



Mind Body Spirit - The Whole News

RNAO-CTNIG Newsletter

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Inside this issue:

Welcome to our special holiday issue.

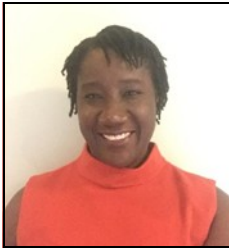
Inside you will find messages from your executive.

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

Holiday Greetings from Jacquie



Jacquie Dover
CTNIG
President

Do you have many holiday traditions? By the first of December my teenager starts blasting her Christmas playlist and programs our car radio to the 24-hour holiday music stations. And when I visit my parents, I will often find my Dad humming to his favourite Christmas hymns.

At my house we try to set up our artificial tree a few weeks before Christmas day. Out come the two Santa figurines, up goes the mistletoe and we hang the stockings. A few strings of light decorate the outside of the house and the wreath goes on the front door. My lovely parents give me a poinsettia every Christmas and I try to keep the poor plant alive until at least year end.

For many of us, the best part of the holiday season is the time we carve out to connect with family and friends. Often these holiday connections take place over food. In

honour of my Guyanese roots, my goal this year is to devour as many traditional Guyanese Christmas foods and drinks as possible before New Year's Day. Black cake, ginger beer, sorrel drink, garlic pork, pepper pot...!!!

Wishing everyone a wonderful holiday. One that is filled with peace and joy.



White Out Conditions

Photo by Sandra Milley

Communications Officer



**Kareena
St. Hilaire**

Being Canadian born of Caribbean parentage, I was fully immersed in mom's Trinidadian heritage. When Parang music began to fill the air, I naturally knew Christmastime was here. The maracas rattling and the strum of the guitar, seemed to gather our loved ones from near and afar. "Christmas in Montserrat", my father would say, "was a jubilant time when we'd sing and pray". As a child he caroled hopping door-to-door. Nowadays, he prods me to proclaim what I am thankful for. After the feast we would sit by the fire to listen to chants of a Christmas

choir. While scoffing a slice of cake black with glee, I'd wash it down with a glass of mauby. Tiptoeing to the kitchen on the night of the twenty-fifth, I would find candles keeping the room well lit. The dinner table would be filled with nuts, fruit, and bread. All with the



intention of honouring the dead. Thinking of those who have already passed on, we cherished joyful moments, reminiscing til dawn.

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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 there 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**

Hello to all of CTNIG members from the humble Policy and Political Action officer in London, Ontario. It feels like the past decade has been building up this volcanic pressure for all complementary therapies and developing the science of energy behind them. And with 2020, we're expecting a big delivery: We are going to bring it all out and put CT information up in front of everyone for what they are, the ultimate practice of holistic health as supported by Watsonian and Rogersian nursing theories. We are no longer going to be beating around the bush, because we know CT can help

achieve our health goals and we have no more time to lose! People are curious and have the right to information and access to CT's. We need all the support we can get from our members to present workshops on the benefits of delivering CT safely to people in health care services and communities in Ontario and beyond. We need to get serious in developing a BPG for CT and bring together all the scientific expertise we have available from across the world to support our initiatives. We need to cross pollinate with other Interest Groups like Research IG and others to develop research projects to test application, safety and benefits of CT in multiple settings. In order to get all this work done, we have to support each other not just in "self care", but in "self love" where all the care naturally flows from. I wish you a happy, mindful and soulful holiday season, celebrating this opportunity to transform and achieve frequencies, in all Holy traditions we identify with.

Yours in Health and Healing,



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



Consulting Editor/ Former President



Darka Neill

They say change is a constant and this year there have been a number of changes in my life with several moves as we sold our house of 40 years in the spring, lived at our cottage for the summer and moved into a condo 1/3 the size of our old home in the fall. The way we spend Christmas with friends and family will change as well. When we first married, our tradition of spending Christmas Eve at our home with family started with us all sitting around the Christmas tree in the living room. That evolved to including friends, and as our children got older including their friends. Imagine literally a house full of people each sharing food, drink and memories of the year before as the adults and younger ones got together. All their boots would fill the front hall and the coats the hall closet plus a queen size bed in a bedroom. There would be a group of people in the living room sitting

around the fireplace, others in the kitchen around the counter and sitting at the bar, some in the family room around the Christmas tree, and those who wanted to be a little more active would be playing air hockey in the rec room. The evening would not be complete without some music and singing, especially Danny Boy as a tribute to my father-in-law.

The importance of having certain foods and drinks was critical as a constant whether it was made by me or brought by the guests. If something was omitted I would hear about it (in a nice way) with a request to make it the next year. I would never forget to make a ham, smoked salmon pinwheels or seven layer dip. A friend would always bring sausage rolls with her special homemade mustard sauce, while my daughters would bake cookies and make cheesecakes. When my mother was alive, her pineapple whipped cream cake was always a big hit. The dining room held 2 tables full of food with a constant flow of people around them. The adults also looked forward to trying out a special cocktail made for the occasion.

In more recent years, we used this occasion to ask our guests to bring a gift of personal hygiene products, socks or gift cards to donate to people in shelters. It was heartwarming to see how they embraced the gifting and how well received these items were at community shelters.

The date changed over the years from Christmas Eve to Dec 23, "Christmas Eve Eve", so more of our friends could attend. "The Neill's Christmas Eve Eve Open House" tradition became part of our friend's tradition. As winter approached, we would get subtle and not so subtle inquiries whether we were still having the open house. This tradition of reconnecting with friends and family to celebrate Christmas provided a sense of comfort and belonging during the holiday season and gave us something to look forward to. It will remain a lasting warm memory for all of those who participated over the years.

With the move to a smaller home, the tradition of the Christmas Eve Eve Open House will evolve to another form. A friend of my son has decided to take on the tradition of an open house at Christmas in his new home. We will go back to getting together with our immediate family on Dec 23 and inviting friends in smaller groups over the holiday season. However, the memories of Christmas Eve Eve's past will live on with new ones to be made.

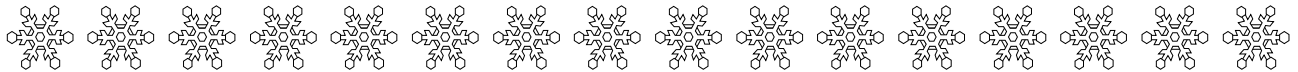


Student Liaison



Erina Park

"Happy holidays, everyone! My name is Erina and I'm a fourth-year nursing student and student liaison for CTNIG. It's been my pleasure to work with and learn from the Executive Board to promote Complementary Therapies in nursing practice as it can facilitate healing, decrease pain, and provide comfort to our patients. We can also incorporate it into our everyday lives, considering our demanding roles and the stressful environments we may find ourselves in. I have always had a keen interest in the use of Complementary Therapies and holistic approaches in order to create a connection between mind, body, and spirituality. Lately, I've been exploring music therapy and aromatherapy more (especially with final exams coming up!). I am so fortunate to be surrounded by such a passionate and knowledgeable group of nurses. Warmest wishes for a wonderful holiday season and all the best for 2020.



Holiday Meditation: Receiving and Giving

In a place you feel safe and secure sit comfortably in a chair with feet flat on the floor, hands in your lap and back supported by the chair.

Become aware of your breath as you breathe in and out.

Gently close your eyes or look downward.

Slowly and gently deepen your breath.

With each breath out let your shoulders drop and muscles release tension as best you can.

Now take a moment to recall a memory from the holiday season that is pleasant and heart warming.

It may be the smell of a certain food, fragrance or pine tree; it may be an event, person or activity; it may be an image, music or sound.

Remember how that felt.

Let that feeling begin to fill you and grow in your heart center with each breath in.

As you breathe out, share that feeling with the environment and those around you....creating a cycle of Receiving and

Giving

Continue for a few minutes and when ready bring your awareness back to your breath, to yourself as you are sitting in the chair and then slowly open your eyes.

Take some time to enjoy the moment with gratitude before getting up.

Wishing you a wonderful holiday season filled with memories you will always treasure.

Be present in all you do and let gratitude bring joy, serenity and contentment into your life and to those around you.

Be Well! Darka Neill

