Expressive Arts: Getting to the Heart of Oncology Nursing

Alternative Treatments

ONS Congress 2010  Moderated Poster Session

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Summary slide presentation by: CTC-ONS Member
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Background

• Patients from over twenty countries receive cancer treatment on the island of Oahu.

• ONS members wanted to develop an intervention for patients, family members, and friends to open communication about their cancer experience in a safe, nurturing environment, despite language barriers.

• This project included pediatric patients, children of adult patients, and the adult patients as well.

Nishimoto, et al, 2010
Oncology On Canvas
Art-Making Family Session

Photo by Pat Nishimoto, 2010
Background

• Months in advance of the event, patients are told of the opportunity.

• Often, their initial response is, “I’m not artistic.”

• Staff help them think of how they would describe their cancer journey if they could not use words.

• On the day of the event, some come prepared with sketches, others just show up.

Nishimoto, et al, 2010
Oncology On Canvas
Art-Making Family Session

• As soft music plays in the background, there is a gentle murmur of voices and pockets of loud laughter and joy as young children experiment with paint.

• The children’s excitement brings out the inner child of other attendees and openness in their ability to reflect and describe with art the adventure they are experiencing.

Nishimoto, et al, 2010
Supplies

Photo by Pat Nishimoto, 2010
Oncology On Canvas
Art-Making Family Session

• The art conveys deep emotions that may not be recognized in the ‘busy-ness’ of life.

• Staff help the artists explore the meaning of the art by helping them write a narrative.

• The completed artwork and narrative are displayed on the wall, which stimulates new arrivals and those who have been sitting back and watching.

Nishimoto, et al, 2010
“Tornado of Cancer”

Photo by Pat Nishimoto, 2010
“One Leaf”

Photo by Pat Nishimoto, 2010
“The Victory Scene”

Photo by Pat Nishimoto, 2010
The Victory Scene is a picture of my faith and belief that God is our keeper.

The purple color represents God in our lives and shows God as our foundation and covering throughout our life.

The white area represents life and within life the dots represents minor challenges in our lives, though at the time they may not have felt like minor challenges. But once the battle of cancer occurs, it becomes the mother of all challenges, and all other challenges become so miniscule in comparison.

But the same God that carried us through the minor challenges is the same God that will carry us to victory through the cancer battle; thus the "V" is the cornerstone through the battle.

The Victory Scene acknowledges that God even blocks other challenges from coming into our lives, as portrayed by the purple blocking another challenge trying to enter in life. When we battle cancer, it might look dark and gloomy but the bright colors remind us of the bright future God has in store for us. The bright colors bring us hope and strength in the midst of the darkness all around us. The bright colors represent the TAMC staff and their support to build-up the family and the sense of extended family their staff creates through their love, support, and their beyond the call of duty efforts to bring about victory. The ultimate victory is won, so if the battle is lost and some time they are, we are more than conquerors through Christ Jesus' victory on the Cross. The TAMC staff was a pillar of strength for us and remains an extended family for us after the victory.
“One Man’s Journey is Another Man’s Blessing”
“Arrrrrrraaagggghhh”

Photo by Pat Nishimoto, 2010
“I’m Still Here”
Outcomes

• Participants, in their written evaluations, comment on the creation of community and the powerful, dynamic venue, which taps into the healing qualities of creativity and relationships.

• The intervention developed by these ONS members is one that can be implemented in multiple settings with divergent populations.
Exhibit at Tripler Army Medical Center

Photo by Pat Nishimoto, 2010
This photo of Katherine Wilson and her father, John, was entered into the 2006 Lilly Oncology on Canvas art competition. It won first place in the Best of the United States Overall and Best of Family Members, Friends, or Care Providers categories. Anne Wilson, Katherine's mother, was the photographer. For more information about this program, visit www.lillyoncologyoncanvas.com.

This Is Not a Dress Rehearsal.

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Questions/Comments?!

• It was my honor to edit the “Heart of Oncology Nursing” CJON column since its origination 3 years ago.

• The description of Dr. Nishimoto’s Congress presentation was, “Expressive Arts- Getting to the Heart of Oncology Nursing,” which is what first caught my eye and sparked my interest.

• Now that I have passed the baton to a new Associate Editor for CJON, I would also like to offer my group facilitating experience to anyone who might be interested in setting up an art-making family session in your oncology care setting.

• For further information, please contact Barb Henry at Bjzh@aol.com or 513-237-6840 (cell) Thanks!