

35TH GLOBAL NURSING CARE & EDUCATION CONFERENCE

September 25-26, 2017 Atlanta, USA

Finding healers within: Mind-body self-compassion training for nursing and other healthcare professionals

Sunny Alpers

Old Dominion University, USA

Background: With changes of demographics and increased chronic diseases, vulnerable patients need what evolutionary biologists call the ingredients responsible for lasting survival: love, good will, cooperative spirit, inter-connectedness, and compassion from healthcare professionals (HCPs). However, these qualities have been disappearing in modern high stress work environments, with many studies demonstrating increased plasma cortisol and other stress biomarkers in HCPs' blood. Despite the problem, self-care pedagogy is a missing element in healthcare professions' education.

Objective: To describe two pilot study results of a new compassion tool for HCPs, Mind-Body Self-Compassion Tai Chi Qigong (MBSC-TCQ). MBSC-TCQ integrates eight simple Tai Chi/Qigong movements with a compassion mantra to enhance integrated absorption of a compassion construct.

Method: Repeated measure pre-post intervention designs were employed in both studies. Participants in the first study were DNP students in an Integrative Medicine workshop format; the second study was conducted with professional caregivers at an Alzheimer facility for 5 consecutive weeks.

Results: Integrative medicine attitudes questionnaire, mindful self-compassion scale, and spirituality perspective scale were significantly elevated in both studies. Measures in the second study, including general self-efficacy, psychological well-being were significantly increased and care burden was decreased. A secondary hypothesis for caregiver impact on patient behaviour was measured with Ativan use and behavioural incident reports; both were significantly reduced one month post intervention compared to one month prior. Strong emotional receptiveness for compassion training was present in both study groups. With further studies, MBSC-TCQ shows potential as a useful tool that can be disseminated in educational and clinical settings.

Biography

Sunny Alpers is a Professor at Graduate Nursing Program at ODU Norfolk VA. She received her PhD from USD, CA and was awarded a Post-doctoral research training fellowship at NIH and another fellowship in Integrative Medicine at the University of Arizona Center for Integrative Medicine under mentoring of Dr. Andrew Weil. Her clinical training is NP; she currently practices in Gerontology. Her research interests include body-mind meditation interventions and the science of compassion, and the application of Qigong and Tai Chi to the health and well-being of patients and healthcare professionals.

salpers@odu.edu

Notes: