Holistic Interventions Articles


Hands-on healing and energy-based interventions have been found in cultures throughout history around the world. These complementary therapies, rooted in ancient Eastern healing practices, are becoming mainstream. Healing Touch, a biofield therapy that arose in the nursing field in the late 1980s, is used in a variety of settings (i.e., pain centers, surgical settings, and private practices) with reported benefits (i.e., decreased anxiety, pain, and depressive behaviors; increased relaxation and a sense of well-being). However, clinical trial data concerning the effectiveness of Healing Touch have not been evaluated using a systematic, evidence-based approach. Thus, this systematic review is aimed at critically evaluating the data from randomized clinical trials examining the clinical efficacy of Healing Touch as a supportive care modality for any medical condition.


Cancer is a challenging disease to diagnose and treat, and oftentimes even with the best medical intervention, it spreads and is deemed incurable, requiring a shift from cure to end-of-life care. This study used a spirituality measure and the PATS© storytelling intervention developed by the principal investigator to better understand the experience of being diagnosed with cancer and being told no further curative treatments are warranted. The purpose of this exploratory study was to implement a storytelling approach to explore the experience of living with terminal cancer. Second, the study documented the presence of spirituality and healing in the narratives. The qualitative data were analyzed by narrative analysis developed by Riessman.


The purpose of this study was for nurses to experience equine-assisted learning and for them to describe their being in the moment with their horse. The aims of the study were to assist clinicians in recognizing their ability and skill at being present—that is, calm and centered—as they engage with horses and to determine if interaction with horses is a valid representation in recognizing presence in the participants. Read the full article [here](#).


To develop a better understanding of how yoga practice affects one’s interpersonal relationships. Design: Qualitative. Content analysis was used to qualitatively analyze written comments (n = 171) made regarding yoga improving interpersonal relationships in a large cross-sectional survey of yoga practitioners (N = 1,067). Four themes were identified: Yoga practice leads to personal transformation, increases social interaction, provides coping mechanisms to weather relationship losses and difficulties, and leads to spiritual transcendence. Practitioners believed that their interpersonal relationships improved because their attitude and perspective had changed, making them more patient, kind, mindful, and self-aware. They expressed an aspect of community that was both practical (they met new friends) and spiritual (they felt they belonged). They thought they could better weather difficulties such as divorce and death. A number discussed feeling a sense of purpose and that their practice contributed to a greater good. Read the full article [here](#).
Several mind body medicine interventions require an active participation of the practitioners. We intended to develop a questionnaire to operationalize and measure the “inner correspondence” of individuals practicing Yoga or Eurythmy Therapy. In an anonymous cross-sectional study we enrolled 501 individuals (61% yoga). Exploratory factor analysis (study 1) of the 12-item instrument (Cronbach's alpha= .84) pointed to a 3-factor solution, with one major scale and good internal consistency (alpha= .83) and two minor scales with weak internal consistency. To improve the quality of the main scale, we added 8 new items which were tested in a sample of 135 individuals (study 2: 71% Yoga). Factor analysis confirmed a 12-item single factor (alpha= .95), that is, Inner Correspondence/Peaceful Harmony with Practices (ICPH). The scale correlated strongly with mindfulness (FMI; r > .50), moderately with life and patient satisfaction (BMLSS; r between .32 and .43), and weakly negative with symptom score (VAS; r > -.23). In conclusion, the scale ICPH was confirmed as a relevant tool to measure the inner correspondence and feelings of peacefulness with practices. It can be used in clinical studies to assess the efficacy of mind-body practices involving physical movements.

Read the full article here.


This article examines holism and healing in nursing as a paradigm and explores at how the use of an integral approach may help articulate and guide the future of contemporary caring-healing-holistic-sustainable nursing practices.


The purpose of this study was to explore the experience of nurses in relation to courage development in patients with disabling complications of diabetes. The phenomenon of courage has been explored in philosophy, theology, literature, and other fields of inquiry rooted in the humanities. Nursing inquiry has not often been directed toward an exploration of courage, although coping, compassion, caring, and other experiences integral to the nurse–patient relationship have been examined. The holistic view of the cascading effect of complications on the individual patient is often overlooked. This qualitative study used phenomenological inquiry and included face-to-face interviews of nurses to explore their experience in assisting patients in the development of courage. The experience of courage is investigated as it relates to a specific group of patients who have complications of diabetes. Four categories representing the unique opportunities for courage development by nurses were generated. These categories included education, advocacy, relationship building, and humanization. Each category described nursing intentions and actions and taken together formed an essential structure of courage development. Conclusions indicated that nurses recognize and are able to describe their role in courage development. Implications for improved health through deliberate caring nursing interventions, aimed at courage development, are presented.


The purpose of this study was to determine if there were any differences in the behavioral responses of persons with dementia while listening to nonreligious and religious music within a multisensory environment. A within-subjects, repeated measures design was used. Participants were exposed to both musical genres during multiple sessions over a 4-week period. Neuropsychiatric symptoms were recorded before and after the musical intervention. Behavioral responses to the music were recorded while listening to the music.
The purpose of this article is to introduce a unique tai chi form that has been successfully implemented in two large randomized clinical trials. The intervention is composed of a series of tai chi movements chosen for their particular meanings, thus adding a cognitive component to the practice of a moving meditation. Over the last decade, the intervention has continued to evolve as it has been used in different populations. Most recently, medical qigong has been integrated to strengthen its potential impact on a variety of biobehavioral measures associated with cardiometabolic risk in women. Following an appraisal of the authors’ process as well as the philosophy, practice, and research of tai chi and qigong, the authors share the story of their intervention to contribute to the evolving research of these safe, well-received, low-cost, and beneficial practices.

Read the full article here.

The purpose of this study was to describe humor and laughter in persons with cognitive impairment (PWCI) and caregivers who were recalling a shared experience in a focus group. Twenty participants attended an Art Engagement Activity at the Andy Warhol Art Museum, which included a guided tour and an art project. All PWCI had medically diagnosed cognitive disorders and all caregiver participants did not. Four focus groups were conducted and transcripts of audio-recorded sessions were transferred to a qualitative software program. Words, phrases, and episodes of humor and laughter were used to construct codes, which were refined during group analysis using constant comparison.

Read the full article here.

Conventional medical treatment of osteoarthritis often successfully relieves pain but can also produce adverse gastrointestinal and cardiovascular effects, especially with long-term use. Hence, many patients use complementary and alternative medicine (CAM) to prevent, control, and manage the pain of osteoarthritis. The author reviews the evidence on the efficacy and safety of several CAM therapies often used for osteoarthritis management, including mind–body therapies, supplements, and body-based treatments.

Read the full article here.

This study was designed to determine the effect of garden walking and reflective journaling on adults who are 65 years old and older with depression. The Geriatric Depression Scale measured depression. Four themes emerged from the interview data collected from each participant.

Read the full article here.

The arts have a history of relaxing and calming patients in the hospital setting, yet research is limited on how arts may aid in the healing process. DooR to DooR was established to bring comfort, respite, and healing to hospitalized patients, family members, and health care staff. DooR to DooR is located in the University of North Carolina Hospitals at Chapel Hill, North Carolina; professional performing artists visit there, spending 5 to 10 minutes with each patient, family member, and health care staff. The purpose of this qualitative study is to understand performers’ experiences and of how arts-based programs can facilitate improved patient outcomes in the hospitalized setting to help nurses better use the arts in their care of patients and families. Three overarching themes were identified: (a) the arts are therapeutic for all involved, (b) the arts transforms the hospital environment, and (c) nurses and the other medical staff play an important role. The significance of this study for nursing practice is that the arts are a plausible intervention for the hospital because they may help improve patient outcomes by reducing pain and depression and by relieving stress among staff and family members. More research is needed to determine the level of arts-as-an-intervention knowledge among nurses.


To test the hypothesis that a novel Zen dialogue–based method can bring about significant improvements in spiritual, meditation, and well-being parameters. A pretest–posttest design was used with participants being randomly assigned to either treatment or no treatment group at the Zen Center. The participants were 14 females and 2 males within each group with no prior formal Zen or meditation training. Those participants in the treatment group received intensive interaction for 1 day with an experienced Zen teacher using a dialogue method to induce a deep meditative state without instruction in formal meditation sitting practice. The outcome was measured with multiple previously standardized instruments designed to assess meditation states, well-being, and spirituality.


Despite the popularity of relaxation practices as mind–body therapy in the United States, little is known about those who practice these techniques. Using cross-sectional data from the 2007 National Health Interview Survey Alternative Medicine Supplement, this study examined potential correlates of engagement in relaxation practices, including sociodemographic characteristics, health behaviors, medical conditions, physical activity, drinking, smoking, and prayer for health. Individuals who engaged in relaxation practices were less likely to be older, male, Hispanic, high income, or residents in the South and Midwest. They were more likely to be college-educated, uninsured, and have one to two chronic conditions. Those with higher psychological distress and with asthma and pulmonary diseases practiced relaxation techniques more than individuals without these conditions. Findings suggest that relaxation practice is associated with lifestyles habits such as regular physical activity and prayer for health. Thus, relaxation practice has the potential to enhance health behaviors and lifestyle change.

The term *person-centered care* (PCC) has been frequently used in the literature, but there is no consensus about its meaning. This article uses Walker and Avants’s method of concept analysis as a framework to analyze PCC. A literature search was completed and data were collected using several search engines (CINAHL, Medline, PubMed, and Cochrane Review). The key words used were “individualized-care,” “person-centered care,” “patient-centered care,” “client-centered care,” and “resident-centered care.” Attributes, antecedents, and consequences of PCC were identified. Empirical referents were provided to measure PCC from the perspective of the person receiving care and finally, a model case provides an exemplar of the concept. Read the full article [here](#).


This concept analysis uses a modification of the evolutionary method (Rodgers, 1989) to identify the antecedent, attributes, and consequences of self-compassion. The antecedent to self-compassion is suffering, experienced in six possible realms: an event, a situation, an emotional response, a psychological state, spiritual alienation, or a physical response to illness or pain. Suffering has three dimensions: intrapersonal, interpersonal, and contextual. Suffering manifests as a pattern of decreased self-care, decreased ability to relate to others, and diminished autonomy. The attributes of self-compassion are self-kindness, mindfulness, commonality, and wisdom. The consequences of self-compassion are the opposite of the antecedent: self-compassion manifests as a pattern of increased self-care capacity, compassion for others, and increased relatedness, autonomy, and sense of self. Ideal, borderline and contrary cases of self-compassion provide examples of the concept. The article concludes with a discussion of implications of the concept of self-compassion for nursing practice and research. Read the full article [here](#).