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HEARTS IN HEALTHCARE

**A (draft) Healers'
Creed**

1 February 2019



Who or what is a healer? Our correspondence shows there is a wide range of beliefs. From our own insight and learnings, and the views expressed by our followers, here's our best take on a collective expression of what it means to be a healer. We have presented it as a (draft) because we really want your comments and feedback.

Is this a role you can identify with?

Are you willing to call yourself a healer? (yes, that maybe takes some courage)

A creed is a set of beliefs and practices that unites us in common purpose. In thinking about being a healer, we came up with seven headings: identity and purpose, our beliefs, how we show up in the world, our practice, self-care, supporting each other, and our collective power. What do you think?

Identity and purpose

- We entered our professions to be compassionate healers, not detached clinicians
- We come in service to the lives of patients/clients
- We have a deep motivated to relieve suffering
- We treat the person, not the disease
- We celebrate our humanity and vulnerability
- We focus more on quality of being, than doing
- Our work is sacred, it has deep meaning, purpose and connection

Our beliefs

- Every person deeply deserves compassionate, whole-person care
- Every person has extraordinary capacity for self-healing, when loved, supported and nourished
- When we serve people, instead of always fixing and helping, then they grow in their capacity to manage their own problems

- I am a healer yet I do not heal others; healing arises within the patient/client, it is not done by the healer
- Healing arises in compassionate relationships, our job is to hold the space of healing with those we serve
- Healing is not equated with cure, it means to transcend suffering
- Much of chronic illness, unhealthy choices and addictions arise from emotional and mental suffering; when that suffering is healed, the illness disappears
- We see our patients/clients as an abundant source of healing, not a burden of demand
- A healing connection saves time, makes our work easier
- Compassionate caring gives us joy and satisfaction in our work
- Compassionate caring has a hugely positive impact on clinical outcomes
- We use our technical skills and knowledge more effectively when brought in healing service to the patient/client
- Our first duty is self-healing

How we show up

- We take responsibility for our attitude
- We are mindful, aware of our own emotions, feelings and body language
- We smile a lot and express joy in our work
- We approach every patient/client with loving kindness
- We do our best to practice non-judgment and to treat all equally
- We express appreciation and gratitude often
- We are unhurried
- We offer a timely touch or a hug but ask our patient/client first
- We are not afraid to express our humanity through shared feelings or a tear in the eye when that is what compassion calls for
- We are not afraid to be sad and to grieve with others, always mindful of serving the patient/client not just our own needs

Our practice

- We always make the human connection first before offering our care
- We give 100% of our attention to every patient/client
- We start every consultation by finding out how our patient/client is feeling
- We explore and validate anxiety/fears before jumping to reassurance
- We find out what is most important for our patient/client and serve those needs, informed by our technical knowledge and skill
- When we care for the whole person, instead of fighting the disease, we support the natural healing process
- We express our caring intention
- We express our belief in the patient/client
- We acknowledge the patient/client as an expert in themselves

- We partner with our patient/client to make an agreed plan
- We give the time that people need, no matter how busy we are
- We practice to the best of our knowledge, skill and care but let go of attachment to outcomes
- We are always honest with patients/clients, including being uncertain
- We always have hope for the relief of suffering, if not for cure

Self-care

- Our first duty as healers is self-care and self-compassion
- We cannot know the potential for healing in others until we have healed ourselves
- We lead balanced lives and take care of our physical, emotional and spiritual needs
- We spend time in nature
- We continuously invest in self-development and learning
- We work with integrity, aligning our identity, our purpose, how we work and who we are
- We acknowledge suffering, sadness, grief and loss as part of the human condition and take time to attend to those as part of our healing

Supporting each other

- We look after our young, supporting our students and new practitioners to maintain their humanity and compassion
- We look after our peers and celebrate together
- We support each others learning
- We stand up to bullies and give them compassion also
- We work to create healthy, healing workplaces
- We look after our boss, showing kindness and compassion

Our collective power

- We become the change we want to see
- We stand courageously in our identity as healers
- When we stand together, we are unstoppable
- A new science of healing is the critical foundation for this change – a rigorous, peer-reviewed science that can stand alongside the science of disease.

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4 Responses to “A (draft) Healers’ Creed”

Joyce Morrissette says:

[February 5, 2019 at 5:52 am](#)

Thanks Robin. I like creeds and appreciate you bringing form to ideas that many of us share. Here are a few things that come to mind. Ideally, healers are connected with their own inner resources—intuition is an example. Equal status—in a true healing paradigm, everyone is of equal value. Maybe it's time to change “doctors orders” to “doctors prescriptions”. Trauma informed—and I don't just mean physical trauma. Conscious—that healers and healing systems are increasingly aware of the power of their choices as well as the shadow—we can't change what we don't see. Excellence and human betterment. I don't like the word “always” because always isn't always called for— a smile is an example. Ideally, healers are aligned and authentic. Boundaries—very needed to avoid burnout and being burned. Interconnection/responsibility—there's a relationship between my well-being and the well-being of the planet. “A culture can be toxic or nourishing. If we wish to take full responsibility for health in our society, we must not only be vigilant guardians of our personal well-being, we must also work to change structures, institutions, and ideologies that keep us mired in a toxic culture.” Thom Hartman. Thanks for your good work Robin and your openness and receptivity—

Robin Daly says:

[February 4, 2019 at 10:55 pm](#)

Wow – comprehensive! We desperately need thinker/activists like yourself to pull together the multiple strands of this deeply messed up arena. The next challenge will be to hone all this down into focused messages that have the power to accurately hit targets and promote change.

Very many thanks for your passionate pursuit of the goal of compassionate care! Keep me posted.

Catherine Cerulli says:

[February 3, 2019 at 1:05 pm](#)

Wow. A very comprehensive creed. Bravo for articulating all of this in this way. It's like a mini-version of your book.

I've been reading all of the recent posts about claiming the identity of healer. It is a challenging one for me as i, like many, feel that the word as been co-opted by those who were put themselves above those that serve. Consequently when i hear someone call themselves a healer, it often is in the context that I have “x” that will fix you.

How do we overcome that common interpretation?

I love that you state emphatically #4 in beliefs: “I am a healer but do not heal others.” When we speak to those we serve, what is their perception of our identity? Are they looking for Healer as Expert? Healer as Partner?

Are we getting hung up on our identity rather than the interactive process? Healing is a process....and we are privileged to be part of the process.

Do we need a “hash-tagable ” identity or might we create a terminology that is more inclusive and descriptive of the interaction itself?

My sense is that it does need to be honed a bit further as some elements may seem redundant and could be tightened.

Just food for thought.....overall, i just want to thank you all again for crafting this vision for the revolution in health care that is so vital for the healing of ourselves, others and the planet. I am so grateful!

(One small typo in third line of identity and purpose: I imagine you meant to either deeply motivated or deep motivation, rather than deep motivated.)

Kathleen A Clark says:

[February 3, 2019 at 3:07 am](#)

Thanks, Robin. Very thoughtful and creative! As you know, I am a lawyer, not a healthcare practitioner, but I support your healing philosophy. As a lawyer, I've long had a healing philosophy, much of it drawn from use of language.

“When all members of an organization are motivated to understand and value the most favourable features of its culture, it can make rapid improvements.”

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