

THEN AND NOW: My Journey to Nurse Coaching Entrepreneurship

by LYN McCRIGHT, RN, MPH, APRN, AHN-BC, HWNC-BC

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“To bring new life to ourselves and our profession.”

There it was in black and white on the page. I sat back, awestruck at the beautiful goal – the result of my first experience in automatic writing. But manifesting it would be another matter.

Our area did not have a local AHNA Chapter leader, so I volunteered the same day I joined the association. Just three months after our Central Texas Chapter grand opening (with guest speaker Dr. Carole Ann Drick), the Central Texas VA Health Care System and the Heart of Texas Nurse Practitioners invited us to have a holistic conference. Ten months later it was held, co-sponsored by six community grassroots nursing organizations!

Nursing, Change, & Resilience

When I graduated nursing school, the faculty told us that only three nursing roles would remain: the nurse who would be there to catch the baby, the nurse to hold the hand of the dying, and the nurse in the emergency room. What about the rest of us?

Reflecting on this question, the words of Dr. Margaret Newman (1991) ring true:

The predominant criterion of health emerging . . . is a person’s ability to interact with and function in a changing environment. Health is viewed as a

personal process characterized by meaning, pattern and continuing development throughout the life process. (p. 238)

Now that’s resilience! Resilience is the area where nurses will be working! When the American Nurses Association came to the 2015 Texas Nurses Association’s Leadership Meeting, the Endnote speaker, Tim Porter-O’Grady, explained that the average length of stay in U.S. hospitals is now 4.5 hours (calculating in day surgeries). Small-town hospitals in places like Wyoming and Kansas are closing in the new economic environment, and nursing is moving back into the community. Porter-O’Grady describes nurses as the center spoke in the healthcare system, coordinating inter-professional patient care and working in community-based agencies.

Nurse Coaching Entrepreneurship

In 1986, I started my first business, Stress Resolution and Prevention. I didn’t know it then, but looking back, I can see how my practice was part of an evolving paradigm that would ultimately emerge as health and wellness coaching.

I had many inspirations in establishing that first practice. One was Florence Nightingale; her *Notes on Nursing: What it Is and What it is Not*

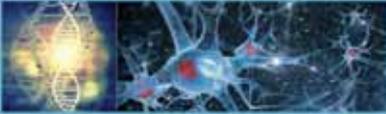
became my constant companion. It was so refreshing to go directly to the source. “Every day . . . the knowledge of nursing . . . how to put the constitution in such a state . . . that it will have no disease . . . takes a higher place. It is . . . knowledge which everyone ought to have” (Nightingale, 1859, preface). Drinking it in, I discovered the nuances of what it means to be a nurse. What is it? What is it not? I asked the questions again and again as I started out on the road to nurse entrepreneurship.

What joy it was to work in my own practice and draw from my background in community health nursing. I taught at the community college (and did research there), saw clients privately, worked with business community organizations, held weekend workshops at a community center, worked with an industrial firm plagued by on-site accidents, talked with a nursing home admitting their first AIDS patients, and spoke to an outpatient mental health clinic (both staff and patients). I even had my own radio show! And now, as a nurse coach, I am teaching others to be nurse coaches through Advancing Holistic Health coaching program. I am falling in love with nursing again. My compassion for myself and others is deepening. I am discovering wonderful insights through my understanding of the new Resilience

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Paradigm. These insights are assisting my students and clients in discovering their own insights, and those insights are transforming us forever.

The future of nursing is so bright! Nursing is embracing a new paradigm that is changing lives all over the globe, and nurse coaches and entrepreneurs are leading the way.

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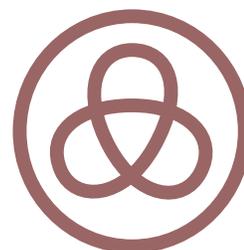
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