

Spiritual Care

The Tibetan Book of Living and Dying by Sogyal Rinpoche, A new Spiritual Classic from one of the foremost Interpreters of Tibetan Buddhism to the West pp.29 has this to say

Spiritual care is not a luxury for a few;

It is the essential right of every human being,

As essential as political liberty, medical assistance and quality of opportunity.

A real democratic ideal would include knowledgeable spiritual care for every one of its most essential truths.

In light of the above then to some extent, Tibet must be very different to Sikkim else why would a Doctor appointed Administrative Director of the largest health institution in Sikkim, the few Nurses who complained and the Secretary of Health who listened and accepted without investigation and verification, take action to stop a program that had been appreciated and approved by the most Senior Nurses in the State?

Nurses Curriculum and Responsibility

The Curriculum for Nurses in India as in the rest of the world stresses the importance of Nurses being competent to help meet the mental, physical, emotional social and spiritual needs of all those entrusted to her/him for care.

Throughout the world, no matter which health care institution one enters one of the most exhilarating joys that draws Nurses together is the fact that patients are people who respond to sensitive loving care.

People who may carry all sorts of 'baggage' be it related to culture, colour, religion, politics, criminal activity, education, philanthropy or socio economics. Be they the most hardened criminal handcuffed to the bed, or the most pious, when physically, mentally or emotionally afflicted their key need is genuine tender loving care. ***This is not sentimental slop it is hard work by overstretched Nurses.***

Given the truth of the above, how could any Nurse offer appropriate care to each patient unless she is free to discuss, consider and come to grips with at least some of the many facets of spiritual care and to share what has proven most enabling and most distressing and disabling in her/his experience.

Spiritual Care cannot exist

Without some understanding of the life principle and essence of life; the psyche, spirit, heart soul and mind; of the inner man or spiritual being; the divine spark and work of the Holy Spirit and the demon spirits whose job it is to steal, kill and destroy as much through as many ways as possible, while they have time in this world.

In the same way if any Nurse does not attempt to understand the demon influences that work through e.g., tantrics, witches, new age theorists, occult practitioners, or ordinary people, how does she help the

Patient who is afflicted?

The patient's family?

How does she help herself?

Her own family?

Her colleague?

Her neighbourhood?

Bewildered and frightened student who is struggling to understand why?

'Am I My Brother's Keeper?' Roman's 14:7

"Whether one member suffers, all the members suffer with it."

When once a Nurse allows physical selfishness, mental slovenliness, moral obtuseness or spiritual density to significantly determine or control her thinking, attitudes and behaviour, everyone with whom she interacts will suffer. For such a standard who is equipped? Our sufficiency is of God and Him alone.

Some real life examples may be helpful

Chandigarh in sharing with Nurses it became evident that something very strange was going on causing great stress to many Nurses. *But what was it?*

Prayer was specific 'I do not understand what is going on; I need you LORD to reveal the truth to me.'

Over time it was clearly identified as **Tantric** activity. Even the Nirinkari electrician knew because his family had been repeatedly subjected to the activities of a tantric and her two female accomplices who lived in the same building.

By the mercy and grace of God it was a wonderful husband an Advocate in the High Court, and his wife a very fine Obstetrician and Gynecologist who having well learned the power of God through prayer, gave the break through. I could read the writing on sign board and notices outside the Pundit's home but lacked comprehension. Their understanding was deep.

This Tantric Pundit lived opposite me and in the same line as the Tantric and her accomplices.

One day he arrived in the ward where the Nurse on duty had been severely afflicted for almost two years, with every effort taken to destroy her professional credibility, but had been kept from failure by the constant prayers of her husband and young children and Nurses who cared.

As the Pundit sat down in the Nurse's station he said 'The trouble with you Sister is that your God is too strong. His hand is on you and no one can touch you'. The vicious attacks and suffering that Nurse and her family went through were horrendous. With rejoicing we can say '**wounded but victorious**'.

Gujarat A Nurse's nephew came to inform her at 6.0am that two other fine healthy nephews and two healthy goats had died! Two hours of pondering why I stated 'It's a mystery, I just cannot understand what fulminating condition could afflict two healthy young men and two healthy goats at the same time'?

There is no mystery was her response, a very close uncle was a very powerful **tantric**.

Jagadhri The end result of a tantric admitting herself to practice her evil art was the brutal murder of the dear old night watchman right outside the Nurses hostel, where he had faithfully guarded the Nurses at night for years. The whole of Yamuna Nagar went into shock fearing the 'Hand of God' had been lifted off them.

These and many other first hand examples when in Sri Lanka and other States of India, have enabled me to recognize that when the fallen angel's work fails to stop progress in the work at hand, in this instance meeting with Nurses in the Districts, the next recourse is a vicious attack against the key person/s.

While the individual is being distressed, I now also know God is working a much mightier work of grace.

In every situation the demonic activity is only dispelled when the individual and people concerned persevere in commitment and persistent prayer to be kept covered by the Blood of the Lamb of God (See the professional paper titled *Nurse's Power and Vedic Scriptures* on www.Nursingwad.org) and to know and to be kept in the Will of God, which is always good, pleasing and perfect, but not necessarily easy, which is why Jesus said "**In this world you will have tribulation, but do not fear, I will never leave you nor forsake you.**"

Lim Kou in his book 'The Two Kingdoms' Understanding the Kingdom of God and the Fallen World. Pp.81 to 87 offers some helpful insights into how Nurses might overcome the pervasive negative influences of the Spirit of the World and to better understand the meaning of our time on earth: growing and contributing to the advancement of God's Kingdom on earth as it is in Heaven.

The World We Live in.

"The influences of the spirit of the world pervade all of mankind and every aspect of life in this fallen world.

The pulls and attractions of this world are both seductive and deadly.

That is why it is so easy to be conformed to the world and drawn away from the "Kingdom of God." One result is the pitiable state of the Health Services including Nursing.

Lim Kou observes that the more serious activity of the spirit of the world is specifically directed to and invasive of areas involving values, attitudes, emotions, human nature and the moral and spiritual dimension. It is therefore more problematical in the arts than in mathematics and science.

Nursing is well recognized as both an *Art and Science*. The truth of Lim Kou's observation is seen in the way Nursing education in the 21st Century is neglecting at great cost to the health of the whole world, the core values of Nursing.

This neglect initially by Nurse Educators and now more pervasively by the whole body of Nursing, has opened the flood gate and allowed the Spirit of the fallen depraved world to take every opportunity to dictate essentially through the medical hierarchy, that Nursing is technical and technical only.

Lim Kou further observes that unlike areas of a technical and mechanical nature, psychology and philosophy have to do with expressions of human emotions and experience, thoughts, ideas and by music. In such areas, it is easier for the evil one to lead us astray.

There is no doubt that the Nurse's ability to understand and interpret negative spiritual forces at work in health and family welfare will be directly related to her/his own spiritual health and knowledge. In other words where she or he stands before the God of all creation at any given time.

Therefore each Nurse is duty bound to search out, work through, discuss and share for her own growth and that of her colleagues, that which will better equip each to more effectively help every patient and his family meet his/their own particular needs.

One Nurse in Gangtok was clear in her mind as she reiterated several times

that 'the reason why I am so powerless is my ego.

This Nurse was obviously working from a psycho-philosophical perspective that can never bring about a deep inner transformation of ego which is actually one's pride and stubborn will.

It is denial of truth

Given that our ego can be our own worst enemy, it is of utmost importance that Nurses are free and are encouraged to use their resourcefulness to explore for themselves all available resources to evaluate and enrich their own spiritual growth and maturity irrespective of religion, politics, caste, creed, State or Nation of origin, educational level, or socio-economic status.

How sad that any Nurse would struggle for her whole life and die struggling when by accepting the LORD Jesus Christ's invitation she may come and receive the power of the Holy Spirit to transform and renew her mind every step of the way.

Every Nurse has something to offer and something to learn for self enrichment that combined brings professional enrichment through the professional ministry of Nursing.

Communion with God

When God created man in His own image He did not put Himself God in man. He created man with three elements body, soul and spirit which is recognized in all cultures. Man different to all other created beings has the ability to think and choose, two attributes that keep us pressing on or giving up.

All peoples seek peace e.g., a young student of Pharmacy came to me and asked 'Are you a Christian' responding in the affirmative she said 'I have seen two kinds of Christians which she described, adding 'I want to be like *this* kind'.

My response 'What will your Papa say he is a Sikh and will have brought you up in the Sikh faith?'

"Oh! Papa says if I can find peace no matter where I find it I must take it."

Giving her a New Testament I suggested she read the Gospel of John chapters 3, 7, and 10 three times with an invitation to meet again if she so desired. This lass returned full of questions.

When the questions were exhausted, a retired Nursing Superintendent who had been listening said ‘You see dear you are no different to any young person, my husband and I have three children and we have brought them all up to read the Bible and to pray. Our daughter and eldest son have chosen to place their faith in the Living Christ and they have the assurance of their communion with God but our youngest son has not. All parents give their best to each child but the child has to come to God himself no one can do it for him.

Six months later this bright young student in a big Medical College had made her choice, was learning all she could and going home to share all with Mama and Papa and her two siblings.

Our communion with God is from our soul and spirit directly to Him who knows our every thought and who loves each and every one with unconditional love. No matter how man may try to choose for another no one can get into the mind, soul or spirit of the other person.

That is why the words of the LORD Jesus Christ are important

“Seek first the kingdom of God and His righteousness, and all these things will be added to you”.

Mathew 6:33

“Come to Me, all you who labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest.”

Mathew 11:28

When traveling in Japan I had the opportunity to spend a whole afternoon with the students of the English speaking Union. Having spent 5 hours visiting all the Buddhist Shrines and important places in their city as they reinforced each other with the philosophy and creed of the Nation, I stated, you have given me a wonderful afternoon and taught me much about Japan but now I would like to know what each of you as an individual believes.

Having done their ‘duty’ and with youthful joy they shared freely. Only one out of five fine young Buddhist men believed what they had told me, but each one had a clear idea of what and why they believed what they did. Thus even when a Nation dictates what must be believed it cannot control the thinking and spiritual commitment of its citizens.

In the Quran God is revealed not as an abstract being, but a being who is *Haiyat* (one who has life) *Ilam* (one who knows) and that he is *Samaa Basar and Kalam* (one who hears, sees and speaks). These attributes clearly indicate that he is not a person, but the Supreme Person who reveals himself both in words and in person. There are glimpses in the Quran and clear presentations in the Tauret, Zabur and Injil that the revelation of God, the Supreme Person is in Jesus.

Thus I believe the founding fathers of our nation who formulated the Indian Constitution, one of the finest in the whole world, stood firmly to the right and freedom of speech and of religion. It is why Jawaharlal Nehru said: Unless a given faith becomes a menace to public order, or its preachers attempt to thrust it down the unwilling throats of men of other persuasions, there can be no justification for measures which deprive any community of its rights.”

Nurses have a moral responsibility and are duty bound to share with one another that which may be helpful for each other. No one has the authority to deny Nurses the right and freedom to expand her own knowledge in order to be better equipped to help those in need and for whose Nursing care or wise counsel she is responsible.

Another fact Nurses need to understand is that the LORD Jesus Christ was not the founder of a Religion. He came that “All may have life and have it more abundantly”. The Church is not a building or an institution, it is all those who have received spiritual life in addition to physical birth and life, and as a result have unbroken communion with God our Creator. It was the people of multiple faiths in Corinth who first called these believers ‘Christians’.

Only as Nurses share and understand each other’s faith, are we in a position to genuinely help ourselves and those in need. For whom and to whom we are responsible.

The Nations Newspapers talk of the Day of Judgment

All Nurses along with all other Health Workers will one day stand before the Judgment Seat of God.

May we help each other to be prepared professionally and spiritually so that our faces will not be in shame and we will hear those cherished words “Well done my good and faithful servant; you have been faithful over a few things, I will make you ruler over many things. Enter into the joy of your LORD.”

‘Nursing is accountable to provide health care within the framework of society’s beliefs and values’ Lippincott Manuel (Sixth Edition) pp 4 -5 Legal/Ethical issues in Nursing Practice.

In the 21st Century Patients’ Rights are a fact of life and Nurses have a responsibility to uphold the rights of patients.

How can any Nurse do this in a multi-cultural, multi-religious divers society if she is not permitted, or chooses not to broaden and deepen her understanding of every facet of care, physical, mental, emotional, social and spsiritual?

Precious are the truths of the resurrection of Christ which guarantees power for our present day-to-day life. The same might, that enabled the LORD to break the shackles of death and rise to life, is available to each Nurse. We can be assured of victory not defeat because we have at our disposal the power to break asunder the strongest tentacles that have the death hold of sinful habits in Nursing and the health services.

All major religions embrace the many noble principles of a truly ethical system. But in the long run each individual has to tread the difficult path alone.

Whereas, the same power that raised Jesus Christ from the dead is abundantly available for each Nurse at every step of the way.

If she does not know how can she choose?

Ignited Minds by APJ Abdul Kalam President of India is amine of wisdom based on the deep meaningful challenges, success and some failures of his life and his journeys throughout India. This simple but profound little book has much to offer Nurses as he looks with understanding and wisdom at Space technology, Agriculture, IT. the Health Services, Education, Religion and so much more.

All Nurse leaders would be encouraged by reading this wee book.

In the Rig Veda we are admonished ‘Let noble thoughts come to us from every side.’ How else can each Nurse take a powerful transformation of life into a powerful instrument of right action so that Nursing may achieve the greatness it is capable of .

APJ Abdul Kalam starts with a dream and the message – Nurses of Sikkim want to see their dream unfold and blossom in their State.

Thirukkural in 421 (200 BC) stated. ‘Wisdom is a weapon to ward off destruction; It is an inner fortress which enemies cannot destroy.’

The wisest man that has ever lived on earth King Solomon received his wisdom in response to God’s question to him in 1 Kings 3:5

‘Ask what shall I give you?’

King Solomon’s response could be the response of every Nurse whose judgments with sound justification becomes the final determinate of the state of Nursing at any one time.

Response

“...but I am a little child; I do not know how to go out or come in. And your servant is in the midst of Your people whom You have chosen, a great people, too numerous to be numbered or counted. Therefore give to Your servant an understanding heart to judge Your people, that I may discern between good and evil. For who is able to judge this great people of Yours.”

To be able to help our sisters in Nursing who reacted negatively to our sessions either during my presence in Sikkim or later causing disruption and distress to Nursing Services may we let the words of the following hymn be a source of continuing strength for ourselves as well as a prayer for our sisters.

Open My Eyes

Open my eyes that I may see
Glimpses of truth Thou hast for me;
Place in my hands the wonderful key
That shall unclasp and set me free.
Silently now I wait for Thee,
Ready, my God, Thy will to see;
Open my eyes, illumine me, Spirit divine!

Open my ears that I may hear
Voices of truth Thou sendest clear;
And while the wave notes fall on my ear,
Every thing false will disappear.
Silently now I wait for Thee,
Ready, my God, Thy will to see;
Open my ears, illumine me, Spirit divine.

Open my mouth and let me bear
Gladly the warm truth every where;
Open my heart and let me prepare
Love with Thy children thus to share.
Silently now I wait for Thee,
Ready, my God, Thy will to see;
Open my heart, illumine me, Spirit divine.

By Clara A Scott

Revival, renewal, transformation, and regeneration all begins with each individual Nurse who has the courage to look upwards to catch a higher vision. Then while reaching up to the mark of our high calling, to walk steadfastly through the valleys of light and dark exercising every atom of our integrity and perseverance to make the vision a reality.

Sometimes encouraging one another, sometimes carrying one another, as we check our plotted course and have the joy of beginning to see the dream of a high quality of Nursing service accompanied by patient and family satisfaction blossoming. The dignity of true Nursing being restored.

This will result in genuine praise and thanksgiving rising from the heart of each Nurse:

Praise brings Blessing

Let us praise God together, let us praise;
Let us praise God together all our days;
He is faithful in all His ways,
He is worthy of all our praise,
His name be exalted on high!

Let us seek God together, let us pray;
Let us seek His forgiveness as we pray;
He will cleanse us from all sin,
He will help us the fight to win,
His name be exalted on high!

Let us serve God together, Him obey;
Let our lives show His goodness through each day;
Christ the Lord is the world's true light –
Let us serve Him with all our might,
His name be exalted on high!

Composed by J.E.Seddon