

Holistic-Inspired Nurse Radio Hits Airwaves

Numerous studies have shown us the connection between sufficiently caring for ourselves and the ability to successfully care for our patients. One such study conducted by Press Ganey & Associates in 2003 analyzed summary data from 33 leading hospitals and found that “there is an almost perfect correlation between hospital employee satisfaction and patient satisfaction.” However, in today’s taxing, bottom-line-focused healthcare environment, nurses are overextended, underappreciated, and often lacking in employer support, and it is these issues that causes many to leave the profession each year. With all of these factors, it can be easy to get bogged down by the negative and forgo your own self-care.

Thanks in part to technology, there is a bright light called *Nurseradio.org*. Developed and produced by Dr Georgianna Donadio, a holistic nursing advocate who is also the founder and executive director of the New England School of Whole Health Education, which provides holistic-based distance learning and in-person-based continuing education programs for healthcare professionals, Nurseradio.org aims to inspire and motivate nurses from all backgrounds and specialties. With the goal of providing a voice for today’s nurses and their respective real-world challenges and creating a medium wherein nurses can come together in a supportive environment to learn from one another, the project initially began in 2003 when the Leadership Council of the American Holistic Nurses Association (AHNA) asked Donadio to participate in a startup project that seemed interesting and potentially supportive to nursing. After a bumpy start, with technical difficulties, the decision was made to fill the need for a voice for today’s nursing and create a nonprofit organization. Consequently, in May 2004, NurseRadio.org: Celebrating Whole Health! was born.

Because Nurseradio.org is an Internet-based radio, nurses all over the world can go online for free, 24 hours a day, 7 days a week, to learn and be inspired.

An extension to the school’s mission, Nurseradio.org is the first and only nurse-focused radio. Through interviews (there are currently 20, with plans to add a new one each week) with prominent nurse leaders and healers in varying specialties and areas of expertise, including critical care, inner-city nursing, public health, spirituality, and nursing in Vietnam, it educates, inspires, and celebrates the global contributions of nurses in patient care.

Donadio says, “Some of them are funny, some of them are educational, and some of them are just heart-wrenching.” She also says, “But it is also about looking closely at these incredible people behind the stories, and for the listener, the ability to relate to them on a personal and professional level.”

One such interview is with Kathy Duffy, a holistic licensed practical nurse, herbalist, and aromatherapist who works with child victims of the nuclear disaster in Chernobyl, Russia. In her interview with Donadio, Kathy recalls how she became involved with the Friends of The Children of Chernobyl organization when she read an article in an Irish newspaper about a group of carpenters trying to raise money to build a sunroom for severely deformed, child survivors of the disaster who had never seen the light of day. Said Duffy, “Every year we bring a few hundred children over from the contaminated areas. We have them for a month; we love them up, feed them up, cloth them, let them rest when they want to, and fix their medical problems. We do this to buy them time and send them into puberty healthier. When they leave us, they have greater knowledge of the world and overall are healthier. Sixty percent of the children we have brought over are still thriving today, so it is encouraging.”

Another interview is with Lea Barbato-Gaydos, PhD, RN, an assistant professor of nursing at the Beth-El College of Nursing at the University of Colorado and recipient of the National Holistic Nurse of the Year and Nightingale Awards for developing complementary pathways to new paradigms in nursing. Other interviews are with holistic nursing industry notables such as Deanne Aime, BNS, MPH, BRE, immediate past president of the AHNA, and

Deva-Marie Beck, PhD, RN, who is the coauthor of the book published by the American Nurses Association, titled *Florence Nightingale Today: A Vision for A Healthy Future*. Soon to be added is one with Barbara Dossey, PhD, RN, HNC, FAAN, an educator, consultant, researcher, and author considered to be a pioneer in the holistic nursing community and recipient of the 2003 Archon Award of Sigma Theta Tau International, the Honor Society of Nursing.

An investment by the school and support of the AHNA was used to launch the site. In addition, it is supported and sponsored by several healthcare organizations and causes, including Partners Home Care, Shriners Hospitals for Children, and Thomson Delmar Learning. For a reasonable fee, advertisers and sponsors can show their support for nursing by having their logos prominently displayed on the site.

Nurseradio.org was formally unveiled on May 9, 2004 during the festivities surrounding the Florence Nightingale National Cathedral Service in

Washington, DC. The site, counts the Nightingale 2010 initiative among its sponsors, whose mission is to engineer a global effort to acknowledge “nursing’s holistic and interdisciplinary contribution to human health.”

Jeanne Crawford, executive director of the AHNA, in Flagstaff Ariz, says that Nurseradio.org can, “help morale for nurses to hear about the lives and accomplishments of other nurses. We really encourage nurses to be very nurturing of themselves, to look at themselves in that same body/mind/spirit way.”

“What we are striving to accomplish with Nurseradio.org and our other efforts is to create an awareness among consumers and the medical community that nurses are the most valuable resource to healthcare—period; they always have been and always will be,” said Donadio. “They are great people with great hearts, great minds, and great skill that deserve to be respected and celebrated.”