Please take responsibility for the energy that you bring into this space.

Honor the space between no longer and not yet.

-Nancy Levin
What then does it mean to share?

• Who is sharing?
• What are we sharing?
• Where are we sharing?
Spirituality is complex and lacks clear conceptual and operational definition, yet given its widely documented importance and mandated assessment, it cannot be ignored. Spirituality may be considered a synthesis as well as a unique expression of biological, psychological and sociocultural factors given that it is expressed through beliefs, values, traditions, and practices (Puchalski et al., 2014). Thus, spirituality is both a highly personal and essential aspect of a therapeutic experience.

Nurses often feel compelled by their relationship to patients, particularly in the absence of readily available clergy, to provide spiritual care. Spiritual nursing care might be defined as “an intuitive, interpersonal, altruistic and integrative expression that is contingent on the nurse’s awareness of the transcendent dimension of life, but that reflects the patient’s reality” (Sawatzky & Pesut, 2005). Thus, interconnectedness can be created by nurses who carefully attune themselves to patient’s needs through intentional caring consciousness. Provision of spiritual care is thus relational, requiring synergy of the patient, the environment, and the nurse in a healing space.
Space

- What is space?
- Where is it?
- Who is in it?
Secular Space

- The most obvious space of daily life is secular space.
  - infection control
  - reimbursement
  - technology
  - medications

- Secular space is by its very design, isolating physically, emotionally and spiritually for patients, families and providers. The balance between technology and holism, direction and intuition, isolation and vigilance, communication and silence, efficiency and time for pause make health care spaces challenging environments.

- Despite the challenges, nurses are expected to attend to the holistic needs of patients and their families and to co-create a space apart.
Consecrated spaces, those spaces officially made holy by a religious ceremony, long included in hospital design.

Support for biomedical model grew in favor with medical professionals, perceived value of chaplaincy services and consecrated spaces decreased as did funding for such space and provision of such services.

The traditional hospital chapel does not meet the broad needs of a religiously and spirituality diverse patient population. A universally acceptable consecrated space is nearly impossible and risks the neutralizing or fragmentation of important religious symbols.

Nurses are called to adopt an inclusive view of patient’s religious or spiritual perspectives and provide them with a patient-centered experience that does not require relocation to a consecrated space.
Spiritual Space

- A sacred space is neither consecrated nor mundane, but any space created intentionally through awareness and designated for something special.

- A holistic way of perceiving space allows for the thought that a place, even a patient’s own hospital room, may be the intersection of material and immaterial, blurring the lines between secular and consecrated. The holistic perspective of space allows for an understanding that spiritual space can exist where those without religious credentials are called upon to be fully present. A spiritual space can exist where concepts such as mystery, prayer and presence are not questioned with regard to their medical usefulness. Such reconceptualization of space and of the sacred based upon a modern understanding of spirituality facilitates the discussion of how a nurse mediated shared space may become sacred or spiritual.

- Nurse-mediated creation of a spiritual space allows for focus on the relationship between the nurse, the patient and the environment. When such a space is created, the nurse becomes the healing environment for the patient. While the patient is the unique individual at the center of the nurse’s focus, the experience becomes communal, shared, universal. Nurse caring becomes unconditional and transcendent; nursing becomes presence. Thus, the creation of a spiritual space does not require that the patient hurriedly be moved to a sanctuary garden or a Golden Room. Nurses can co-create a sacred space with patients and their families.
Sharing Spiritual Space

• What does this look like?
• What does this sound like?
• What does this feel like?
• What does this smell like?
Sharing Spiritual Space

• How should we share?
• With whom should we share?
• Why should we share?
  • What are the outcomes?
    • For us
    • For others
    • For the world
Map