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THE MINDFULNESS IN ADVANCED PRACTICE NURSING

By: Tara Kelly, DNP, ANP-BC

Like many of my nursing colleagues, I felt a true calling to nursing. I nearly completed my bachelor degree in another field before I decided to apply to nursing school. When I reflect back on this feeling, nursing just felt right. Now, looking back after ten years of nursing, caring has always been at the center of my practice, but it was only recently I developed a deeper understanding of nursing as a vocation. I developed deeper gratitude for my nursing practice after I started approaching my role with mindfulness.

Several years ago I discovered the practice of yoga. There are ideas and core concepts of yoga that relate to many aspects of daily life, including patient care. At first I would come to my yoga mat for the physical exercise, but found myself returning for the spiritual experience of slowing down, breathing deeply and discovering my individual abilities. During this time I also revisited my personal philosophy of nursing: My goal is to connect with patients in a meaningful way to work as their partner to reach a positive health outcome. Yoga allows me to stay focused, while accepting challenges, value my personal connection with patients and appreciate even the subtlest gains in wellness. Mindfulness also includes thankfulness for colleagues and teams that make patient care possible.

Before my regular yoga practice I wasn't familiar with dharma. There is no literal English translation of the word dharma because it is better explained as a central concept of spirituality. Dharma is the idea that each of us is born with certain gifts and we share them with others. When we share these gifts, we allow ourselves to live more fully. Many

nurses share their gift of caring with the greater community. I am grateful other colleagues share knowledge, patience, and humor with me. Dharma relates to Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs in that dharma encompasses the pinnacle of the pyramid: self-actualization. Although dharma is a central concept and Maslow's pyramid is a progression, both these ideas can motivate positive behavior. Practicing dharma brings me closer to reaching my fullest potential by encouraging me to grow as a care provider, colleague, student, and leader every day. A mindful review of my everyday practice always includes gratitude for my colleagues who help me grow.

I am honored to work alongside role model advanced practice providers, educators, physicians, registered nurses and administrators who encourage nurses to set goals and support them while they work to reach them. These articles shared by our advanced practice colleagues are just a sample of the exemplary accomplishments of UC San Diego's nurse practitioners, clinical nurse specialists, certified nurse midwives and certified nurse anesthetists.

I am always seeking ways to improve the practice of what I do with my Orthopedic patients here at UC San Diego Healthcare because that is why we are nurses, we want to help people with the health issues they come to us with and being mindful of their varied problems allows us to provide them with the care they need. I am proud to have been given the opportunity to partake in this the 14th edition of the UCSD Journal of Nursing showcasing the Wide World of Advanced Practice here at UC San Diego Healthcare.



Tara Kelly, DNP, ANP-BC

As a nurse practitioner in the department of Orthopaedic Surgery at UC San Diego Health Systems, Tara Kelly, DNP, ANP-BC, specializes in nonoperative care of musculoskeletal conditions in vulnerable populations. She also has experience providing comprehensive care for patients with obesity. She is active in local and national nurse practitioner organizations, and is a member for the California Association of Nurse Practitioners Health Policy and Practice Committee. She has also served as an editor and peer reviewer for several nursing publications. She enjoys working as part of a team to help patients achieve better health through holistic, evidence-based care.