



AHNA Beginnings

News from the American Holistic Nurses Association

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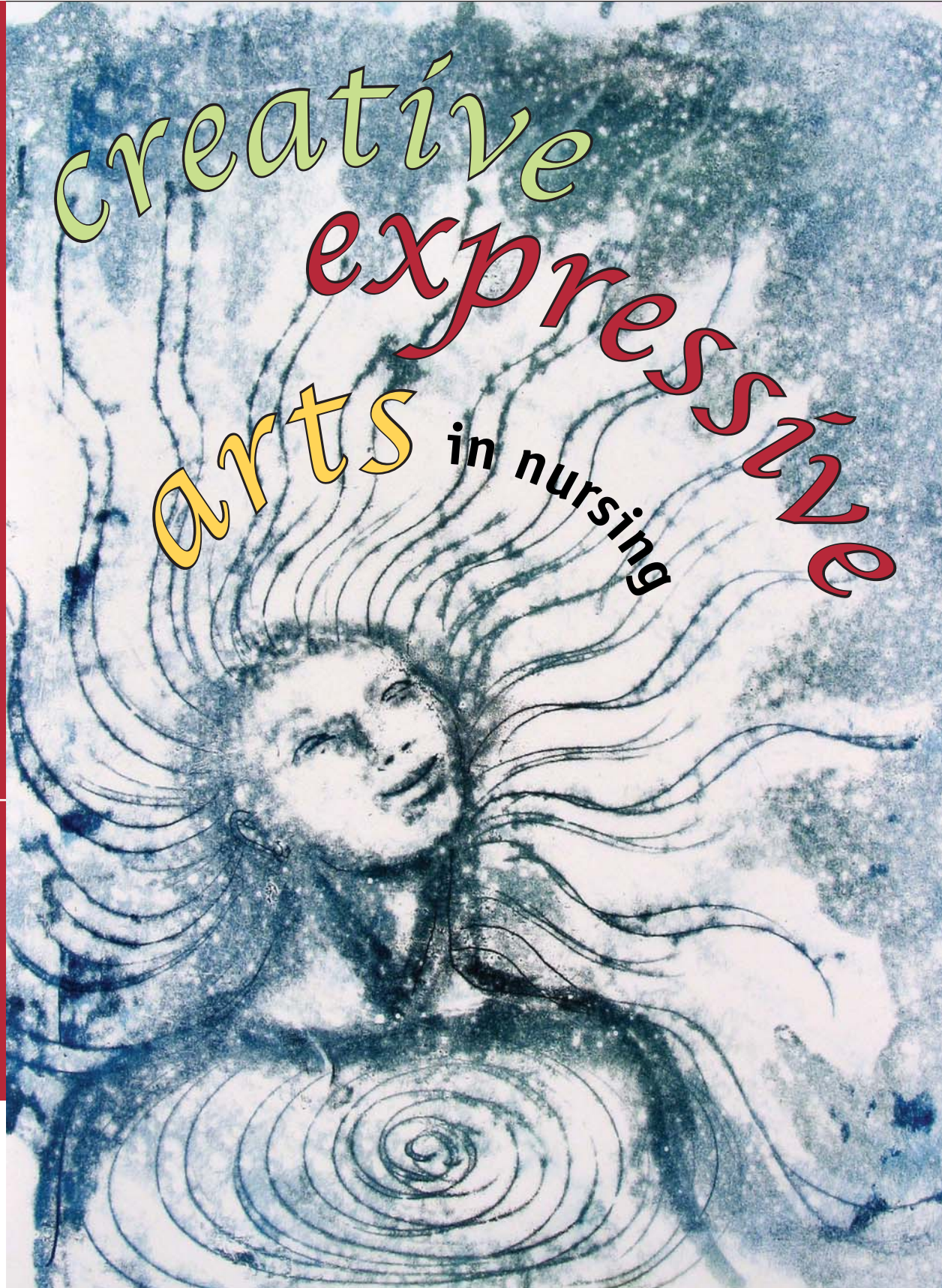
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the
Heart of nursing
the
Science
of holism



creative
expressive
arts in nursing

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The American Holistic Nurses Association (AHNA) is a non-profit organization whose membership is open to nurses and others interested in holistically oriented healthcare practices.

Membership: \$125/US, \$50/student, \$75/elder.

Although the AHNA supports the concepts of holism, it refrains from endorsing specific practitioners, organizations, products, services, or modalities. Advertising in *Beginnings* does not imply endorsement by the AHNA. Only qualified, educational certificate programs that meet specific criteria are endorsed by the AHNA and listed in *Beginnings*.

Beginnings is a forum for AHNA members. Viewpoints expressed in this publication may not represent the position of the AHNA.

The Power of Art

by JEANNE CRAWFORD MA, MPH, AHNA Executive Director

I make *no* claims to having any artistic talents. I can't draw, throw pots or write poetry. However, I can – and do – appreciate the healing and community-building power of art.

In a past life, I worked at Canyon Ranch in Tucson, Ariz., where I directed a holistic health program for the elderly. The program included many activities, including fitness, health education, nutritional counseling, and art activities. Yet years later, it is the art that I find myself remembering with the most clarity and affection. None of the hundreds of participants in the program could be regarded as an artist, but the scarves we made together, the life arrows we constructed, and the pieces of clay we molded remain in my mind to this day because they provided the participants – and me – with a unique opportunity to express feelings, work towards healing, and develop a strong sense of community.

I especially remember one gentleman who told me that his friends were tired of hearing stories about his recently deceased wife. When he was able to construct a life arrow that prominently displayed the position of his wife in his life's progression, he was able to put into that arrow what he no longer felt easy putting into words. And another participant hand-painted a scarf that evidenced the tremendous anger she felt about her recent bouts with cancer and loss. Not only did these activities provide a sense of individual healing, but they also worked towards her creation of a strong and deep sense of community. Just as these people taught me about the power of art, in this issue of *Beginnings* you will find many more stories about art's transformative and inspiring potential within holistic health care.

I also remember how we used art at last year's annual conference. I watched people paint, glue and glitter leaves for our "Tree of Life." At the time, I was struck by a similar sense of community building and bonding. People were laughing, talking to each other, and some were even crying as they created individual leaves that meant something special to each one. Together, the leaves represented the diversity that is one of the key strengths of the AHNA.

At this year's conference (June 7-10 in St. Paul, Minn.), and in keeping with our theme of *Building Integrated Healthcare*, we are calling on each of you to help furnish a miniature "Integrative Dream House" (see page 27). Again we want to foster a sense of community and healing for all attendees, so bring your artistic urges to the conference and help us use art to strengthen our AHNA community. I look forward to seeing you there.



The artwork on the cover is an example of Touch Drawing, an expressive art form discovered in 1974 by Deborah Koff-Chapin. Since then, Deborah has helped many people connect with their creative source through Touch Drawing. The article on pages 28-29 illustrates how she used this practice to help connect and inspire nurse leaders at a rural hospital. Deborah is the author of *Drawing Out Your Soul* and creator of *Soul Cards I* and *II*. You can learn more about Touch Drawing, browse Deborah's gallery and order fine art prints at her Web site www.touchdrawing.com.

building the bridge:

Helping Nurse Leaders Find a Vision Through Art

by EILEEN ZORN MS, RN

As a nurse, I find great joy in coaching executives and other healthcare professionals in leadership positions. Last summer, I was called in to support the senior vice president for Patient Care Services at a rural hospital. The task was to explore innovative approaches for moving beyond the hospital's present financial difficulties. After several coaching sessions, it was determined that our best option was to support the nursing leadership in a spiritual retreat to reconnect with the power of the original mission and pioneering heritage of the organization and move forward to envision a more desirable and abundant future. This required the creation of a high-energy space to give lots of permission to imagine greater possibilities.

In the summer of 2005, the decision was made for the hospital to partner with the Kaiser Institute (specifically, Leanne Kaiser Carlson, a healthcare futurist, and Kevin Kaiser, an intuitive coach) and an artist (Deborah Koff-Chapin) to create a retreat where managers were encouraged to explore the possibilities of who they were as individuals as well as who they were as leaders within the greater organization. As a nurse consultant and retreat co-leader, my role was to form a bridge between the attendees' current experience as managers and this intuitive creative journey. Our focus together was to explore how to move into the future



This image came from an inner soul portrait that Deborah Koff-Chapin did for the author, Eileen Zorn. Eileen uses it as her signature on letterhead and all invoices.

more intentionally and to design explicit systems for nursing innovation.

During the first day, participants were led on a guided meditation, visioning the ideal form they wanted to create within their organization. Within the context of a wisdom circle, each participant shared his/her vision as experienced during meditation. As the descriptions were shared, the intuitive artist captured the images of creative ideas and revelations through her art of touch drawing (www.touchdrawing.com). A scribe (Shirley Barnett, also my business partner) then documented the participants' words and expressions that were connected later to the images. When the images and words were combined, the *story* of the organization evolving into its future form was told.

The second day focused on the managers' direct participation by touch drawing themselves to express their personal and professional hopes for the future. They were supported during guided meditation to view both themselves and the organization in the most perfect, healthy form and to view themselves as leaders of mythic proportion. Participants also were encouraged to see the organization as healed and whole in fulfilling its mission to the community.

From this position of wholeness, beautiful images representing the possible future came forward. Each manager created a perspective of how the organization



These images were created by intuitive artist Deborah Koff-Chapin during a guided meditation where nurse participants were encouraged to envision and describe the ideal form they wanted to create within their organization. ©2006 Deborah Koff-Chapin www.touchdrawing.com

might best fulfill its service commitment. Then the images were brought together, and focused areas of emphasis were chosen. Selective images guided the group on its next step of writing a formal strategic plan and vision statement. The images were symbols of the leaders' visions advancing and expanding the organization into the future.

In order for health care to thrive, leaders must find meaning in what they do, and having an opportunity to express heart and soul can bring this meaning back to life. Throughout this retreat, the nursing leaders created an extraordinary experience that increased the expansiveness of opportunities ahead. Participants were able to explore imaginal spaces for healing the organization and themselves. Inspired by these images, the managers had breakthroughs into collaboration and innovation and a new sense of boldness in facing any challenges.

Eileen Zorn MS, RN, has over 30 years experience in diverse healthcare settings, focusing on incorporating innovation and values-based spiritual leadership into the workplace. She is currently President and CEO of Zorn Consulting Network, based in Loma Linda, Calif. (eghayzorn@aol.com).

