

Australian Faith Community Nurses Association

faith in action
hope in expression
love in motion



Whole Health

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I can't wait to tell you about...

my season of rest

I unexpectedly remain in this season of rest and restoration up in Byron shire. My studies continue but I am waiting on God's direction for my next steps. It's a big step of faith and grows my trust in Him daily.

It surely is a season of new beginnings and fresh growth. I have been culling, cleaning and sorting. This season feels more restful and I am enjoying sitting in God's presence, receiving the blessing of walking, riding and kayaking through His beautiful creation of hills, sea and rivers. I am about to commence learning from Danny Silk and Shawn Bolz at conferences and seminars and realizing that however much I learn there is so much more to know about Jesus Christ!

God is lavish and abundant in His blessings and provides more than we can ever ask for. He is moving in mighty ways in my life and He can in yours too. He wants good things for us all.

I want to encourage you to continue in your Christian life with fresh boldness and confidence. God has a plan for each one of us. He has a plan for your FCN practice and for AFCNA. We all need to continue to grow our gifts and use our knowledge and skills to keep reflecting Jesus in our world. Sometimes this requires us to be patient as we wait for His guidance in our next steps, because when we wait on Him and with Him, we can more readily discern His direction and His timing. When we move in His strength alone things unfold with clarity and greater ease. This is true personally and for AFCNA, our churches, our families, our workplaces and our nation.

You won't want to miss our AFCNA AGM on Monday 10 September (6-9 pm) where you will hear retired FCN Pat Watts share her story of serving Jesus as a nurse in outback Australia and Pakistan.

I urge you to stay close to Jesus and journey in unison with Him. He wants to use YOU for His purposes. He will equip you. BE BOLD and never give up!



Jo Rich

Jo from beautiful Byron Bay
Chairperson, AFCNA 2018

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The times they are a changing... so where to next?



Bob Dylan's song *The times they are a-changing* was an anthem of the 60s and 70s, yet it remains true as we move toward 2020. Australia's population reached 25 million on 7th August 2018 and we are a diverse, multicultural country with many races living in peace and prosperity, but is this prosperity being experienced equally? Are our Indigenous Australians, or people from refugee and asylum seeker backgrounds, or people living in regional and remote communities getting the same services as those in the major cities?

In Australia and internationally, the world's population is ageing and western cultures in particular are facing increasing numbers of people living with chronic conditions. A lot of these illnesses have contributing lifestyle factors that may make them preventable. In the 70s and 80s key health messages about the damage caused by smoking contributed to today's reduced smoking rates in Australia. This health education occurred by community health services which focused on disease prevention and health promotion. However, today these community health dollars have been shifted to disease management in the community. Our health and welfare systems are struggling to cope with rapidly increasing service demands in a time of limited funds. The needs for health and care ministry in our churches is patently obvious to those of us involved in health and community care, just as it is to the Board of AFCNA. These situations provide an opportunity for our churches to be more receptive to current community issues. Christians have a mandate to respond because these are matters of justice, right living, responsible stewardship and compassionate service and core to the Christian way of life.

Australian health care is changing

There are new funding models including a trial of 'Health Care Homes' (<http://www.health.gov.au/internet/main/publishing.nsf/Content/health-care-homes>) where GPs are funded a set amount to care for a person living with a chronic illness. This money can be allocated to recognised allied health professionals. Interestingly nurses are not a part of this funding allocation unless they are working as GP practice nurses. Christian GPs could link FCNs with specific churches, but to date AFCNA is unaware of anyone using such a model to fund an FCN role, but we believe it has potential.

Funding models are changing

Consumer-directed care models that fund individual users are being rolled out in the disability and aged care sectors to organise care against the person's health goals and negotiated care plans. This means the person has input and some control over their funding allocation and where it should be focused. There may be significant opportunities for Christian community services to employ FCNs to provide care management and other health and care services. AFCNA Board believes such service delivery models have significant potential. Please join us to pray about such opportunities and how we can trial and progress them.

Communication is changing

Our world is increasingly digital and that brings new challenges and opportunities. Your AFCNA newsletter is delivered via email. AFCNA has a presence on Facebook and YouTube. All of this requires new policies, processes to meet regulatory changes, and the additional cost of insurances which are a necessary cost in today's climate of litigation. AFCNA has commenced creating online courses through WCEA educational portal. The Board is grappling with the changes and the specific skillsets required to develop and maintain up-to-date websites and digital services. We have always sought out cost-effective ways to support the future FCN role in this nation and will continue to do so. We use a lot of voluntary assistance and can always do with more! If you have skills in this space then please let us know how you can assist us. We thank you for your patience, because landing all of these service changes can take longer and can cost more than anticipated.

Our regulatory environment is changing

In order to comply with Australian privacy standards, we have developed additional policies and procedures relating to the digital environment. The Board has obtained various insurances because the climate in which we operate is rapidly changing. All of these developments incur costs but our membership fees have remained unchanged for 22 years. We have managed by the thousands of hours of faithful volunteers who are all busy Christians juggling multiple responsibilities and we are immensely grateful for their assistance. It raises the question how we can continue to improve our reach and service to members while maintaining financial viability and practicing responsible stewardship of members' funds into the future? The Board is grappling with this issue at present.

FCN practice environment is changing

When we commenced AFCNA there were many FCNs volunteering in their local churches. What we know for certain is that the FCN role often becomes too large to be sustainable for volunteer FCNs. We know that most churches in Australia have less than 50 members, therefore funding an FCN is impossible for most churches.

The FCNs who have really flourished are often in a salaried role, but more importantly they receive strong support from their local church leadership and professional and ministry support from their denominational networks. One practising FCN, who worked as a volunteer FCN for many years, and later as a private Christian practice nurse contracting her mental health services to regional GPs and health services, made the comment to AFCNA Board, 'Payment for my work has brought greater professional respect for the services I provide than my volunteer services did. Volunteering did not change my skillset, but equally it did not promote the same level of professional respect from clients and service providers'. That is not to say that the volunteer FCN role does not have a significant and valuable part to play in the health and pastoral care ministry of our churches. It simply means we need a mix of models for a sustainable future.

These are some of the issues that the Board is working through as we look for ways to advance the FCN role, provide appropriate support, quality education, promote sustainable models that provide FCN ministry roles (paid and voluntary) across Australia. We continue to seek new ways that FCNs can stop people falling through the gaps in health and community care and promote healthy thriving communities.

Be bold and influence these changing times for the better

If you have ideas about addressing any of these or other issues, please let a Board member know. Give us a call, an email, or better still nominate yourself for the Board and be part of a Christian voice in Australian Nursing, health and community life. We welcome nominations. **If you are not a current AFCNA member, please join or renew your AFCNA membership. We value and need your prayer for the Board as we seek to meet the changing times.**

Annual General Meeting (10 September)



Please join us to celebrate Pat Watts, our first Anglican parish nurse serving with St Bartholomew's Anglican Church in Norwood. We have asked Pat to reflect on God's vocational call on her life in her profession of Nursing. She has served as a missionary nurse in Pakistan, as a 'Bush Nurse' in Aboriginal communities in SA and NT and was one of five Faith Community Nurses that commenced the pilot research trial in SA in 1996. She served faithfully as an FCN for 14 years and as an AFCNA Board member and National FCN Mentor for AFCNA over the past 22 years!

"Being a faith community nurse gave me freedom to put my faith and my professional work together in meaningful ways that created better lives for people. It gave me freedom to care for the whole person."

Pat Watts 2018

Pat will present during our **AGM on Monday 10 September (6-9 pm)**. Please join us for a celebratory meal at 6 pm at The Goody (Goodwood Hotel) 75 Goodwood Road, Goodwood, followed by a short AGM meeting and Pat's story. Please join us in person, but if you can't, please provide us with your PROXY form and instructions.

The Board of AFCNA

Cultural Safety—

Nurses and midwives leading the way for safer healthcare

At the last CoNNMO (Council of National Nursing and Midwifery Organisations) meeting, discussions were held about 'cultural safety' and how nurses and midwives have a role to play in 'closing the gap' for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples who still experience worse health outcomes than non-Indigenous Australians. These discussions resulted in the issue of a joint statement: 'Cultural Safety: Nurses and Midwives leading the way for safer healthcare'. Australia's professional Nursing organisations were invited to support this statement which you can read here: <http://www.nursingmidwiferyboard.gov.au/News/2018-03-23-joint-statement.aspx>

At the May AFCNA Board meeting we unanimously agreed that as Christians we are called to work together for unity and justice in our nation. This includes recognising the effects of colonisation, some of which have caused adverse impact with subsequent health ramifications which continue to be experienced by many of today's first Australians. AFCNA supports reconciliation for all Australians and wants all Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples to be treated as equals, which is the way God sees every human being. To that end the AFCNA Board agreed that our logo would be added to the CoNNMO statement demonstrating our support of that statement.

The principle of cultural safety forms part of the new Code of Conduct for nurses and midwives. It provides 'simple, common sense guidance on how to work in partnership with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples'.¹

What is cultural safety?

Cultural safety is not treating everyone the same, but treating everyone equally by providing an environment that is 'spiritually, socially, emotionally safe, as well as physically safe for people'.² The Code of Conduct describe Cultural safety as 'a key philosophical shift from providing care regardless of difference, to care that takes account of peoples' unique needs'.³ Cultural safety is the outcome where the person who receives the service defines their experience of the service as culturally safe and respectful.^{4,5}

Cultural safety is a continuum of care beginning with cultural awareness which is the first learning process of understanding cultural differences, and then moves through cultural sensitivity where the person delivering care reflects on their own cultural identity, recognising the impact of their culture on their practice. As skills improve a nurse develops cultural competence which leads to culturally safe practice.⁶ This reflective process is a difficult but important part of ensuring cultural safety because the person examines their own culture and personal attitudes and beliefs and considers how these are influencing the way they think, feel and behave.^{7,8} It recognises the historical treatment of people groups and the effect that power differentials have on the delivery of health care.⁹ Depending on the setting or the community, your practice may functioning in different parts of this continuum.¹⁰

References

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6. *Ibid. Cultural safety framework summary*
7. *Ibid. Cultural safety, cultural connections for learning*
8. *Ibid. Code of conduct for nurses*, p. 9. (3.2c)
9. *Ibid. Code of conduct for nurses*, p. 9. (3.1)
10. *Ibid. Cultural safety framework summary*, p. 5.

Vicky Legge RN, Grad Dip CCM
AFCNA Board Treasurer



Resources

Cultural safety

Code of Conduct for more information on what this will look like in your practice as well as the glossary page 16.

<https://www.nursingmidwiferyboard.gov.au/Codes-Guidelines-Statements/Professional-standards.aspx>

[Closing the Gap – Prime Minister’s report](#) about Indigenous health

[10 year critical reflection](#) from the Australian Human Rights Commission on why governments haven’t succeeded in closing the health gap.

CATSINaM (Congress of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Nurses and Midwives) definition of cultural safety: <https://www.catsinam.org.au/policy/cultural-safety>

Head to health (H2H)

The Australian Government is encouraging people to use online services and resources for mental health. H2H can be used personally or to help you guide someone in need. This website has approximately 380 services and resources including the opportunity to get professional support via phone and email. It includes a section on spirituality under the heading ‘Meaningful Life’ recognising the importance of spirituality for health and wellbeing. Check out the website at <http://www.headtohealth.gov.au>

Palliative care resources

There are a number of excellent and free education modules on palliative care in the community available at

<https://www.palliaged.com.au/tabid/4305/Default.aspx>;

CareSearch has a Death and Dying in Australia page with a huge list of resources on it. Dying2Learn 2018 course has closed but you can hear about future course offerings by CareSearch and sign up for their CareSearch newsletter

<https://www.caresearch.com.au/caresearch/tabid/3726/Default.aspx>

Mental health and drought

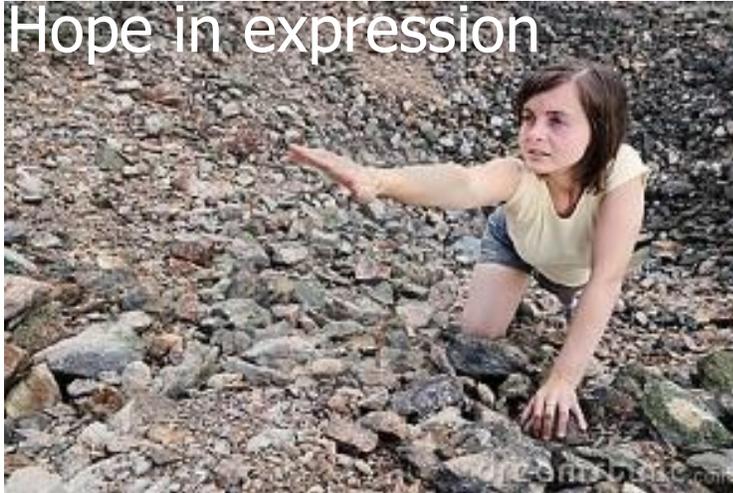
With 100% of NSW drought declared and large areas of QLD, WA, SA and NT experiencing serious or severe rainfall deficiencies, it’s critical that rural and remote communities talk more about suicide prevention.

Start an R U OK? Conversation. The convoy is coming so why not host a conversation event?

<https://www.ruok.org.au/>

The ‘Heads up’ resources from beyond blue are also useful <https://www.beyondblue.org.au>

Hope in expression



AFCNA has a motto:

Faith in action

Hope in expression

Love in motion

What do we mean when we say FCNs and pastoral health and care workers are hope in motion? A few years ago, I went to speak to the senior mental health social worker at the Department of Health in my state. I asked him how churches might effectively support people living with severe and persistent mental illness. His response was:

‘People living with persisting mental illness have often lost hope about a better future. Their families have lost hope and they say

their community holds little hope for them. If there was one thing I would ask of the church it would be to become purveyors of hope!’

Wow I thought. If Christians don’t have a message of hope for our community, then who does? But perhaps more to the point—why aren’t people in our nation hearing or experiencing that hope from Christians and churches?

What is a ‘purveyor’?

It got me thinking exactly what does it mean to be a ‘purveyor’? A quick check of the thesaurus revealed a purveyor is a person who supplies, brings, is a vendor, or source of a supply, which in our case is HOPE. A purveyor is someone who tells, tattles, spreads, transmits, whispers, and even gossips HOPE! I had the mind picture of someone who takes every opportunity to bring a message of hope through stories, chit chat, a quiet whisper when things are difficult, a person who cannot stop sharing messages of hope to another.

I was reminded of the lyrics of a vibrant Christian song by Irish Christian band Rend Collective, which contains the line ‘*We are your church, we are the hope on earth!*’¹ It’s up to all of us as Christians to be the purveyors of hope in our community! So how can we be effective chatterers, tattlers, whisperers, suppliers and bringers of hope in a world that craves real hope?

What is ‘hope’?

Hope can be a noun or a verb. As a noun it is the expectation that a particular thing will happen, and as a verb it is defined as wanting something to happen.² In Scripture hope is used the same way, as a confident expectation that God will fulfill His promises³ which inspires hope within us, and as a desire about things we want to happen when we trust in God. Biblical hope is grounded in a promise-keeping God, so we can have complete confidence and trust that God will keep His promises. In this way Christian hope is built on our faith in Jesus, which concurrently strengthens our faith in Jesus.

Lee Strobel, atheist journalist turned Christian apologist, describes Jesus as a ‘hope dispenser’ in *The Case for Hope*.⁴ He writes, ‘[Jesus] lived a life that instilled in His followers the hope that they could find greater meaning and purpose in their lives. He spread tangible hope as He healed the broken hearts and diseased bodies of countless people. He embodies hope for our earthly lives and promises a hope-filled existence in heaven for eternity to those who would trust and follow Him.’⁵

Jesus ushered in the kingdom of God so it would be here ‘on earth, as it is in heaven.’ The kingdom of God is not just about our individual salvation and entry to heaven when we die, the kingdom of God has come in Jesus Christ, and as followers of Jesus we demonstrate the kingdom of God here and now to the people with whom we commune. We have an individual role to fulfil and a collective purpose as God’s church to build God’s kingdom here and now. Christians are called to be the purveyors of His hope on earth.

Two ways Christians can be purveyors of hope



1. Be a loving community that fosters inclusive relationships

Loneliness and social isolation are harmful to mental, physical and social health. Loneliness is linked to mental health concerns such as low self-esteem, suicide and depression and it increases the risk of cardiovascular disease, with a recent UK study finding a 30% greater chance of heart attack or stroke in people who are lonely⁶. Loneliness is one of the social plagues of our time. In a survey by Lifeline Australia in 2016, about 60% of 3,100 respondents said they 'often felt lonely' and 82.5% said they felt 'loneliness was increasing in our society', with a third of respondents stating they have 'no-one to confide in'⁷. Research shows lack of social connections is just as damaging to your health as smoking 15 cigarettes a day!⁸

Humans were created for relationship and our churches need to be places where people are welcomed, accepted and included, regardless of their skills, abilities and health conditions. Social isolation is not confined to people living alone. Many people living as a couple say they are lonely. A 2017 RUOK survey found 'Australians spend an average of 46 hours a week (outside of work hours) looking at various screens, from smartphones to televisions'.⁹ This compared to only 6 hours spent engaging with family and friends. Social networks and friendships reduce the

risk of becoming ill and help people recover when they are sick. Our churches need to consider the many ways they can continue to encourage and promote relationships of all kinds in churches, because this brings hope to people and it enables people to 'tattle' hope to one another in the small talk, and bring hope intentionally in the deeper discussions of daily life.

God's kingdom includes everyone, but especially the most vulnerable, so churches need to be inclusive communities that genuinely demonstrate love for one another, intentionally connecting people on the margins, raising those who are oppressed, and offering a community of acceptance, participation and belonging for ALL.

God instructs us to meet together regularly, and to not give up on doing this. In Australian society the church is the only group that meets voluntarily and regularly, for the long haul, with diverse people across the lifespan, from different social, cultural and economic backgrounds. This is all a part of God's plan for our personal and community health. As Christians we may take for granted the hope and strength we receive from living in a healthy, loving faith community, but we need to make sure we continue to invite others into this community to share the hope, experience the love and develop the faith, with the many people in our community who don't have any opportunity to experience it.

2. Be full of hope

Hope is ignited between people via relationships. Hope is contagious—a hopeful person can quickly fan the flame of hope in someone who feels hopeless. Studies show that hopefulness of health professionals directly impacts their patient’s hopefulness.¹⁰ We ignite hope in another when we can help them look forward and see a meaningful future. This allows a person to envision possibilities that they may not be able to see on their own. It requires encouragement, and willingness to journey alongside another through their valley experience.

The healing and hope-giving power of a friend is not to be underestimated. We have witnessed it in ‘Share’, a social group commenced in the Adelaide Hills by faith community nurse and registered mental health nurse, Millie Davey. In 2011 Millie started working with churches in the Adelaide hills in South Australia to develop a friendship program that partnered with local churches and the community mental health service. People were recruited and invited to join ‘Share’, where they were buddied with a friend, and connected into a social group that

shared life together regularly. These were everyday people having fun, laughing, sharing a meal and generally doing life together as an informal community.

People with severe mental illness learnt how to ‘have a friend’ and ‘be a friend’ and later how to give back to others in their community. Almost all the participants have improved their mental health dramatically and very few have experienced relapses. Their hope for a better future was ignited in friendships. Just being with genuine people, who smile, have fun, listen to each other, accept each other, give one another time, allow everyone to participate when they can and if they want to, show concern for what is happening in their life, speak positively, encourage abundantly, share hopeful visions of what is possible... This is the healing power of community and demonstrates the healing love of God’s Kingdom on earth.

As FCNs and followers of Jesus, we need to be hope in motion, in our gestures, our actions, our suggestions, our chit chats which should all signal that we are ‘purveyors of hope’.

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Anne van Loon RN PhD & Vicky Legge RN Grad Dip CCM
AFCNA Board members

Lindy speaks about hope



My life journey has taught me about the healing power of HOPE. Without hope in Jesus there isn't much we can do, but with hope in Jesus there isn't much we can't do!

A few years ago, God placed on my heart the need to create a resource called the Hope Pack and many people have used it to get back on their feet after life circumstances have held them back, suppressing their joy in life and stealing their hope. They are unable to experience the abundant life that Jesus promises to all who believe in him (John 10:10). Events that lead to mental and spiritual distress such as the experience of trauma, relationship breakdown, mental illness, incarceration are examples of circumstances that can steal our hope in life and a future.

Hope is something everyone desperately needs. It works like a rising tide that lifts all boats and frees them to move as they were created to move. The Bible tells us that hope is one of three things (faith, hope and love) that remain when everything else in life fails. Our motivating AFCNA motto is 'Faith in action, Hope in expression, and Love in motion'. Christians can express hope in the way we speak to people, the way we act and respond to their situation, and this ignites within them hope for a way forward.

Hope is only as strong as its source. The foundation of our hope as Christians are the promises of God in his word the Bible and fulfilled through Jesus Christ's death and resurrection. We may be full of flaws and failures, but we can overcome impossible situations when we place our hope in Jesus and God's promises. Our faith is placed in our all loving, all knowing, promise-keeping God, who loves us and wants an abundant life for us.

So look up! Get your hopes up! Don't let fear stop you from thinking nothing is going to change, because God's word tells you all things are possible. God wants you to have the best life possible. He wants the very best for you spiritually, mentally, emotionally, relationally and physically—every moment of every day. When you understand that God wants the best for you, it will fill you with hope. As you dare to get your hopes up, you will see things start to change—your faith increases, your joy returns, and your peace is real.

God gives you wisdom to make the right choices when you ask Him and believe in Him, and that wisdom brings hope that can transform your life. It is the catalyst that sparks new ideas, new ways and a new future. In Proverbs 24:14 we read 'Know also that wisdom is like honey for you: If you find it, there is a future hope for you, and your hope will not be cut off'.

Hope is the anchor that steadies our soul. Just as an anchor secures a boat in the storms, hope is the firm and secure anchor for our soul when our hope is placed in Jesus Christ (Hebrews 6:19). Hope is the confidence that dares you to build a new and better life (Proverbs 23:18) because God has a future for you and he will not cut you adrift! Hope is the comfort of knowing you are not alone in this life—God is for you and if He is for you, nothing can work against you that will last (Romans 5:5). The power of hope in Jesus Christ is amazing!

Lindy Gower, BEd—outrageous hope giver
AFCNA Board member

Hope Pack



The Hope Pack is an excellent resource for FCNs and church pastoral care teams. Developed by Lindy Gower and published by Baptist Care SA, it provides 21 letters to encourage a person living with a mental health condition to develop life-enhancing habits that structure their day. It uses positive self-talk, good nutrition, hydration, increased movement, regular fresh air and sunshine, and developing positive thought patterns. The pack uses Bible verses to help a person shift their thinking and their self-talk. It should be used with a buddy/friend who provides the person with the encouragement and support they need to repeat and reinforce the new behaviours until they become life-giving habits.

Hope Packs are available from Baptist Care for \$44Au. The packs can be used repeatedly for different people because the CD contains all of the PDF files an FCN needs. You may need to re order and add the incentives for some envelopes. The video instructions on how to use the Hope Pack and how to package the contents are all on the DVD/CD. You can order the pack by emailing avanloon@baptistcaresa.org.au or Lindy Gower lindygower@bigpond.com.au

AON workers share the hope

We want to thank workers with AON Insurance who volunteered their time to package Hope Packs. What a great community service they have provided to enable HOPE to move forward in our community.

Thankyou AON for sharing the hope!



Testimonial from Susie

"I've lived addicted to medication because of chronic pain for 10 years. Before Christmas I changed doctors and he helped me decrease the dosages. A month ago, I overdosed on sleeping tablets; I now regret this action but I had reached an all-time low. My friend works with Lindy and she got me a pack. Every day I can't wait to open a letter! I've got a new friend! I'm feeling stronger and the anticipation gets me going. I now know stuff that's happened to me is not my fault. It has really renewed me and my sense of HOPE, but Lindy reminds me once the pack is done it's just the beginning of speaking to myself differently."

The WHOLE you

When one part of our being is sick, the whole person experiences the illness. As FCNs we minister/practice with our whole person to affect the health of another whole person. I am no theologian but this is my simple attempt to explain wholeness to people so we respond in ways that are genuinely holistic when we care for others.

We experience life and move around the world with our body. We use its five senses, the brain and all of the body systems to process the world.

Our mind enables us to be conscious of others as well as ourselves. It enables us to process our world and the people in it. We can think, reason, predict, analyse and synthesise information our minds receive to enable us to function and achieve various purposes within life.

Within our mind lie our personality and character traits and our conscious capacity to think and reason intelligently. We react to our experiences of the world with our feelings and emotions. These are influenced by our thoughts, beliefs, values, attitudes and memories. We consciously process life experiences to develop knowledge from which we can make conscious choices that affect our best responses to given situations.

Deep within every person lies the human spirit and it enables God-consciousness. The spirit animates us as human beings and enables us to experience meaning, purpose, love, hope, faith and an awareness of the spiritual dimension. We process the world in the spiritual dimension via discernment and intuition.

The Bible speaks about the 'heart' and each person's 'heart' traverses both mind and spirit. The 'heart' is the seat of a person's free will. It can choose to quench the human spirit or enliven it. With our 'heart' we can choose to connect with the Holy Spirit of God, or disconnect and deny God. When a person chooses to let their heart connect with God that person receives the Holy Spirit of God, which empowers them and enables them to make life choices using their God given conscience and knowledge to discern good from evil. This enables them to choose actions that represent love for self, love for others, love for the creation, and love for God.

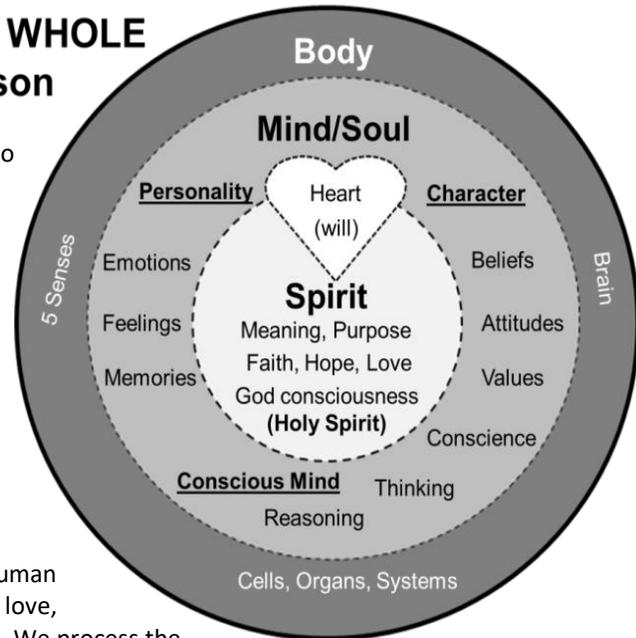
Christians believe the spirit has the capacity to transcend the body at death and for believers in Jesus Christ, our spirit returns to be with God. At that time the person's spirit will receive a new body and will be made whole again in and through Jesus Christ. Understanding this has enabled me to view and enact my nursing practice in a very different way.

References

This diagram has been adapted from an original diagram by Fletcher (2015) available at http://www.faithandhealthconnection.org/the_connection/spirit-soul-and-body/ and is used with permission.

Anne van Loon RN PhD (2015 'Introduction to Health and Care Ministry', used with permission)

The WHOLE person



Anne van Loon RN PhD

Membership

It's never too late to renew or to join. While still only \$30, your membership allows AFCNA to keep you networked with newsletters, conferences, new resources, access to discounts and the online education portal, and as our website upgrade continues to have access to members only content <http://www.afcna.org.au>. Your fees enable us to provide scholarships to support FCNs and keep an ecumenical Christian presence in the profession of nursing via CoNNMO membership.

Please renew your membership and invite others to join us as we seek to develop pastoral health and care ministry via faith community nurses. Your membership is vital.

You can sign up and pay via the net at <http://afcna.org.au/members-options/> or complete and send us the form below, paying with a cheque or via internet transfer.

Australian Faith Community Nurses Association MEMBERSHIP 2018		
Name	Address	
.....	Postcode Phone (.....).....	
Mobile.....	Email	
1. I am happy to be included in AFCNA networking via the AFCNA data base	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> (privacy assured)	
2. Practising FCN/Health Ministry	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>	
3. Current AHPRA Registration	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>	
4. I consent to my details being shared with AFCNA members' prayer network.	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>	
5. Newsletter: email or Australia Post (please circle preference)		
Signed: _____		
Full membership (\$30.00/year) <input type="checkbox"/>	Concession (\$20.00/year) <input type="checkbox"/>	Donation: AFCNA General Fund <input type="checkbox"/>
Electronic transfer: Australian Faith Community Nurses Association Incorporated BSB: 704-874; Account No. 100009636 Please insert your name as the reference code		
Make cheques payable to: Australian Faith Community Nurses Association		
Mail to: Treasurer, Australian Faith Community Nurses Association, PO Box 2707, Kent Town, SA 5071		

What you think influences who you become



I recently read the book *Train your Brain* by Margaret Court (2016) and the blurb on the dustjacket reads:

'The way you think shapes your present and creates your future. It makes your destiny. In *Train Your Brain*, tennis legend Margaret Court outlines principles from the Bible that she has personally proven in her own life. Learn how to triumph over patterns of fear, rejection, guilt, negativity, failure, depression, addiction, indecisiveness, timidity and much more. The mind is a battleground, but everyone can conquer self-defeating thoughts and start to flourish. It is possible to change your life by changing your thinking!'

This book is simple and easy to read, aiming to help any person win the battle for their mind and live the victorious life that Jesus Christ died to give each one of us. Here's how I see it working.

You can change your life by training your brain using the word of God. Then, with the power of the Holy Spirit living within you, God's truth is implanted in your mind and soaks into your heart, and it is out of your heart that you make your life choices.

For example, think about an international airport. The air traffic control is critical to the safe and smooth function of the aircraft as it synchronises the take-off and landing of thousands of flights every day without incident. Your mind is like a centre for air traffic control, but you are the controller. You control what comes into your life and what goes out. Whatever you allow into your mind will impact your heart and this in turn shapes your life.

Your mind is the gateway to your heart and what is in your heart determines the kind of person you will become. The things you take into your mind and your heart influence your beliefs, your speech, your self-talk, your actions, your heart and your life. They are like signals that create a picture of your life which you and others can see. Therefore Christians are instructed to be careful about what they watch, read, give attention to, meditate on, because these signals shape your heart and your character, and they create the picture you and others can see that represent your life. If the things you input are the truths that God tells you to think upon in scripture, then your picture will be life-giving. If the input signals are what the world says you should focus on they are likely to promote fear, resentment, anxiety, selfishness and other life-sapping traits which will be the picture you and others see that represent your life.

The Bible tells us that God looks at our hearts not at our outward appearance. If we imagine our heart is like a tree, then our observable behaviour is the fruit of the tree. The quality of our tree determines the quality of our fruit. Scripture tells us to guard our hearts, 'Above all else guard your heart for it is the wellspring of life' (Proverbs 4:23). Growing our character requires us to keep some things in our hearts and to keep other things out of our hearts. An unguarded heart is open to attack! It is for this reason that the Bible says, 'As a person thinks so they are...' (Proverbs 23:7). The fact is that what we think and how we speak and the way we embrace these thoughts over time will impact our emotions, actions/responses and consequently our health. Words mobilise our mind and produce thoughts that shape our heart and our character. We renew our mind by speaking into our hearts the living word of God because this defeats the enemy who is the father of lies, sowing seeds of mistrust, self-doubt and fear.

Satan cannot touch our identity in Christ because nothing can separate us from God's love, but he can stop us living each day in that identity so we become blind to our inheritance in Christ and unable to walk in victory. God wants his children to have an 'abundant life' (John 10:10). If our hearts are unguarded, Satan will capitalize on our propensity for doubt and destructive self-talk which keeps us worried, stressed and isolated and effectively shackles our heart in a negative cycle of self-destructive beliefs that say to us 'You are useless, hopeless, helpless, worthless and you will never amount to anything!' These thoughts are lies and they can become strongholds of negative wrong thinking that undermines God's life-giving truth that in Christ we are worthy, hopeful, able, creative and loved.

The Good News is that Jesus has won the victory over Satan and we don't have to live in that state anymore. You may have been hurt in your past, crippled by fear, struggling with addiction, self-loathing etc. Whatever it is you don't have to stay there. God can uproot the old and plant the new you. God's desire is for us to be free from things that hold us captive. The place to start is putting into our minds and our hearts the word of God. Read it and think about it and live it. In Jeremiah 23:29 we read, 'Are not my words like a hammer that breaks the rock in pieces?' As we put God's word in our hearts it breaks away the things that are holding us back from going forward with God into an abundant life. We have no labels, no restrictions and we have freedom in Christ.

So guard your heart and your mind and think upon God's word so you can live a VICTORIOUS and ABUNDANT life.

Lindy Gower, BEd,
AFCNA Board member

Please submit your photos and stories for *WholeHealth* to afcna@outlook.com or send to annevanloon@internode.on.net.
Ph 08 8278 8274.

Deadline for next issue: 30 October 2018

Your snippets and stories are essential for the content of the newsletter to be both informative and share the joys and opportunities of the FCN role.

Disclaimer: In no event will AFCNA be liable to anyone for any decision made or action taken by anyone in reliance on information in this newsletter.

OUR AIMS

- Provide education, resources and networking for nurses working in faith communities
- Provide resources, education and consultancy to faith communities to enable viable health & care ministry
- Liaise with government and other organisations to further the FCN ministry
- Enable FCNs to meet their professional practice requirements

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