



Mind Body Spirit - The Whole News

RNAO-CTNIG Newsletter

Volume 17, Issue 4

December 2018



Inside this issue:

Welcome to our special holiday issue.

Inside you will find messages from your executive.

We all hope that your celebration, in what ever form it takes, be full of joy and happiness.

Happy Holidays!

A Few Words from the President



**Kelly Osborn
Willowgreen
CTNIG
President**

It is the season of giving but please remember to give to yourself as well.

It may seem counterintuitive, as Nurses tend to be givers but it's so easy to end up drained or even sick, especially at this time of year.

As part of self care it's important to remember the instructions on a flight, to put your own oxygen mask on first so you then have the fuel you need to help others. It may seem selfish but it's the only way to give from a healthy place.

Be aware of not spending on gifts outside of your means but also be aware of your time and energy especially if you are expected to attend lots of functions. Tune into yourself and give yourself permission to decline or to leave when you get too tired or uncomfortable.

Don't end up exhausted by spending too much time, energy and money.

So Then the most important thing is available,

Your "presence" with your loved ones.

May you all be blessed in every way, how ever you spend this holiday season



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Past President



Kim Watson

I love the holiday season and all the feelings, ideas and sights it brings. It is a time that seems to just lighten my mood and load, regardless of all the things that seem to be added to my checklist during this time, like: decorate the tree, put up some lights, plan holiday dinners, choose the right gift, wrap the gifts, meet with family and friends, and the list goes on. It is also a time of year I check in with myself mentally, emotionally, physically, and spiritually. Each year it is my goal to put on my Christmas wish list that which will help me grow as a person and a soul.

Well, this year I have had an unexpected, yet interesting journey into caring for myself. In January of this year I was diagnosed with work-related PTSD. For those of you who are not aware I work in an ER Trauma Center in Windsor. I have been a nurse for 42 years, and made ER my focus when I first started working in

ER in 1982. As nurses many of us put our service to others over our own self-care at times in order to do more and better for those we serve. Sometimes though the universe know better and reacts by bringing to us gifts disguised as challenges. When we meet up with these, it is the time to look for the gift in the moment. When I first needed to take time off I kept wondering why me and why now? Though I said 'thank-you,' I couldn't yet see the gift.

Thankfully I immediately recognized I needed to put myself on the top of my list, and since then I have worked towards wellness and health; and I am still working on it. And like they say, sometimes it takes a village – or at least a team. I am blessed to have other professionals, friends, and family supporting me on my path. And though there is a big learning curve to this diagnosis (I thought I knew a fair amount about PTSD, though now I know more!), you have to be open to treating yourself with kindness, acceptance and willingness. By learning to take care of self first, I am learning the blessings of my journey this year. As I have been told "It is from our wounds were the light comes in."

I want my holiday message to be one of caring and kindness for oneself, first. As Kelly reminds us all, we must first give ourselves the tools to breathe, so we can effectively help others. So check in with yourself. Ask the important questions of oneself at this time of giving. Am I taking care of myself enough, to ensure my bucket is full, before I attempt to give to another – mentally, emotionally, physically and spiritually. In order to be all we can be, we must first care for ourselves. It is through our own self-care we will teach our family, friends, peers and clients how to treat us; our youth – be it children or new nurses, what they should expect when they are the giving one; and it is how we will set our own karma up to come back to us. And if you are not paying attention, and your focus is not including yourself fully, the universe will set it right; and like me you will be given the time to focus on self.

One activity I plan to do this holiday season is to do a vision board, and set visually my intentions for 2019. I usually do this annually, though somehow missed last year. I will share it with you in the next newsletter, along with my ideas on how to do one in case you never have tried it yourself. Perhaps, you will decide to do the same and share yours as well. A good suggestion I have for you is to invite a couple of friends over which will also allow us the chance to catch up. It is always good to check in with those you trust, they may help expand your vision for 2019.

So Merry Christmas, Happy Hanukah, or Happy Holidays – However you celebrate, have a wonderful time!

Blessings, in love and in light, Namasté, Kim

Education Officer



Piroška Bata

A Nurses Christmas story:

Since my first year of working as an RN a few patients passed away while on my shift. At first it was a bit shocking as that Christmas also a baptism into how to work as a team when you have half the staff compliment for the day shift. A patient also flooded one of the ward rooms by stuffing a sock in the sink and opened the tap full on. I remember wading in ankle deep water and trying to put flannels on the floor to soak up the water. For the next 20 plus year working in hospitals my Christmas didn't change much.

That is someone always passed (died) over on Christmas day with me, not always my assigned patient but close enough for me to help or hold a hand.

When I became a Nurse Manager I thought, finally I have left that Christmas

tradition behind.

Well as I was leaving Christmas Eve late to get home after a crazy day of trying to get staffing sorted out and making sure all the patients from ER were admitted into medicine had a bed.... One of the RN's informed that a patient took for the worst and is imminently passing away, family needs to be notified as she is a DNR. Of course, now its evening, and she is also the Charge Nurse.

I put down my purse and work bag, took off my coat at the desk and called the family to notify them, they were over half an hour away. I told them that I will stay with their loved one till they get there.

Then I went into the room and sat with the patient, praying, holding her hand and telling her that her family is on their way. We sat they're for a good half hour or more. And then she took her last breath, pain free and in peace.

I notified the charge nurse as they needed to pronounce her. Soon the family arrived, and I went home.

I learned a very important lesson over those years.... It was not about me or staff or the idea of death or passing over. But it was about sharing in a sacred space with another human being, during one of the things we do ourselves – dying. I am now honored to have shared that sacred space with patients and families. What may appear to be sad or perhaps a mystery and unknown to us, it is a sacred space we as Nurses can be present in; with compassion, kindness and respect.



So, this season of joy and peace we can also remember that we are chosen at times to be with someone in a sacred space that is for all of our highest good. That is a blessing, and a gift. May you honor that blessing and gift with all you do. Peace and joy to you all.

Policy and Political Action Officer



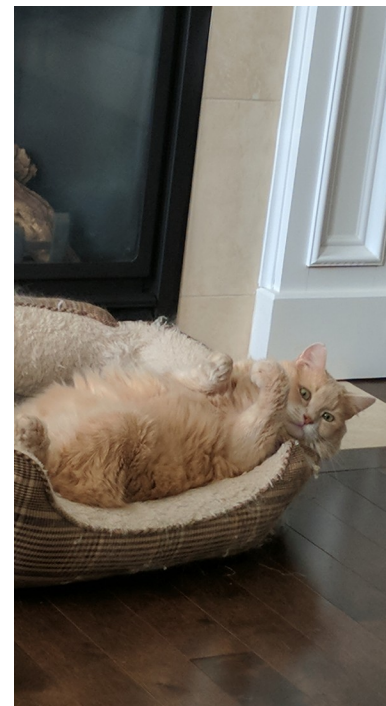
**Farnaz
Michalski**

I came to Canada from Iran, where the oldest religion is Zoroastrianism and the first day of every season was calculated accurately by the scholar priests and celebrated for its symbolic representation and spiritual and meditative values. December 21 is the longest night of the year and the first day of winter. Winter solstice, Yalda Night in Persian/Farsi, is celebrated for the end of the darkness as the earth enters the phase where days will progressively get longer. At the family gatherings, nuts and red-colour fruits like pomegranates and watermelon are served to represent the light-giving fire. Families enjoy reading old poetry which is about love as the ultimate passion for humanity.

In Iran we also officially celebrate Islamic, Christian and Jewish Holidays and others faiths and belief systems exist as well. Iranians were the first recorded in history to decorate the evergreen during this holiday season. Here in Canada, I enjoy all the celebrations to the fullest, trying to remain close to the essence of the celebration, honoring the philosophies and core values that brings humanity together as a cohesive unity. In the past ten years of my practice as a Registered Nurse in Ontario, I have either worked on Christmas or New Years shifts and shared the joy of the season with my team of colleagues. My gift to you is a reminder to be present in the moment wherever you are and cherish the lessons of this glorious life, with your patients, colleagues, family, friends, pets, or alone. May you be blessed with true inner peace and joy!



Traditional Yalda table with a lady reading Hafez' poetry for inspiration



My Maverick enjoying a cozy winter

Social Media Officer/ Executive Editor



Sandra Milley

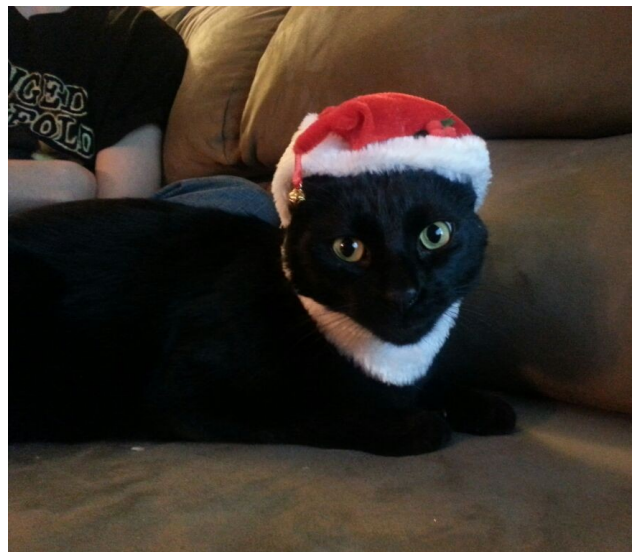
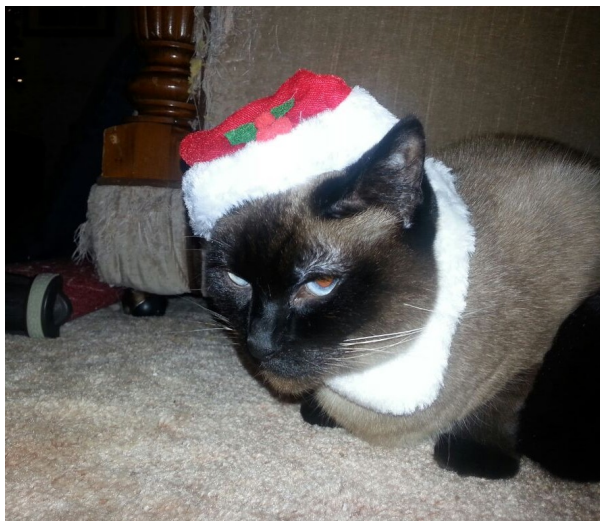
December is a magical time of the year. It is a time of celebration and family. Growing up my celebrations focused on Christmas. I come from a large, close family; my father is the oldest of 10 siblings and Christmas meant that everyone came together. There was lots of food and even more cousins. Since my father was in the military it sometimes meant this was the only time of the year I saw my cousins. Now that my children are grown, and I have a grandchild of my own, I again look forward to the magic of everyone coming together.

Now though, there is a new aspect of December celebrations that I look forward to. It is the multitude of celebrations that happen in the winter that I have been introduced to, thanks to the friends I have. I am blessed to be able to experience Diwali, Hannukah, Winter Solstice, Yule and Christmas. The one thing each of these have in common is food and family - sometimes the family one is born into and

sometimes the friend family that is chosen.

Often when people think of celebrating they think of large events, but as nurses who have worked the holidays, we all know that sometimes the celebration can be something small and easily missed. My memory of working the holiday and a small celebration was the New Year's Eve I worked at a hospice. There was a gentleman who required a catheter, and as I gathered everything, midnight drew close but I wasn't really paying attention to the time. I entered his room and he was watching TV, with the New Year's Eve show on. Instead of continuing with my task, I took a pause and together he and I did the count down. We celebrated - he had made it to the new year. I asked if he wanted me to wait any longer and he smiled, said no, and thanked me. His smile and joy is a bittersweet memory that I treasure.

I wish each and everyone of you peace and joy in whatever celebration you have, with whomever you have it, be it big or small.



The happiest of holiday wishes to each and every one of you from Sabbath (above) and Madison (left).

Consulting Editor/ Former President



Darka Neill

*May this time in the holiday season be filled with love, joy and light.
May you be at peace and compassionate to yourself and others.
May you enjoy some quiet time to reflect on your life with gratitude.*

Here is a short guided imagery that may be useful.

Gratitude Meditation

Begin by finding a quiet place to sit or lie down comfortably

Perhaps you have a sacred space that is set aside for meditation or reflection

Once you are in a comfortable position, gently close your eyes or look downward
Allow your attention to go to your breathing, without changing it

Just watching, noticing as you inhale and exhale for a couple of minutes

Nothing to say,

Nothing to do,

Just breathe

As you continue breathing, let your shoulders drop, and your muscles soften, releasing any tension as you breathe out

Releasing and relaxing more and more with each out breathe

If distracting thoughts intrude, as they often do, keep bringing your attention back to the breathe, as best you can

As you breathe, allow your in breath to slow down and deepen and your out breath lengthen and let go more and more

Inhale peace and relaxation with each in breath and release any tension with each out breathe for a couple of minutes

Now imagine or remember a place and time where you felt safewhere you experienced love, contentment, joy, compassion or acceptance. Perhaps somewhere in nature, somewhere inside, during an activity, with a pet or with someone

Look all around that place... to the right to the left... up...down...sensing the sights, sounds, smells, touch and feelings of that experience...sensing the gentle, healing energy of that experience

As best you can, allow the gentle, healing energy of that experience fill your heart area for a moment

From there let it radiate to fill every part of you... then beyond to surround you in healing energy

As the gentle, healing energy spreads, it releases any tension, worries, pain or fear

Within this healing space, remember and reflect on what you are grateful for...

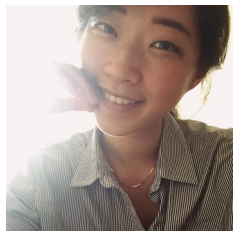
whether it be family, friends, relationships, experiences, health or challenges

Gently open your eyes and write these down in a journal, if you have one, or on a piece of paper

Let gratitude, love, and joy flow with each stroke as you write.



Student Liaison



Erina Park

Happy Holidays, Everyone!!

We are finally at the end of 2018 and I hope you all have a chance to relax and unwind during this crazy time of year. Upon reflection, I am constantly reminded of how blessed I am to have my lovely family and friends around me to celebrate Christmas with and also, to be able to pursue a nursing career in the near future! My goal for the new year is to prioritize self-care so I am excited to be engaging in more learning opportunities regarding aromatherapy and naturopathy. I hope everyone has a safe winter filled with lots of good food and company!

About a Nursing Student



"I'm a nursing student, so money and food are tight. Can I have those candy canes on your tree?"

About a Nurse



"I'm sorry, but I can't give you holidays off, or a social life. Would you settle for a candy cane?"

Darka Neill - Fond Memory



While working with teenagers in a specialized medical program who were in hospital on New Year's Eve, there were always **vigorous** requests by the group to stay up late to bring in the New Year.

Their usual bedtime was 2215 with lights out by 2245. To stay up until midnight was a major concession (which was always given).

So **party plans** were made. The staff and patients would make party hats and decorations for the lounge and get the sparkling juice ready to serve at midnight. The TV would be on a countdown program ready to ring in the New Year.

Everything was in place for the celebration....except it was usually only the staff and one or two patients that ended up being awake at midnight. One by one, everyone else would head off to bed before the big moment.

So much for the big plans. For the teenagers, it was more about the challenge to get permission to stay up than the actual staying up and having something special to do to normalize a part of their hospitalization

