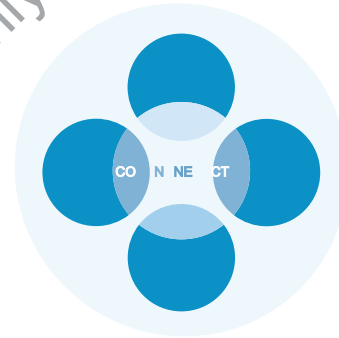


THE CONNECTION PARADIGM

BUILDING CONNECTION COMPETENCE
IN OURSELVES & OTHERS



LORA PEPPARD, PHD, DNP, PMHNP -BC
APNA IMMEDIATE PAST PRESIDENT



Learning Outcome:

Identify multiple ways we as nurses can foster
connection with others, self, and spirit.

I have nothing to disclose.

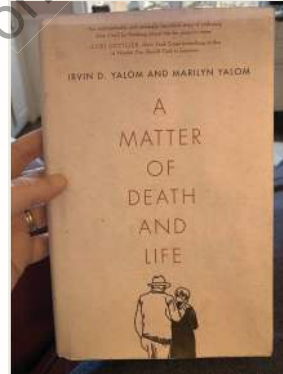


Objectives

1. Why is connection important?
2. How was the paradigm developed?
3. What is the Connection Paradigm?
4. What are the simple truths of connection?
5. How can I bring connection to life and become more connection competent?

Connection is personal.

When was the last time
you paid attention to your
ability to connect with
others, self, or spirit?



Why is connection important?

- Fundamental to physical health, mental health, & well-being
- Protective against serious illness and disease
- Promotes a longer, healthier life
- Professional identity & responsibility
 - Full potential
 - Standard
 - Ripple effect

Mattering

The belief that we're a significant part of the world around us that comes from *feeling valued* and *adding value*.

- Zach Mercurio

Cardiac Outcomes

- Social isolation and loneliness (perception of social isolation) linked to 29% increase in risk for heart attack and/or death from heart disease
- Loneliness is a mortality risk factor!
- Improves our ability to manage stress
- Improves healthy eating habits and physical activity
- Improves quality of sleep

Mattering

The belief that we're a significant part of the world around us that comes from *feeling valued* and *adding value*.

- Zach Mercurio

Professional Identity

Hildegard Peplau

- Theory of interpersonal relations
- Human connectedness is essential to health
- 1st goal : Establish the relationship and build trust.
- Compassionate, respectful, nonjudgmental

AACN Core Competencies

- Establish/foster caring relationships (2.1)
 - Demonstrate empathy, compassion, respect
- Caring relationship:
 - Essence of what it is to be human
- Profound effect on well-being, recovery, healing

PMH Scope & Standards

- Standards 5G & 7 Competencies
- Shall use the **therapeutic relationship** as the basis
- Develop, enhance, understand, and support it to promote well-being & growth
- Demonstrate a commitment to practicing self-care, managing stress, and connecting with self and others.

NURSE -PATIENT RELATIONSHIP

PERSON -CENTERED CARE

THERAPEUTIC RELATIONSHIP



Professional Identity

Hildegard Peplau

- Theory of interpersonal **relations**
- Human **connectedness** is essential to health
- 1st goal : Establish the **relationship** and build **trust** .
- **Compassionate** , **respectful** , **nonjudgmental**

AACN Core Competencies

- Establish/foster **caring relationships** (2.1)
 - Demonstrate **empathy** , **compassion** , **respect**
- Caring** relationship:
 - Essence of what it is to be human
- Profound effect on **well-being** , **recovery** , **healing**

PMH Scope & Standards

- Standards 5G & 7 Competencies
- Shall use the **therapeutic relationship** as the basis
- Develop, enhance, understand, and support it to promote **well-being** & growth
- Demonstrate a commitment to practicing self-care, managing stress, and **connecting with self and others** .

NURSE -PATIENT RELATIONSHIP

PERSON -CENTERED CARE

THERAPEUTIC RELATIONSHIP



Systematic Approach

- Survey to all APNA members
- Review of existing literature
- Formal review: APNA chapter meetings or invited presentations
- 2 formal reviews: APNA Chapter & Council leaders
- Formal review: APNA Board of Directors
- Final synthesis of content

Please rate your ability to connect with:

	1 - Very Weak	2 - Weak	3 - Average	4 - Strong	5 - Very Strong
Others	<input type="radio"/> 1	<input type="radio"/> 2	<input type="radio"/> 3	<input type="radio"/> 4	<input type="radio"/> 5
Your senses	<input type="radio"/> 1	<input type="radio"/> 2	<input type="radio"/> 3	<input type="radio"/> 4	<input type="radio"/> 5
Your spirituality	<input type="radio"/> 1	<input type="radio"/> 2	<input type="radio"/> 3	<input type="radio"/> 4	<input type="radio"/> 5
Yourself	<input type="radio"/> 1	<input type="radio"/> 2	<input type="radio"/> 3	<input type="radio"/> 4	<input type="radio"/> 5

Please respond to the following questions:

	1 - Not at all	2	3 - Neutral	4	5 - Very
How important is enhancing your ability to connect in these four dimensions at this particular time in your life?	<input type="radio"/> 1	<input type="radio"/> 2	<input type="radio"/> 3	<input type="radio"/> 4	<input type="radio"/> 5
How confident are you in your ability to connect?	<input type="radio"/> 1	<input type="radio"/> 2	<input type="radio"/> 3	<input type="radio"/> 4	<input type="radio"/> 5
How ready are you to enhance your ability to connect?	<input type="radio"/> 1	<input type="radio"/> 2	<input type="radio"/> 3	<input type="radio"/> 4	<input type="radio"/> 5

What does connection mean to you?

"Feeling, understanding, intertwining with another human being."

"Connection is... the invisible glue that holds a relationship together."

"Recognizing and accepting each other as fellow humans sharing this experience of life."

"...feeling seen, heard, and recognized..."

"...the spinal cord..."

"Not feeling alone in this field"

What qualities of connection are most important to you?



What would indicate to you that you had effectively connected with someone?

Feelings

"That indescribable good feeling."
"Great feeling from my heart to my brain."
"We share feelings and joys."
"The way I feel about them."
"It is an evolution of give and take that I don't realize in the moment, but when you know, you know."

Behaviors

"They open up and begin to share important things."
"Good energy, positivity, and truthfulness."
"Verbal and nonverbal messages, body is more relaxed, eye contact, positive affect."
"Engagement and reciprocity of response"
"They respond and get back to me."
"They return for another appointment."

Experiences

"We share a smile and relate to each other."
"We laugh together, a big hardy laugh."
"They share things about themselves."
"We leave the moment feeling seen, heard, and known. Maybe we even have difficulty parting from one another."

Information

"Their feedback to me."
"They tell me they feel relief, a feeling of calm, a feeling of release or that they can move forward in a positive way."

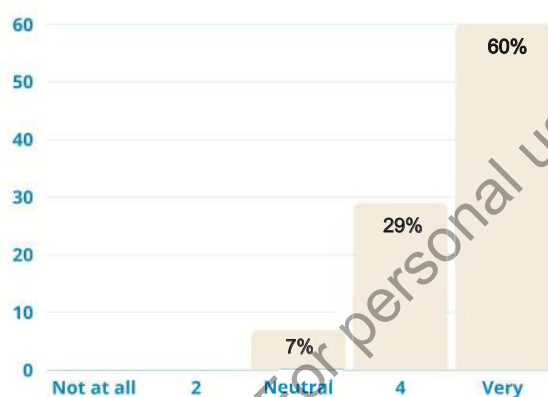


Rate your ability to connect

Across all domains, **over 25%** of psychiatric-mental health nurse respondents do NOT report a strong ability to connect.

% reporting their ability to connect in each area is Strong or Very Strong

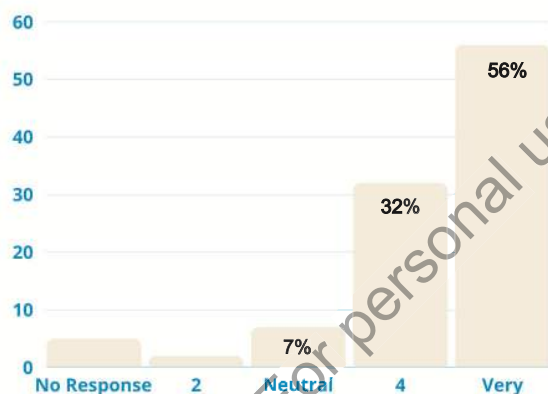
N=180



How important to you is enhancing your ability to connect?

89% of psychiatric -mental health nurse respondents report enhancing their ability to connect is important or very important to them.

N=180



How ready are you to enhance your ability to connect?

88% of psychiatric -mental health nurse respondents are ready or very ready to enhance their ability to connect.

N=180

What informed your ratings?



“Connection and learning to connect authentically is one of my annual goals for 2024...I am looking to grow in this area.”

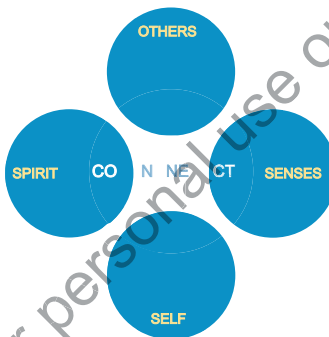
7 Core Components

- 1 Domains of Connection: Others, Self, Spirit, Senses
- 2 Practices to Cultivate
- 3 Relationships among the domains
- 4 Fruits of Connection (intermediary outcomes)
- 5 Long Term Outcomes
- 6 Well-being as the ultimate health outcome
- 7 Attributes of a Therapeutic Self

CONNECTION PARADIGM

A synthesized way of understanding and operationalizing connection through seven core components.

1 Domains of Connection





- Cope more effectively
- Make healthier choices
- Extend life expectancy
- Improve quality of sleep

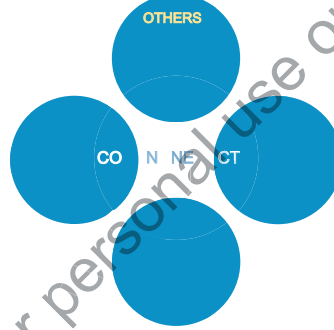
- Improve happiness, health, well-being
- Sharpen memory
- Sense of belonging and feeling seen
- Improved trust



Top 5 Regrets of the Dying

1. I wish I had been more true to myself.
2. I wish I hadn't worked so hard.
3. I wish I'd had the courage to express my feelings.
4. I wish I had stayed in touch with friends.
5. I wish that I had let myself be happier.

(Ware, 2019)



Chopin Nocturne vs Mary Had a Little Lamb

Don't ever lose the ability to connect with others. Sharpen your connection competence at every opportunity life throws your way.

Human connection is essential for healing.

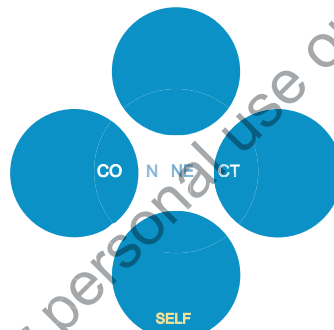
Brief Self-Connection Exercise

At any moment in time, pause and ask yourself:

"Am I feeling connected right now?"

1. Am I focused on this?
2. Is it meaningful to me?
3. Is it consistent with my goals and values?

(Klussman, 2019)



Practices for Building Self-Connection

1. Solitude
2. Reflection
3. Seeking feedback
4. Paying attention to thoughts, feelings, and actions
5. Mindfulness
6. Physical activity
7. Journaling

(Klussman et al., 2022a; Klussman et al. 2022b)



- Behaviors aligned with values
- Cope more effectively
- Lower risk of physical & mental health disorders

- Greater sense of control
- Greater self-awareness & acceptance
- Reduced anxiety and depression
- Improved relationships

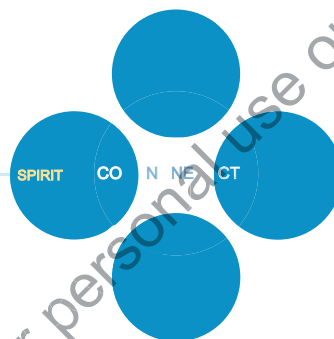


Spiritual connection promotes the ability to establish meaning in one's life.

- Meaning and purpose
- Positive sense of self
- Improve quality of life
- Improve mental health & well-being
- Hope, Peace, Comfort
- Forgiveness

Spiritual Care

- Assessment of spiritual well-being/distress
- Encourage examination of spiritual beliefs.
- Support in making decisions consistent with these beliefs.
- Encourage spiritual reflections that assist in discovery of meaning and reconnect with inner resources.



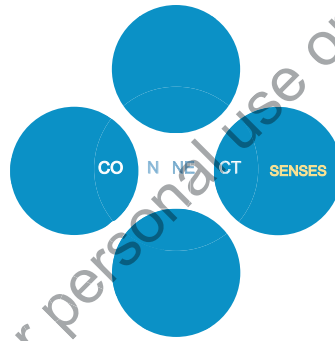
*When **peace**, like a river,
attendeth my way,
When sorrows like sea
billows roll;
Whatever my lot, thou hast
taught me to say,
It is **well**, it is **well** with my
soul.*

- Horatio G. Spafford

"Spirituality is the essence of who we are."
- Barbara Warren, PhD, RN, PMHCN-BC, FNAP, FAAN

Senses facilitate connection.

Senses can be engaged as tools to promote healing and well-being in self and others.

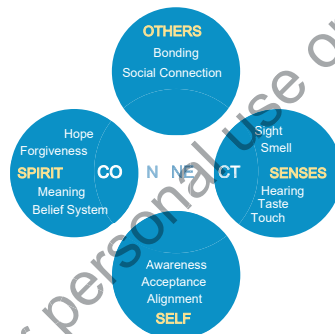


- Reduced anxiety and depression
- Feel calm
- Increased concentration
- Improved communication
- Reduced pain
- Cognitive growth
- Language development
- More fully present

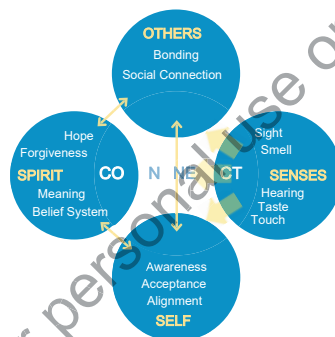


How are you being received?

2 Practices to Cultivate



3 Relationships among the Domains



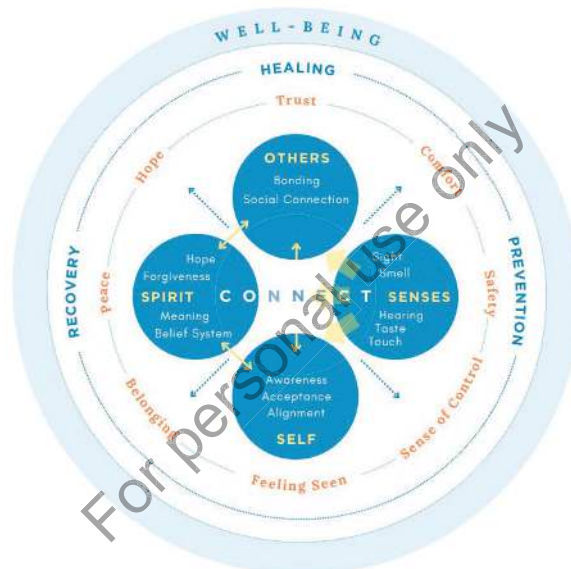
4 Fruits of Connection



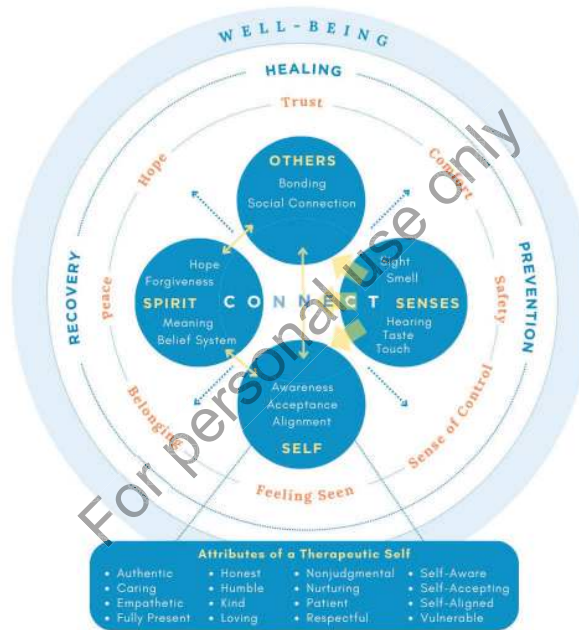
5 Long Term Outcomes



6 Well-being



7 Attributes of a Therapeutic Self



Attributes of a Therapeutic Self

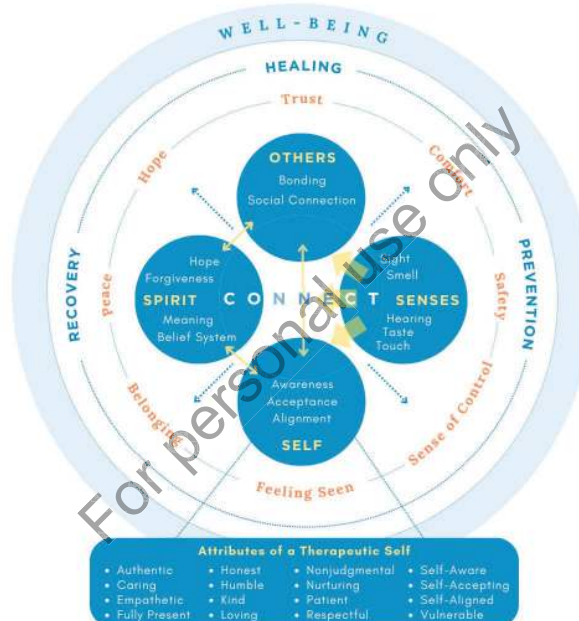
- Are these a priority in your life?
- Have you spent time with each one individually?
- Which come easily to you?
- Which can you improve?

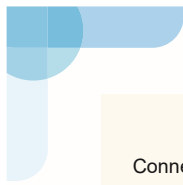
Could you teach someone how to improve their ability in each of these attributes?

- Authentic
- Caring
- Empathetic
- Fully Present
- Honest
- Humble
- Kind
- Loving
- Nonjudgmental
- Nurturing
- Patient
- Respectful
- Self-Aware
- Self-Accepting
- Self-Aligned
- Vulnerable

Therapeutic: To have a good effect on the body or mind; contribute to a sense of wellbeing

THE CONNECTION PARADIGM





Competence

Connection is a basic human need and a skill we must nurture and maintain.

Evidence

True connection bears fruit.

Humility

Pruning of self is essential for connection.

SIMPLE, QUIET TRUTHS



Humility

- 3 parts: accurate self-perception, modest self-portrayal, other-oriented relational stance
- A type of growth mindset, seeks feedback
- Teachable
- Opposite of pride, a common obstacle

(Maldonado, Vera, & Spangler, 2022; Schaffner, 2020; Worthington, Davis, & Hook 2017)



Forgiveness

- 2 types: Decisional and Emotional
- REACH
 - Recall the wrongdoing in an objective way
 - Empathize by trying to understand
 - Altruism: Offer forgiveness as a gift
 - Commit to forgive
 - Hold on to forgiveness during doubts
- Self-Forgiveness

(Worthington & Wade, 2020; Worthington, 2014)



Hope & Peace

Hope: Belief or expectation that the future can be better and that we have the capacity to pursue that future

- Positive expectancy
- Sustenance
- 3 components: goals, pathways, agency

Peace: A state of tranquility or quiet; freedom from oppressive thoughts or emotions

- A way to embrace the "richness of life" while struggling
- Creates space for healing
- Affective dimension vs Cognitive (meaning)

(Bassett et al., 2008; Snyder, 1994; Underwood, 2013; Murphy et al., 2010; Ernstmeier & Christman, 2021)



Suffering

Connection, even in the midst of suffering, can still promote well-being.

"The calm that I experience day to day irrespective of the fires burning around me is markedly different from the anxieties experienced in previous challenging or stress-inducing situations when I felt lonely and unseen and was not intentional about fostering connection in every experience throughout my day."

- Psychiatric-mental health nurse

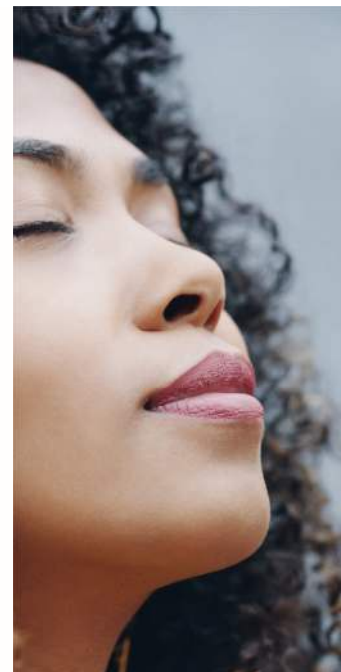
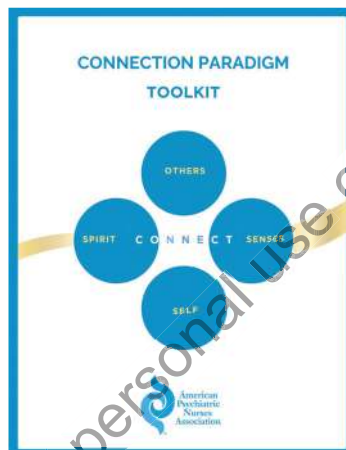


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1. Introduction
2. Orientation to the Connection Paradigm
3. Attributes of a Therapeutic Self
4. Practices that can be Cultivated
5. Fruits of Connection
6. References



HOW TO USE IT

1. Review the whole toolkit.
2. Spend time with each of its individual components.
3. Engage pieces of the toolkit when feeling disconnected or as they seem important to you.
4. Support skill development in students or others.



[illegible][illegible]

Question & Discussion	Answer	Guided Reading Questions	Homework
<p>Question: What is the difference between a strong and a weak acid?</p> <p>Discussion: Strong acids are those that dissociate completely in water, while weak acids only partially dissociate.</p>	<p>Answer: Strong acids are those that dissociate completely in water, while weak acids only partially dissociate.</p>	<p>1. What is the difference between a strong and a weak acid?</p> <p>2. What is the difference between a strong and a weak base?</p> <p>3. What is the difference between a strong and a weak electrolyte?</p>	<p>1. What is the difference between a strong and a weak acid?</p> <p>2. What is the difference between a strong and a weak base?</p> <p>3. What is the difference between a strong and a weak electrolyte?</p>
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<p>Question: What is the difference between a strong and a weak electrolyte?</p> <p>Discussion: Strong electrolytes are those that dissociate completely in water, while weak electrolytes only partially dissociate.</p>	<p>Answer: Strong electrolytes are those that dissociate completely in water, while weak electrolytes only partially dissociate.</p>	<p>6. What is the difference between a strong and a weak electrolyte?</p> <p>7. What is the difference between a strong and a weak acid?</p> <p>8. What is the difference between a strong and a weak base?</p>	<p>6. What is the difference between a strong and a weak electrolyte?</p> <p>7. What is the difference between a strong and a weak acid?</p> <p>8. What is the difference between a strong and a weak base?</p>

The diagram illustrates the components of a positive relationship, centered around a dark blue diamond labeled "RELATIONSHIP". Surrounding this central diamond are four blue circles: "BELIEFS" (top), "VALUES" (right), "SKILLS" (left), and "TRUST" (bottom). These four circles are interconnected by arrows in a clockwise cycle. Below the "TRUST" circle is a green triangle labeled "FACILITATORS OF CONNECTION". The entire inner structure is enclosed within a yellow ring that contains the following labels: "Meaning", "Purpose", "Resilience", "Hope", "Competence", "Belonging", "Connectedness", "Agency", "Self-Efficacy", "Self-Worth", and "Spirituality". The outermost ring is blue and labeled "PROTECTION" on the left and "PREVENTION" on the right. The top of the circle is labeled "YOUTH WELL-BEING" and "FLOURISHING".

4. I can overcome hard things.
5. I have support.
6. Life is on my side.

What stirs within you?

Self

Others



I Am Well Today

May I pay attention to the stirring deep within,
Silence all distractions, all the noise, and begin,
To connect with intention, to see and be seen,
Engage in ways that matter, practice humility.

For the fruits of a connected self are gateways to much more,
Trust, peace, hope, belonging – how they help us soar,
To the heights of well-being, bringing healing, and recovery,
Comfort, safety, a sense of control - preventing further injury.

Connection is fundamental to a life well lived,
Yet rarely noticed as the free and glorious gift it is,
Quite possibly the most important thing I can do each day,
Do I seek it? Do I offer it? Do I cultivate it in every way?

For when my time has come to lay my head for its final rest,
Will I close my eyes knowing I have done my best,
To connect with others, self, and spirit in purposeful, meaningful ways,
Loved and forgiven, listened closely, fully engaged?

Will I know I lived my days by my values and highest priorities,
Denied my pride and steadied my soul through spirituality,
Pruned the qualities that led me astray, and nurtured those that paved the way,
For myself and others to confidently say "I am seen. I am loved. I am well today."

- Lora E. Peppard

Thank you!

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APNA Immediate Past President