided by Spirit, Spiritual life force energy is rooted in Love, has Divine intelligence and is always gentle, always helpful. Spiritual life force energy works to heal and harmonize all the energy systems in

all of your bodies (spiritual, mental, emotional and physical)^[11].

Spiritual life force energy goes to the root of whatever most needs healing at the time of its application, and the root may lie in any one of those 'bodies'. We are alive because life force is flowing through us. Life force flows within the physical body though pathways called chakras, meridians and nadis^[11]. It also flows around us in a field of energy called the aura. Life force nourishes the organs and cells of the body, supporting them in their vital functions. When this flow of life force is disrupted, it causes diminished function in one or more of the organs and tissues of the physical body.

The life force is responsive to thoughts and feelings. It becomes disrupted when we accept, either consciously or unconsciously, negative thoughts or feelings about ourselves. These negative thoughts and feelings attach themselves to the energy field and cause a disruption in the flow of life force. This diminishes the vital function of the organs and cells of the physical body.

Spiritual life force energy heals by flowing through the affected parts of the energy field and charging them with positive energy. It raises the vibratory level of the energy field in and around the physical body where the negative thoughts and feelings are attached. This causes the negative energy to break apart and fall away. In so doing, Spiritual life force energy clears, straightens and heals the energy pathways, thus allowing the life force to flow in a healthy and natural way.

One of the greatest Spiritual life force energy healing health benefits is stress reduction and relaxation, which triggers the body’s natural healing abilities, and improves and maintains health. Spiritual life force energy healing is a natural therapy that gently balances life energies and brings health and wellbeing to the recipient. Spiritual life force energy healing is a pure energy form. When it is combined with the sincere Desire of the Healee, who is willing to effect a cleansing within their emotional and spiritual consciousness, a total healing can occur^[11].

Some of the Spiritual life force energy Healing Health Benefits:

- Creates deep relaxation and aids the body to release stress and tension,
- It accelerates the bodies self-healing abilities,
- Aids better sleep,
- Reduces blood pressure
- Helps relieve pain,
- Assists the body in cleaning itself from toxins,

- Can help with acute (injuries) and chronic problems (asthma, eczema, headaches, etc.) and aides the breaking of addictions,
- Removes energy blockages, adjusts the energy flow of the endocrine system bringing the body into balance and harmony,
- Reduces some of the side effects of drugs and helps the body to recover from drug therapy after surgery and chemotherapy,
- Supports the immune system,
- Increases vitality and postpones the aging process,
- Raises the vibrational frequency of the body,
- Helps spiritual growth and emotional clearing^[11].

When we are relaxed, stress-free, we are able to restore our natural ability to heal.

ESTABLISHING NURSE-CLIENT RELATIONSHIP TOWARDS ELIMINATING DISTURBANCES IN THE HUMAN ENERGY FIELD

The therapeutic nurse-client relationship is foundational to spiritual nursing care. The therapeutic nurse-client relationship is the fundamental means for providing safe, competent, compassionate and ethical nursing care. It is well documented that the nurse-client therapeutic relationship has a positive impact on client outcomes and satisfaction^[12,13].

The therapeutic nurse-client relationship differs from social and intimate relationships. A therapeutic nurse-client relationship is:

- Purposeful and goal-directed
- Well-defined with clear boundaries
- Structured to meet the client's needs
- Characterized by an interpersonal process that is safe, confidential, reliable, and consistent

Every feeling you have saturates every cell and organ in your entire body. When you have good feelings, you are giving love and you receive the full force of health through your body at an astounding rate^[14]. When you have bad feelings, the tension causes your nerves and cells to contract, the vital chemical production in your body changes, your blood vessels contract, and your breathing becomes shallow, all of which reduces the force of health in your organs and your entire body^[14]. Therefore, the cardinal role of the nurse is to make patient feel better. Disease is simply the result of a body's not being at ease over a long period of time, because of negative feelings like stress, worry, and fear.

The body is made up of 70 percent water. Researchers in Japan, Russia, Europe, and the United States have discovered that when water is exposed to positive

words and feelings such as love and gratitude, the energy level of the water not only increases, but the structure of the water changes, making it perfectly harmonious. The higher the positive feeling, the more beautiful and harmonious the water becomes. When water is exposed to negative emotions, such as hate, the energy level of the water decreases, and chaotic changes occur, negatively affecting the structure of the water^[14]. If human emotions can change the structure of water, can you imagine what your feelings are doing to the health of your body? When you feel love, your love affects the water of the 100 trillion cells in your body. Therefore the significance of making a patient feel better is a blueprint for actualization of energy balance and thus energy healing.

In the face of any sickness, give good feelings about health, because only love brings perfect health. You cannot give bad feelings about sickness and receive health. If you hate or fear a disease, you will be giving out bad feelings, and disease can never go away through bad feelings. When you give thoughts and feelings of what you want, your cells receive the full force of health. When you give negative thoughts and feelings of what you don't want, the force of health to your cells reduces! It doesn't matter if you feel bad about a subject that has nothing to do with your health; when you feel bad, you reduce the force of health to your body. But when you feel love for anything - for a sunny day, new house, friend, or promotion - your body receives the full force of health.

The nurse can use the creation process and imagine and feel full health being restored to clients. Although you cannot override what another person is giving to the law of attraction, your power can help them rise to a frequency where they can receive health^[14]. Ensuring the mood of the clients involves many strategies. Guided imagery is an alternative healing practice in which relaxation and mental visualization are used to improve mood and physical well-being, help heal injuries and illnesses, and prevent a wide variety of illnesses. Guided imagery helps reduce pain and anxiety, which can make surgical patients feel better and heal more quickly. Using this low-cost, low-tech procedure, a therapist guides the patient to create relaxing images of a special place in the patient's mind to help him or her overcome the stress and anxiety that often accompany illness. The patient listens to taped music designed to foster relaxation, help focus concentration, and relieve apprehension about surgery and the recovery process. Guided imagery can ease preoperative anxiety and stress and may give the patient a valuable tool to use in the postoperative period to help deal with pain^[15,16].

More so, therapeutic massage helps to physically and mentally relieve stress, muscle tension, and stiffness. It aids relaxation, reduces pain, promotes deeper and easier breathing, improves circulation of blood and movement of lymph fluids, reduces blood pressure, and strengthens the immune system. Massage releases endorphins and improves the recipient's mood, strengthening the balance between mind, body, and spirit^[17]. Additionally, healing touch has very effective in energy healing. Healing touch therapy is a gentle energy-based therapy that emphasizes heart-centered care and compassionate healing intention. This noninvasive energy therapy facilitates smooth and balanced flow of energy from the nurse to the patient, helping to restore the patient's mind, body, and spirit connection. It is based on the premise that the human body is surrounded by an energy field and contains energy centers that control the flow of energy from the energy field to the physical body. The healing touch practitioner gently rests his or her hands on the energy centers of the patient's body. After surgery, the postanesthesia care unit nurse works with the patient to clear the energy field and bring the patient into harmony and balance. Healing touch can help the patient's pulse and respiratory rate return to normal, reduce anxiety and stress, reduce pain, strengthen the immune system, and help reduce the side effects of medications and other treatments, especially during the preoperative and postoperative periods. This therapy provides complementary care for neck and back problems, deepens spiritual connection, supports cancer care, creates a sense of well-being, and eases acute and chronic conditions^[18,19,20]

Active listening is important for patient care. It requires that the nurse listen to the patient, ask appropriate questions, not force answers or interpret replies, give sincere responses to questions, and ensure that the patient understands what has been discussed. It is important that the nurse not be judgmental or confrontational or otherwise make the patient feel uncomfortable. Active listening decreases anxiety and helps to normalize physiological parameters^[16].

The therapeutic nurse-client relationship is a "planned, time-limited and goal-directed connection between a registered nurse (RN) and a client for the purpose of meeting a client's health care needs"^[21]. The nurse - client -relationship provides the blueprint for removing disturbances in the human energy field. This occurs in three phases;

- 1. Orientation phase**
- 2. Working phase**
- 3. Termination phase**

ORIENTATION PHASE:

This phase is focus on learning about the client of any concerns or needs. In this phase roles are defined, information is collected using a spiritual assessment tool. Goals are established and avenue is given to the client for further clarifications. It is important for the nurse to establish good rapport with the client. Orientation phase involves the following step;

- Introduce self to the client and state purpose.
- Set the contract: meeting time, place, frequency, duration, and date of termination.
- Discuss confidentiality.
- Build trust by establishing expectations and boundaries.
- Set goals with the client.
- Explore the client's ideas, issues, and needs.
- Explore the meaning of testing behaviors.
- Enforce limits on testing or other inappropriate behaviors^[22].

Centering and creating an intention for healing are processes the nurse engages in prior to any patient interaction. Centering involves focusing your attention on your heart, setting aside concerns and thoughts, and connecting with feelings of love and compassion.

Creating an intention is a powerful way for the nurse to create an optimal environment for a caring-healing interaction. (Table 1.)

With this intention the nurse is consciously setting aside her own concerns and focusing on the patient; she focuses on the idea that the interaction will be "for the greater good of this person"; and she is making a conscious decision to be fully present.

The nurse creates an environment that promotes and sustains a caring-healing interaction.

TABLE 1: Centering and Intention Setting Technique

<p>Pause for a moment before entering the patient's room</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Set aside any concerns regarding the past or the future, these can be picked up when leaving the room. ▪ Gently close your eyes. ▪ Breathe deeply and slowly. ▪ Repeat to yourself, "I am here for the greater good of this patient – I give my full attention to the here and now." ▪ Direct awareness to the area around your heart, bringing to mind something or someone that evokes your love and compassion. ▪ When connected with that feeling of love and compassion repeat again, "I am present to the

moment.”

- This entire process should take only between 5 and 10 seconds.

Culled from Thornton^[23]

WORKING PHASE:

Reiki energy flows through the practitioner’s hands into these negative energy patterns of the human bio-field and charges them with positive energy, elevating the vibratory level in and around the physical body. It strengthens energy pathways, or meridians, to facilitate healing in a natural way. Reiki restores energy balance and vitality throughout the body’s subtle energy system that is blocked by stress or negative emotion^[24,25,26]. Working phase involves the following steps;

- Maintain relationship according to the contract.
- Perform ongoing assessment to plan and evaluate therapeutic measures.
- Facilitate the client’s expression of needs and issues.
- Encourage the client to problem solve.
- Promote the client’s self-esteem.
- Foster positive behavioral change.
- Explore and deal with resistance and other defense mechanisms.
- Recognize transference and countertransference issues.
- Reassess the client’s problems and goals, and revise plans as necessary.
- Support the client’s adaptive alternatives and use of new coping skills.
- Remind the client about the date of termination^[22]

TERMINATION PHASE:

Termination phase involves the following steps;

- Provide opportunity for the client to discuss thoughts and feelings about termination and loss.
- Discuss the client’s previous experience with separations and loss.
- Elicit the client’s feelings about the therapeutic work in the nurse-client relationship.
- Summarize goals and achievements.
- Review memories of work in the sessions.
- Express own feelings about sessions to validate the experience with the client.
- Discuss ways for the client to incorporate new healthy behaviors into life.

- Maintain limits of final termination^[22]

THE ROLE OF NURSES IN SPIRITUAL AND BIOENERGY CARE:

Energy therapies are fundamental to Nursing practice and are recognized in the Nursing Intervention Classification Code^[27]. The American Holistic Nurses Association (AHNA) endorses use of energy modalities as valid nursing interventions for self-care and for care of others^[28,29]. This organization incorporates a separate standard for self-care in holistic nursing. It is estimated that more than 30,000 nurses practice energy therapies^[30].

Origins of touch therapies, therapeutic touch, Reiki, Healing Touch, and massage may differ; however, they share an efficacy derived from subtle energy or spiritual changes^[31]. Congruent with nursing philosophy, each uses a holistic approach that views the client as a dynamic within its own contextual relationship to life and environment. They deflect the focus from disease to wholeness through the prevention of disease and promotion of healthy aging.

They are not interventions of curing but of healing, which is about becoming more whole. The process belongs to the person, not the disease^[32].

Therefore the need for nurses to focus on the following is highly essential;

- a. **Attention-** both the noetic and transpersonal views validate the importance of one’s values- spiritual belief system and focused attention as a conduit to access universal life energy. Thus, it has to come through deep intentional focus on a specific mental object of attention and awareness. This process invites spirit-energy to enter into one’s life and work, and into caring-healing process and outcome. The spiritual culture unfold a nurse as an instrument, and as a sacred healing environment, possessing an intentional presence, engaging with grace, beauty, artistry and loving energetic attention. Therefore the ability for nurses to release themselves an instrument for healing is extremely vital in the bioenergy healing process. Nursing is ultimately a spiritual practice. Thus, they are such an opportunity to transform practice through mindful practice^[33]
- b. **Using the intentional transpersonal caring-healing theory, the following are crucial for a nurse spiritual care;**
 - i. Start each day with spiritual practice. Upon wakening, each day, be silent and give gratitude for life.

- ii. Be open to receive the day and all the universe wishes you to receive and give in return.
- iii. Established your intentions about those things you can control and let go of those you cannot control.
- iv. Be guided by caring, companion, tenderness, gentleness, loving kindness, and equanimity for self and others.
- v. Honor nursing as the spiritual, spirit-filled practice; belief that you are a vessel or the carrier of energy.
- vi. Work to cultivate discernment in your daily life and work by invoking infinites spirit in the now which will bring divine presence in all you meet, hold them in light, bless and forgive them.
- vii. Revision your place of work as a temple, a shrine, a sacred site for inner healing.
- viii. Seek to connect with others in spirit –to – spirit relation in caring moment
- ix. Love energy to flow through you for healing
- x. At the end of each day offer gratitude for all. Dedicate what you have done to the universe. Bless and forgive all you come across in your place of work^[33,34]

CONCLUSION:

The present health care delivery system is facing a lot of challenges owing to disappointment in conventional medicine. This has given ways to growth and development of energy healing methods which has been proved to cure many diseases and illnesses. There is need for health providers to utilize the knowledge of energy therapy to provide quality care in our health care delivery system in Nigeria. Since therapeutic communication is holistic and patient centered, and engages the totality of the patient's condition – environmental, spiritual, psychological, as well as physiological elements, its practice can help to form a health-focused and stress-reducing collaborative relationship which provides the blueprint for energy care; the primary goal is the establishment of trust in order to create a healing exchange between nurse and patient.

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