









The quivering of the heart:
cultivating compassion in healthcare

Create Act Change
International Digital Storytelling Conference
Hacettepe University
Ankara, Turkey




Pip Hardy
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The sleepless ones



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The sleepless ones


What if all the people
who could not sleep
at two or three or four
in the morning
left their houses
and went to the parks?
what if hundreds, thousands
millions
went in their solitude
like a stream
and each told their story?
What if there were
old women
fearful if they slept
they would die
and young women
unable to conceive
and husbands
having affairs
and children
fearful of falling
and fathers
worried about paying bills
and men
having business troubles

and women unlucky in love
and those that were in physical
pain
and those who were gaily?
What if they all left their houses
like a stream
and the moon
illuminated their way and
they came, each one
to tell their stories?
Would these be the more troubled
of humanity?
Or would these be the passionate of this world
or those who need to create to live
or would these be
the lonely
ones?
And I ask you
if they all came to the parks
at night
and told their stories
would the sun on rising
be more radiant and
again I ask you
would they embrace?
-Lawrence Tirnauer




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Suffering





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Relieving suffering

Healthcare:
Science or art?

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Science: the dominant paradigm

- 'conventional' (western) medicine *or* 'alternative' medicine?
- logic and reason *or* intuition?
- statistics *or* stories?
- quantity *or* quality?
- technical skill *or* compassion?

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Crises in healthcare

The United Royal Infirmary Inquiry: the human element

The United Royal Infirmary Inquiry (UROI) is the largest and most complex investigation in the history of the NHS, examining the circumstances of a fatal case and the systemic failures that led to it. The inquiry is a landmark case in the history of patient safety and the NHS.

Winterbourne View care home staff jailed for abusing residents

The staff at Winterbourne View care home have been jailed for abusing residents. The care home was found to be a place of horror, with staff using force and restraint on residents.

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Compassion: what is it?

1. How would you define compassion?
2. Describe a compassionate act – either given or received by you.
3. How did that feel?

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Compassion: what is it?

'The quivering of the heart in the face of sorrow, pain or suffering.'

Jack Kornfield

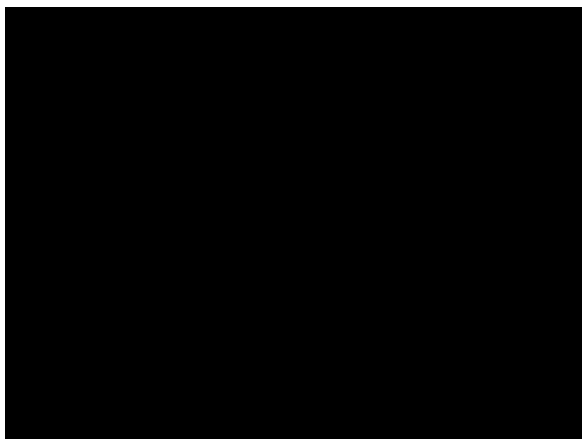
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Finding compassion in unexpected places

Night shift

www.patientvoices.org.uk/flv/0685pv384.htm

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How to make it happen?

- Legislation?
- Regulation?
- Policies?
- Targets?
- Training for nurses?
- Training for managers?
- Training for leaders?
- The 6 Cs?

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Ways of knowing

- Empirical knowing
- Aesthetic knowing
- Personal knowing
- Ethical knowing

Carper 1978



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Cultivating compassion

Creating the right conditions:

- Preparing the ground
- Sowing the seeds
- Nurturing the plants




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Preparing the ground

- becoming more aware
- noticing the nature of suffering
- accepting ourselves
- being kind to ourselves
- recognising our interconnectedness

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Ubuntu: the essence of being human



'The solitary human being is a contradiction in terms and therefore you seek to work for the common good because your humanity comes into its own in belonging.'

Archbishop Desmond Tutu

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Sowing seeds

- cultivating skilful action
- developing wisdom
- offering kindness
- relieving suffering
- sharing joy
- practising equanimity

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Nurturing the seeds

Making and taking time

- time to notice
- time to care
- time to listen
- time to breathe
- time to 'just be'

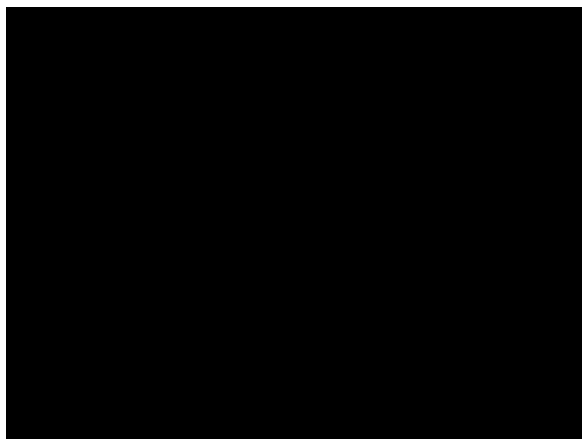
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Susan's story

Only connect
www.patientvoices.org.uk/flv/0690pv384.htm

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Creating the right conditions


Creating space

- *temenos* (sacred space)
- creative listening
- story circles



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Digital storytelling as compassion practice



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Empathy: a scientific approach



'Mirror neurons enable us to feel the emotions, movements and intentions of others: they facilitate a kind of natural empathy, part of the social brain that connects us intimately in every human encounter.'

Kornfield 2008

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Empathy: an artistic approach



'Telling, sharing and hearing stories is another way of crossing the boundaries of consciousness, opening our hearts and cultivating compassion for all beings as if they were part of our family.'

Kornfield 2008

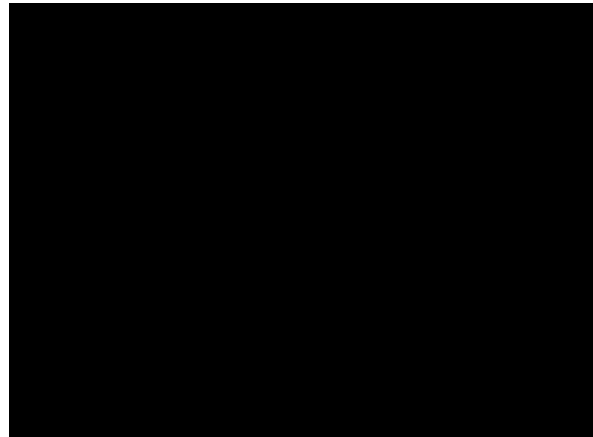
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Wee Haan's story

Can I have a hand, please?
www.patientvoices.org.uk/flv/0262pv384.htm


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Facing our dragons

'No matter what form the dragon may take, it is of this mysterious passage past him, or into his jaws, that stories of any depth will always be concerned to tell...'



O'Connor 1969

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Transformation

'People reach greater maturity as they find the freedom to be themselves and to claim, accept and love their own personal story, with all its brokenness and its beauty.'




Vanier 2004

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The stories are all one

'Each affects the other and the other affects the next and the world is full of stories and the stories are all one.'



Albom 2004

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Thank you.

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