



Greetings and welcome again to news from The Janki Foundation, a charity supporting the integration of spirituality into healthcare, for patients and professionals. In this issue, we bring you updates and news on how our flagship training project, *Values in Healthcare: A Spiritual Approach* is reaching out to people in diverse settings, in the UK and around the world. Each event is a testament to individual or team

inspiration to share empowering methods and give time for reflection to those working on the frontline in healthcare. In some places, such as South Africa, this work has been going on for a number of years.

Please find below a report on the JF Lecture of last August, which was an illuminating group conversation on the theme of hope in healthcare.

Editor: Dr Kala Mistry

Hope and Health

Janki Foundation Lecture

About 350 people attended and hundreds more connected online for Hope and Health, a conversation with **Rev Peter Wells**, **Hla Myat Saw** and **Dr Craig Brown**, facilitated by **Arnold Desser**, lecturer, NHS clinician and post-graduate medical trainer.

The panel shared viewpoints from different faiths as well as different healthcare perspectives. Rev Wells, an Anglican priest, is Lead Chaplain at a large acute hospital, and Bereavement Manager at Brighton & Sussex University Hospitals NHS Trust. Hla Myat Saw, a Buddhist born in Burma, practises Chinese medicine at the Student Health Centre, Imperial College and trains GP trainers at the London Deanery of Postgraduate Medical Education. Dr Craig Brown, a GP for 30 years is past President of the National Federation of Spiritual Healers and currently Chair of the British Holistic Medical Association, and a trustee of and Advisor for The Janki Foundation.

Is hope relevant today?

Arnold opened the conversation by suggesting that 'hope' is a complex word, referring to Julian of Norwich (a 14th century female monk), who felt certain that God had spoken the following words to her: *All shall be well, and all manner of things shall be well.* Arnold asked the panel 'How does hope fit into today's medical model of evidence-based diagnostic thinking and clinical experience?'

Their responses were thoughtful and practical. One idea is that the greatest taboo of these times is not death but discussing the meaning of life. Hope entails affirming where people are in their journey of pain, and offering to be with them, as well as providing reassurance that they will not be abandoned.



Lou Beckerman, singer, nurse and therapist enthralled the audience with her lyrical songs on the evening's theme of courage and hope in health.

Hope in attendance?

People often simply want someone else to hear and recognise their worries - a space to



Arnold Desser facilitated deep conversation with the three panellists, Rev Peter Wells, Ms Hla Myat Saw and Dr Craig Brown, each of whom eagerly shared their ideas.

express their hurt and for it to be affirmed. Every encounter with patients can create some element of hope and reassurance.

In Buddhism, the feeling of hope is seen as an opposing energy to fear, and both remove us from the completeness of the present. However, if we envision hope as sunlight coming through dark clouds (illness) - and the sun is ever-present - then it is just a matter of knowing that.

Sometimes to be with a patient and to have an affirmative thought can be enough: for example, 'I hope this patient finds a way through this'. Sometimes verbalising can be inappropriate. All agreed that a deeper understanding of spirituality or life in general, can bring renewed hope and energy.

Pointers from Dadi Janki

Dadi Janki, who is 96 and has endured a lot of illness, nevertheless exerts such mastery over her body that she is still travelling for service worldwide. Sister Jayanti translated.

Hope is linked to courage, trust and honesty. When these are present you cannot lose hope - or happiness - as these are interrelated. Positive thoughts are a great medicine and we can take courage from understanding two analogies: an ant sees a mountain and is not scared as he knows he will find a way around it; an ant enters an elephant's ear, and the elephant may fall unconscious. Human beings sometimes become ill from hearing something tiny, but it is important for us to minimise things, not magnify them. This takes wisdom.

Spiritual medicine

Equally valuable is to never lose hope in yourself or another human being. There is always the possibility of change. Also, staying present to the present, otherwise you become lost in the stories of the past. When doctors work with good feelings and hope, it brings hope to patients. Spiritual medicine for us all:

take three tablets every day - patience, peace, and love - and watch how these can manage anything that happens during the day.

"Every encounter with patients can create some element of hope and reassurance."

The evening closed with a meditation commentary by Sister Jayanti:

I look within ... I see the flame of hope ... it is able to finish the darkness of fears, questions and doubts... The light of this flame lights up the path ahead... I can strengthen the power of this flame by reminding myself to maintain patience, contentment and tolerance... I now keep this flame burning brightly in my heart...

A member of the audience, who is facing a serious life-threatening condition, said this:

"The speakers were excellent and Dadi topped it all with her words of wisdom. They were simple but made so much sense. I wrote notes and most importantly I intend to apply these simple steps to real life. I feel that I have hope and more contentment right now."



Dadi Janki met the audience with pin-drop silence. She was accompanied by Sister Jayanti, European Director of the Brahma Kumaris.

Still Point, Turning World A dialogue exploring the integration of spirituality in healthcare

Led by Dr Sarah Egger, this international three-day retreat, held at the Global Retreat Centre, Oxford, was a collaboration between JF (UK), Point of Life Foundation (USA), GHRC (Rajasthan, India), and the Brahma Kumaris (UK, USA, Australia and India). The aim was to develop new ways of understanding and talking about the challenges of and opportunities for integrating spirituality into current healthcare practices.

Instead of listening to lectures, keynote

addresses and presentations, the 65 participants (15 from overseas) explored the subject through creative journaling, café conversations, large group discussions, still-point dialogues, silence and walks in the grounds.

The small group conversations came up with key topics to investigate further, such as language, compassion for self, resilience, spirituality and community, conscious presence and walking your spiritual talk. Free space groups and dialogues allowed some of the

topics to be considered further.

An important session was on using silence to reflect and to access 'a different quality of reality', said Sister Jayanti, 'that nurtures our relationship with nature'. Silence also empowers the still-point of peace and love in the heart, cultivating compassion (a natural tendency to be kind to people) and an inner healing space for 'ourselves, our family and friends'.

For a full report, see jankifoundation.org/international_dialogues.



Many of the discussions on integrating spirituality into healthcare inspired the participants to practise being in deep silence using still-point meditation.

VIHASA Trainings create 'right space'

Three experienced VIHASA facilitators offered the 4-day training in July to ten professionals from varied medical backgrounds. The group quickly bonded allowing co-operation, interwoven with humour, creativity and deep reflective learning, to happen. The feedback was keen: 'Professionally organised, balanced, nurturing and supportive programme'; '...confidence and enthusiasm to deliver the VIHASA course'; 'creating the right space is just as important as having the exact words or

process'; 'Excellent energy and opportunity to connect with people from all walks of life'.

One attendee, Melanie Mullard, healthcare assistant and nursing student, who first came to a JF workshop last February, wrote in to share: 'At the end of the weekend I wanted to give something back ... the best I can do at present is to pass on the knowledge ... (of) that weekend. ... I responded to an article in the Nursing Standard [she made reference to JF, the VIHASA training programme and that spirituality is not a distraction, is key to nursing and integral to the well-being of all human beings] and the magazine printed my letter.

After this weekend I readily envisage small steps that can be taken for a future with better care for all.'

Claire Rodway, an attendee from September 2011, also wrote to us: 'The course was a real life-changer. Definitely work is easier to deal with now (that) I've let stuff go! ... meditating for over a year helped my stress levels. Having to stand up and do group work ... I now work with volunteers ... and run supervision and information sessions, which I'd have been terrified of before! So thank you to the Janki Foundation... I will never forget that Worthing weekend. It made me discover many things!'



A new group of VIHASA facilitators emerged triumphant from their four-day training on using the values programme to inform, inspire and help sustain others.



London Hospital Nurses Study VIHASA

Deirdre O'Toole, Clinical Governance Facilitator, Guy's Hospital, facilitated VIHASA sessions with nurses as part of their mandatory training last year. This followed the lunchtime pilots she undertook in 2010.

She reports: An opportunity arose in August 2012 to offer Values in Healthcare as part of a nurses' study day at Guy's Hospital. I facilitated five sessions on Compassion, Values, Resilience, Co-operation and Caring for Myself, especially focusing on reflecting on achievements and personal values that enabled this to happen. Staff respected the time to reflect on their values and Trust core values in the context of managing difficult situations, and enjoyed experiencing and integrating VIHASA tools such as appreciation, group discussion, reflection, visualisation and action planning. Discussions are in progress about further trainings.



Deirdre O'Toole, clinical governance facilitator at Guy's Hospital, has enjoyed introducing VIHASA trainings – amongst other initiatives - to staff in the last year.

North-East London Community Services

After VIHASA training, assistant speech therapist Bhawna Babbar ran a session on resilience for work colleagues in Barking and Dagenham in January, with the help of facilitators Shalini Bajaj and Leena Khagram. The feedback from the team was appreciative and the manager has requested further workshops. Some benefits from the session:

'...how to appreciate myself and prepare myself for future challenges';
'Consider my own values and time to reflect';
'Thinking about ways to increase resilience'.

Retreat into Compassion, Kent

Following a successful one-day event in 2011, the Kent VIHASA group arranged Retreat into Compassion for health professionals at The Quiet View near Canterbury. 21 participants from a range of therapeutic backgrounds attended for a day of meditation and VIHASA workshops. Dr Julia Ronder chaired this summer occasion; Rev Lizzie Hopthrow and counsellor Nannette Jackson facilitated. The participants gave unanimously positive feedback and two more retreats are booked for this year.

A group of diverse health practitioners enjoy the VIHASA retreat at the Centre for Spiritual Learning in Leura, Blue Mountains, Australia. Feb 2013



St Wilfred's Hospice, Chichester

Dr Craig Brown, who has run VIHASA sessions at this hospice for six years, offered an important two-hour workshop for nine complementary therapists as part of a foundation course on holistic palliative care in November. The aim was to examine self-awareness and personal resilience as well as learning about palliative care, reflective practice, bereavement, communication skills and dementia.

Martlets Hospice, Brighton

Dr Brown also ran a 3-hour session for hospice counsellors on Finding Peace as part of an annual conference. The organiser, Mary Bredin, affirmed: 'Re-reading the evaluations yesterday I was really struck how immensely valuable the afternoon had been for people and what a lot they got out of it in such a short time.'

Values in Self Care, Wales

Retired surgeon John Fleet, who has been running VIHASA workshops for a variety of groups over many years, has started a new project with an older people's group that values its autonomy. The group already meets using a Swedish model called Passion for Life and now plan to use the VIHASA modules on values, peace, positivity, compassion, co-operation, resilience and hope and to explore health and healing for the next year. They will rate their progress answering questions used in a national well-being survey for a 'before' and 'after' evaluation. More on this next year!



John Fleet meets up with the Passion for Life group, co-ordinated by the Older People's Strategy Development Officer for Denbighshire.

Australia

Melbourne Mental health nurse, therapist and educator Gopi Elton organised afternoon workshops for health practitioners in Melbourne and at a retreat centre nearby. About 60 people in total attended three separate events on Building Resilience and Rekindling The Dream. Participants took a deeper look at spirituality in view of their work practices and two VIHASA facilitators, Gopi and Raewyn Simpson (trained in 2012), put some of their skill base into practice.

On resilience they note: The word is derived from the Latin 'resilire' which means to leap back. This can imply the ability to recover quickly from illness, change or misfortune. Some factors that enhance resilience are a firm view of reality, acceptance; a sense of values; a belief in one's purpose and the ability to innovate and think 'outside the box'. Workshop participants were able to revisit, identify, appreciate and strengthen personal values in healthcare.

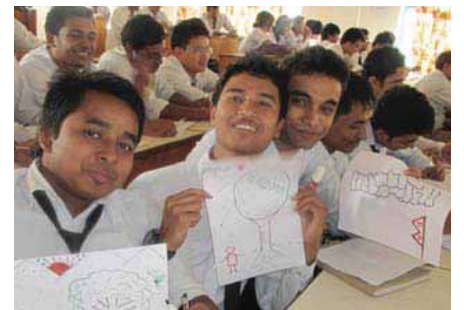
Sydney VIHASA facilitators have held two retreats for a diverse group of health professionals over the last six months, in September and February, at the Centre for Spiritual Learning, Leura, Blue Mountains, Australia. An update and more details next issue.

VIHASA reaches Eastern Nepal Nov 2012

Nirmala Ragbir Day (UK) and Nita Pokharel, retired Principal, College of Nursing, GHRC, introduced VIHASA to different groups, including doctors, on a recent visit to East Nepal. They facilitated a workshop on Values with 150 students at Nobel Medical College Teaching Hospital, Biratnagar in November. The students and a few faculty members who attended said they enjoyed the time to use creativity and reflect on their values.

Days later, they ran a session on Being Positive and Inner Values for students and faculty members at a famous tertiary care hospital, B P Koirala Institute of Health Sciences, Dharan. The Vice Chancellor and Rector attended the opening of their session to wish them well.

Nirmala and Nita have also run multiple modules for nursing students at GHRC and the hospital in Talheta, Mt Abu in October.



Medical students in Nepal proudly show off their individual creative depiction of values for better health care.



South Africa

The VIHASA team in South Africa continue to offer regular workshops at different healthcare settings, and for NGO groups and for social care organisations, such as the Department of Health Employee Assistance in Kwa-Zulu Natal.

The hospital staff who have attended sessions at Entabeni hospital in Durban, greatly appreciate the topics they explore, as seen by the feedback given at a recent compassionate care workshop: Celimpilo Ndaba – ‘the compassionate listening was great’ and Dumansani Ntuli – ‘... enjoyed the session on meditation. I will be the catalyst for bringing back compassion in the nursing profession on my ward’

Mothers2Mothers is a national NGO, to prevent mother to child transmission of HIV which ‘keeps mothers healthy and empowers women’. It employs and trains mothers living with HIV. Last July-September, the team ran exercises from the Inner Values module, to allow participants to identify, experience and empower their own values, with groups in Pretoria, Cape Town and KZN. Participants enjoyed the stress relief and felt that they could use the spiritual tools in their daily life.

Grey’s Hospital tunes in

The hospital nurse manager, after her experience of the quality of VIHASA training programme for management last year, requested workshops for professional nurses last June. Following this, the VIHASA team hold weekly meditation sessions in the chapel at Grey’s Hospital, in addition to workshops.



Participants in workshops at Mt Abu show the results of their co-operative creative work.



In Mumbai, the sessions were attended by a mixed group of hospital staff who enjoyed contemplating and engaging fully in this new way of learning.

India

MUMBAI conference

Prof Dr Arun Jamkur, Vice Chancellor of Maharashtra State University and Dean of Health Sciences spoke on the importance of values, and commended *Values in Healthcare* to a gathering of 2700 doctors. He was the chief guest at a one-day conference in Mumbai, a collaborative venture by the Medical Wing of the Rajyoga Educational & Research Foundation (RERF), BSES Mumbai and the Janki Foundation (UK) as well as other associate partners. Dr David Goodman, JF trustee and retired dentist, represented the Foundation.

From Yorkshire to Mt Abu: UK-India Collaboration

Head of Pastoral Care Rev Mike Gartland of SWYPFT and the unit training co-ordinator Nirmala Ragbir-Day visited the Global Hospital and Research Centre (GHRC) in Mount Abu in Rajasthan, India to share what they are doing as part of the Yorkshire Trust’s Pastoral and Spiritual Care Strategic Framework 2012–2015. They met hospital director Dr Partap Midha and other key staff, expounding that they envisage spiritual care to be at the heart of well-being and recovery.

Developments so far in the Trust include: provision of multi-faith rooms; regular meditation sessions for staff; staff well-being retreats; training days on spirituality, well-being and resilience; development of a woodland walk and quiet spaces such as a labyrinth on the Trust grounds; hosting two national conferences on spirituality and mental health; presenting at conferences.

JF trustee Dr David Goodman acted as liaison for the group.



University VCs experience VIHASA

Dr Ashok Mehta, Director of BSES municipal General Hospital, Mumbai was invited to give a presentation and taster session on VIHASA to a conclave of vice chancellors in Lucknow, last September. Prof Arun Jamkar, Vice Chancellor of Maharashtra University of Health Sciences, had arranged this contemplative session for the prestigious gathering.

VIHASA workshops operate monthly in Mumbai

VIHASA-trained facilitators have run whole-day workshops at Reliance Energy for healthcare staff since last summer. A mixed group of clinical and non-clinical staff attend each session, which promotes experiential learning. Last July, 40 participants attended, several of them medical professors from Nagpur, a large city in Maharashtra, for a day on Building Resilience and Values. They enjoyed using appreciative inquiry and the spiritual tools.

Feedback from the session in December, on Valuing Yourself, comprising doctors, nurses and non-medical hospital staff:

‘The objective of my life has been re-addressed and I’m reminded of my life’s direction.’

‘The main benefit was enhancing my skills and building self-esteem.’

Pune

Facilitators are also running weekly session at a hospital in Pune over the last six months. Both staff and management report improved co-working practices and the VIHASA training programme has enthused a team in Pune to create and run new projects, under the banner of Values at Workplace, for (400) shopping mall employees and industrialists.

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For information on the activities of Global Hospital & Research Centre, Rajasthan, India, which the Foundation supports, visit www.friendsofghrc.com or www.ghrc-abu.com