



THE JANKI FOUNDATION FOR GLOBAL HEALTHCARE

NEWS



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EDITORIAL

Welcome again to news and stories on the work of the Janki Foundation for Global Health Care (JF) and its inaugural training package Values in Healthcare: a spiritual approach (VIHASA). In addition to the annual lecture in July 2005 and welcoming various visitors from abroad, members of the JF team in London have been busy promoting VIHASA at conferences, workshops or retreats in the UK, Europe and further abroad. During 2005, healthcare professionals from diverse cultures and backgrounds have continued to employ modules and workshop material from VIHASA in various clinical settings. A selection of stories and bulletins are included here, which variously reveal spiritual viewpoints of healthcare and experiences, deliberations and personal reflections that have resulted from taking part in workshops.

At Global Hospital and Research Centre (GHRC), Mt Abu, India, which is supported by the JF, and Mumbai BSES Hospital, staff already participate in a spiritual

and holistic approach to healthcare. Following a 5-day facilitators' training on Mt Abu, in October 2005, with a group of 46 attendees from India and around the globe, both hospitals have commenced implementation of the VIHASA programme. The co-ordinator of the project in India is Dr Ashok Mehta, medical director of Mumbai BSES and past president of several Indian surgical societies. News updates on GHRC can be found by visiting www.ghrc-abu.com

The new-look training incorporates the principles of a professional learning community, including collaborative inquiry and participants of it have described it as invigorating, conducive to learning and a pleasure to attend.

We include also an account of the latest event Take Care, 14 January 2006, when Reverend Professor Stephen Wright of the Sacred Space Foundation gave a moving presentation. Please enjoy your reading!

Editor: Dr Kala Mistry



TAKE CARE A Janki Foundation event held in London on 14 January 2006

Lou Beckerman's ethereal singing and guitar playing created a calm, serene mood at the start of the event, and at intervals throughout the day. Take Care was designed to support healthcare workers in developing spiritual self-care and a deep-rooted self-respect – so they can look after themselves for their own benefit and that of patients. Around 200 people attended, including visitors from Turkey, The Netherlands, Italy and Canada, reflecting a growing international interest in the Values in Healthcare approach.

Dr Sarah Eagger introduced the morning's speaker, Rev Prof Stephen Wright, a pioneering writer, editor and teacher in the field of spirituality and health. Stephen is an ordained interfaith minister, a spiritual counsellor, and a former nurse – so he brings wide experience to bear on his subject. He reflected sadly on "the loss of soul in modern health care" and asked, "What effect does such a loss have on staff and patients - how can we restore soul and spirit to our work?"

He spoke from the heart in a gentle yet powerful way, combining profound reflection, personal experience and poetry: "Everything is diminished when soul is left out...yet there is a reluctance to address soul and spirit." He referred to contemporary Western life as 'a wasteland' where soul and spirit are 'dumbed down' to the level of popular magazines and TV programmes.

Spirituality is distinct from religion: a spiritual approach is concerned with questions of meaning and purpose, outside the framework of formal religious belief. Stephen described his work with NHS staff, which involves helping them to approach their work in a deeper way. "Healthcare workers need to be part of a working team as a soul community", he said, "in which members are profoundly aware of each other's deeper needs, as well as those of patients." Stephen is also chairman of the Sacred Space Foundation in Cumbria, a retreat centre for care workers experiencing crisis and burnout. He mentioned one visitor who felt lost at the end of 30 years as a social worker.

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A POSITIVE APPROACH

In Mauritius, there is immense interest in the spiritual approach of The Janki Foundation training package Values in Healthcare [VIHASA]. Since 2004, modules from the pack have been run under the aegis of a new organization, Positive Approach to Total Health (PATH), which is committed to non-denominational spiritual approaches to healthcare.

By March 2005, I had run 11 two-hour sessions, mostly at the Mauritius Institute of Health and on the site of a non-governmental organization for healthcare. The participants included doctors, nurses, pharmacists, student dispensers, social workers, community healthcare officers and pharmacy store managers. They unanimously reported that they found the VIHASA

everyone in the department should attend. They also volunteered to share what they have learnt with their colleagues and friends.

Following four sessions of VIHASA held at the Cardiac Centre, the director, Dr T K Gunness, stated: "The various modules during the training have been profitable and advantageous to all staff who participated in the programme. In view of the nature of our speciality (caring for critically ill patients) the VIHASA training has empowered personnel to serve dutifully, with a compassionate heart, a rational mind and caring hands."

Pharmacy students with Dave Dyall



sessions valuable and that they were keen to follow more. Here is a selection of their evaluation comments:

Community healthcare officer: "The session has been very enriching and I would say vital. You see, it has created in us a sense of worth. I hope to have more sessions like this in the future."

Doctor: "Initially I was doubtful about the usefulness of such a session but now I am completely convinced."

Social worker: "During the meditation commentary, I felt really peaceful and forgot about the incurable disease I suffer from. For the first time I had no worries at all. It was beautiful."

Pharmacy stores manager: "VIHASA is a must. Well done and thank you from the bottom of my heart."

Community healthcare officer: "...I will try from now to be at peace with myself and take time to reflect ...and will end being negative about my job!"

As a result, a number of organisations have shown interest in training their staff using VIHASA, including the Mauritius Institute of Health, as an addition to the usual professional training, and the Mauritius Council of Social Services. I ran 12 workshops between April and December 2005 with staff at new organisations including those at the Cardiac Centre of Mauritius, Pamplemousses, the medical unit of the Ministry of Social Security and the Radiology Department of Dr Jeetoo Hospital, Port-Louis on 22 December 2005 and with students from Sir Seewoosagar Ramgoolam Medical College, 17 December 2005.

The vast majority of participants have rated the contents of the training, training style and exercises as very good and find the sessions relevant to their work. Nearly everyone stated they would like to attend more sessions, that the training should be ongoing and that

Further feedback:

Nursing officers from the cardiac centre, after attending the session Being Peaceful, reported feeling more self-confident and plan to meditate regularly.

A senior nurse reported: "I appreciate the sharing aspect most and find that ideas just flow naturally. I plan to be more patient and attentive, and will try to appreciate the values that others have." Mrs Priya Erriah, a specialised nursing officer, believes that with wider implementation, the VIHASA workshops will improve working relationships and atmosphere at her workplace.

Similar feedback was received from nursing officers at the Ministry of Social Security, one of whom plans to meditate every morning and think more about humanity, another to stop smoking.

A final word from dental surgeon, Rookmanee Doolub, "Values are very important in my profession for self-satisfaction and for giving satisfaction to others. I believe this kind of training will improve the service healthcare professionals can offer."

Dave Dyall, pharmaceutical representative



TAKE CARE continued from front page



During her time at the centre, she came to see herself as far more than a role: "I'm not a social worker – I just am."

Two workshops followed, on the themes Self Care and Support at Work. Delegates split up into groups to explore the day's topic in a more personal way, culminating in the presentation of their ideas to everyone at the close.

Then came about an illuminating interview and discussion with Dadi Janki, JF president, Stephen Wright and Sarah Eagger. Dadi Janki reiterated Stephen's point about roles: "Who am I? I must not think of myself as a mother, a daughter and so on. I am a living energy inside, the master of my senses and of my own mind." She spoke of becoming 'soul-conscious': "When I receive might from above, I am filled with soul power. There's no question of retiring from this practice."

Stephen responded, "Dadi is an example of how, when someone becomes humble, it can help all of us." He referred to the day's theme Take Care, which usually means 'take care of yourself' or 'be careful'. "It can also have a more assertive meaning, as an active process - take care, go out and seek it. Find what helps you: soul friends, soul communities, meditation." Dadi Janki concluded: "We have to be of assistance to the world. This is our duty. For those who remove the sorrow of others, God removes their sorrow." A fitting thought to take away from a memorable day that provided much nourishment for the mind and soul.

Peter Linnett, writer on holistic health

NEW BEGINNINGS!

Thursday 28 April saw the introduction of Values in Healthcare to Reading Primary Care Trust (PCT). The module presented was part of Being Positive and those who attended were health visitors, staff nurses and occupational therapists.

This was an exciting venture for the facilitators, Maggie Parle, social worker and I and also for the participants. One course member commented "The session was excellent; I gained new useful knowledge and skills. I shall definitely feed the session back to other staff members." Another stated, "An innovative course. We need input on positive thinking particularly in this time of change."

Thanks to the personnel development manager who made this possible.

Esme Weithers, health visitor, RGN

TAKING CARE OF THE SOUL

In September 2005, the Janki Foundation was visited by Gustavo Rodio, a psychologist specialising in palliative care and psycho-oncology in Argentina and one of the steering team for Values in Healthcare (VIHASA) there. We took the opportunity to ask him some questions about healthcare in his home country and the relevance of VIHASA for them. He explained: "In terms of healthcare, we have more or less the same situation as in the UK – practitioners are very busy and stressed. The VIHASA pack offers resources as some kind of antidote to our current demands in healthcare delivery.

"The pack looks very good to me, with a clearer layout and shorter modules than the piloting version! In Argentina, we have tailored existing modules to produce a 2-3 hour presentation which we can share with hospitals as a 'taster session' when we speak to them.

"I am one of eight in the Argentinean team for Values in Healthcare and I became interested in this approach through my professional interest in spirituality. As a psychotherapist, I am faced with a person's private conflict and emotional distress and so their psyche or soul. The prevailing issue seems to me, therefore, that I have to take care of their soul.

"I feel values are at the roots of spirituality. Values are often connected to a person's view of themselves and so relevant to mental health. I find values are really like a flag giving direction/ guidance on what is a robust choice to make. Atheists who have good values also have spirituality in their life and so, for me, 'good values' is the same as spirituality.

"I believe that our lives demonstrate spirituality through true values and not through a religious or spiritual title. When people feel separated from their source or their soul, and so their values, they are distressed. When people feel connected to their soul then their emotional state becomes stable. And so my task often returns to helping patients take care of the soul.

"VIHASA works well with my view that I am a spiritual being, a concept I use all the time. I have enjoyed working with the other Values in Healthcare members in Argentina: that is Moira, Pablo, Maria Ines, Cecilia, Christian, Susy, Mauro."

Values in Healthcare: Trinidad and Tobago (T&T)

Nirmala Ragbir-Day, VIHASA researcher & Robert Day

During a week's visit to Trinidad and Tobago, in June 2005, we had the opportunity to present the Values in Healthcare Programme to health professionals and other interested persons.

Two workshops were held, the first on Wednesday 15 June at the Port of Spain General Hospital and the second on Friday 17 June at a meditation centre in Port of Spain. A variety of health professionals attended, about 30 for each session, and we were able to provide 'taster workshops' from the module Values on both occasions.

There was positive discussion around forming a VIHASA Steering Group in T&T, so that a common spiritual approach could be made available for health staff and students.

It was really good to hear health professionals share their frustrations but at the same time, keep an affirmative attitude in their workplace. Overall our visit was very productive and enjoyable!

Since summer 2005, Nirmala Ragbir-Day has presented VIHASA research papers at the National Conference on Quality of Life and Quality of Death, 29-30 August 2005, at School of Medicine, University Malaysia Sabah; the 28th Biennial Congress of the World Federation for Mental Health Conference on Equity and Mental Health, 4 - 8 September 2005 where 2 workshops on VIHASA were also conducted with 12-15 people; the 6th Annual Interdisciplinary Research Conference, Transforming Healthcare Through Research, Education & Technology, 2-4 November 2005, School of Nursing and Midwifery Studies, Dublin.



PAPER PRESENTATIONS



Malitha S (extreme right) facilitates various values exercises with community health care workers in Durban, South Africa.

NEWS UPDATE IN NORTH WALES

Mr John Fleet, a retired dental surgeon running his own retreat and self-development centre in North Wales, has extensively piloted the VIHASA programme for health practitioners since 2002 and continues to expand his remit.

In 2005, John was invited to run a Values workshop from VIHASA for 5th year medical students from Cardiff, Swansea and Manchester, who attend the Maelor Hospital in Wrexham for a few months each year. The first session took place on 15 November and was well received; after consulting the postgraduate tutor, John expects to run the same for the next group and commented: "It would be good to offer this training to medical students just before they graduate."

John also ran a workshop for the executive board of a Welsh business organisation employing 60 staff, where he presented the Values module from VIHASA, augmented with an appreciative inquiry approach tailored to business corporations.

The feedback was very positive:

Director of operations: "...helped clarify and re-iterate the company values, and also to learn about the team's values."

Chief executive officer: "A chance to stop and think about the company's values, and the need to share these across the board..."

Financial director: "Groundwork for setting company strategy and action plan...Very enjoyable, quite powerful, a good way to articulate my own values and to relate them to work and other aspects of my own life."

INTEGRATED MEDICINE: A Personal and Parliamentary Perspective 5 July 2005

Earl Baldwin of Bewdley, President of the Parliamentary Group for Integrated and Complementary Healthcare and an active Chair from 1992 - 2002, spoke with sincerity and humour about recent trends towards integrative healthcare and his own journey through the unmapped customs of unconventional therapies.

Convinced that complementary and alternative medicine has a great contribution to make, Edward Baldwin asked: whose agenda should govern the choice of treatments and even the assessment of evidence in our society? He discussed the Parliamentary activities he had undertaken in this field as a cross-bench peer, in particular his part in the landmark House of Lords Committee, which had reported on Complementary and Alternative Medicine in 2000.

When his wife became ill with cancer in 1993 she was able to adopt an unorthodox programme, on the strength of the perspectives he had accrued. Earl Baldwin proposed that integration is needed but sounded a concern about bias, ignorance and conflicting basic assumptions about healing which could undermine integration, if not faced and addressed. He concluded that much progress had been made but it could not be rushed.

A vote of thanks was given by Professor David Peters, School of Integrated Health, University of Westminster who is Chair of the Working Party on Service Delivery to the Foundation for Integrated Healthcare.



IT'S LOOKING UP IN BRIGHTON

Thirty people turned up to Brighton Post Graduate Centre on 30 September, 2005 for the study day Looking after Yourself, which is the sixth module of the VIHASA training pack. They were primarily nurses from Brighton County Hospital, local GP practices and a local hospice, but also a few complementary and alternative medicine practitioners and non-clinical staff. Margaret (see photo) joined forces with the local team of experienced and enthusiastic facilitators – that is Liz, Richard, Chrissie and I – and as we gelled, so our workshops ran smoothly and proficiently!

The participants reported in their evaluation how much they enjoyed working in small groups, learning from others and spending ample time in meditation. Many commented on the benefits of taking part in the self-confidence exercise and on the novelty of a study day focussed on health care practitioners, rather than clinical care of patients. Most of the nurses were sponsored by their health trusts: fees were paid for and time off given to attend.

The message that self-caring staff become happier and healthier staff seems to be getting through!



SPIRITUAL CARE STUDY DAY IN CHICHESTER

Module 7, Spirituality in Healthcare works well as a one-day educational program in a hospice setting. On 3 September 2005, I facilitated a day at St Wilfred's Hospice, Chichester for 16 people. The attendees were largely hospice staff, but included two chaplains, a social worker, a mental health nurse and a residential home manager.

Feedback from the evaluation was delightfully positive and observations included: "...stimulating and thought provoking", "Good structure and time for sharing views" and "...confidence in the process and the facilitation." Many enjoyed the meditations and asked for copies of the CD, which comes with the VIHASA pack.

During feedback and discussion, references were given to current medical publications (1,2) and to recent guidelines on spiritual care (3,4). Following the action planning session towards the end of the module, the group decided to design their own spiritual care plan for patients at the hospice. It is good to witness how much the staff benefit from having time out to discuss their own spirituality and then produce something that will bring benefit to their patients.

1. BMJ 2002; 325: 1434-1435 (21-28 December) Spirituality and clinical care.
2. BMJ 2004; 329:123-124 (17 July) Spiritual needs in health care.
3. NICE guidance on Supportive and Palliative Care for Adults with Cancer, National Institute for Clinical Excellence, MidCity Place, 71 High Holborn, London WC1V 6NA www.nice.org.uk
4. Spiritual and Religious Care Competencies for Specialist Palliative Care, London: Marie Curie Cancer Care, October 2003 www.mariecurie.org.uk

Dr. Craig Brown, General Practitioner, GP Trainer, Sussex, UK

ITALY - COMMUNICATING VALUES

In June 2005, Astrid Bendomir, gynaecologist from Aberdeen, Susan Balmforth, retired nurse from Leeds and Joy Rendell, trustee of JF and occupational therapist, London visited Gubbio, Italy on the invitation of the steering group for Values in Healthcare (VIHASA) in Italy to familiarise them with the ethos and facilitation style of the VIHASA pack. It included a discussion on how values are communicated and how this is relevant to healing and healthcare.



1. Dadi Janki, JF president, chaired an evening discussion on taking VIHASA forwards, with invited guests (30) on 16 August 05.

2. Dr Sarah Eagger and Jan Alcoe, both members of VIHASA production team, presented a VIHASA poster and workshop at a learning conference in Iceland, 30 May – 1 June 2005 entitled, Enlightening Holistic Care: from research to practice through reflection.

3. Jennie Starling, lecturer at University of Bangor who has piloted VIHASA as part of nurse education, presented a poster at Partnerships for Healthy Places, a conference held at University of Central Lancashire, Preston, 6-7 Sept 2005.

4. Maryam Taheri, VIHASA team member, attended a conference on hospice care, titled Unlocking the Future, 27-29 Sept 2005 in Harrogate.

5. Dawn Redwood, who collaborated in the piloting of VIHASA, introduced the VIHASA project at a Birmingham hospice care conference: A multidimensional Approach for the National Association of Complementary Therapists on 8 Sept 2005.

6. Astrid Bendomir, VIHASA team co-ordinator in Scotland and Stephanie Morrison, Lecturer in the Health Sciences department of Robert Gordon University ran a day session with 3rd year occupational therapy students on 3 Nov 2005 on site. There now follows ongoing work on integrating VIHASA into undergraduate teaching.

7. Sarah Eagger was invited to speak at a weekend retreat: Exploring Spiritual Dimensions of Health, Healing and Care for healthcare professionals, 4-6 Nov 2005 in New York State, USA.

8. A group of VIHASA team members attended an academic meeting at Warwick University on 16 Dec 05.

9. A one-day retreat for healthcare staff from Lambeth PCT, The Wisdom of Teams was held on 9 November 2005, which incorporated sessions on teamwork, self-empowerment, wisdom at work, meditation and VIHASA, including a workshop on Co-operation in Action.

10. A weekend retreat entitled Flourish or Survive was held for Spanish healthcare professionals on 11-13 Nov 2005 at a retreat centre near Barcelona with facilitators from the UK VIHASA team.

11. A brief facilitators' training weekend was held 18-21 Nov 2005 with participants from UK and abroad.

12. Dr Avdesh Sharma, past president of the Indian Psychiatric Society and director of Mind Watch for Indian television gave a talk on Spirituality and Mental Health: the Hidden Dimension during his visit to London on 1 June 2005.

13. The special interest group in spirituality at the Royal College of Psychiatrists has endorsed the VIHASA programme after sampling a session in February 2005. Further information is available on <http://www.rcpsych.ac.uk/college/sig/spirit> in newsletters 15 and 17, item 6.