Complementary & Alternative Healing Practices

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Goals for Today

- Basic information about Complementary and Alternative Medicine (CAM)
- Cultural influence on CAM
- Impact on healthcare practice

You may find incorporating alternative therapies valuable because it changes your perspective from the conventional, fragmented physical medical care emphasis to one of a more integrated, holistic & spiritual dimension.
Definition of Terms

- Complementary- used in conjunction with conventional therapy
  - Guided imagery as an adjunct to drug therapy for pain control
- Alternative- used instead of conventional or mainstream therapy
  - Acupuncture instead of analgesic to relieve pain

Commonalities of CAM Therapies

- Nature- the perfect state of being
- Vitalism- nature & life are self-determined
- Science- observational, qualitative
- Spirituality- belief systems & freedom

Vital Energy

- Internal energy force “Qi”-China, “prana” in India & “Ki” in Japan
  - Flows through the body on paths called meridians
  - Unimpeded flow is necessary for restoration & maintenance of health
  - Yin Yang- all nature has mutual opposites that control each other
Evolution of CAM
Began with the traditional healing practices of China & India

- China-
  - Herbal therapy supported by the government
  - Acupuncture used for over 3,000 years
  - Also uses meditation, massage, diet and exercise (Tai Chi)

Evolution of CAM (con't)

- India-
  - Ayurvedic medicine- Comes from the Vedas, the religious text of Hinduism over 5,000 years old
  - Natural living, herbal therapy, meditation & yoga
  - Balanced state of inner harmony, health & natural well-being

Evolution of CAM (con't)

- 19th Century- allopathic or western doctors
  - Hippocrates used the word Holos
  - Referred to the treatment of the whole person
  - Developed theory of relationship between disease & physical environment
  - GERM theory- changed focus to problem
Evolution of CAM (con’t)

1940’s Dunbar- holistic philosophy of psychosomatic medicine
– Linked mind, emotions & typical traits to disease

Evolution of CAM (con’t)
Phillis, 1976 Identified Principles of Holism
• The whole is more than the sum of its parts
• The whole determines the nature of its parts
• The parts can’t be understood in isolation from the whole
• The parts are dynamically interrelated or interdependent

Holism means accepting the person as a whole, while acknowledging the connectiveness and interaction of mind, body, and spirit.
Evolution of CAM (con't)

- 1977- World Health Organization declared international health goals
  - Equitable distribution of primary care for promotion, prevention, curative, & rehabilitative services
- 1979- Surgeon General released Healthy People
  - Focus on health promotion & prevention

National Center for Complementary & Alternative Medicine (NCCAM)

- Established by congress in 1992
- Website- Http://nccam.nih.gov
- 10 Specialty research centers
- 4 Centers for Dietary Supplement Research: Botanicals

NCCAM
Five Primary Domains

- Mind-Body interventions
  - Interconnectiveness such as psychotherapy, meditation, hypnosis, guided imagery & prayer
- Bioelectromagnetic therapies
  - Produces changes in body tissues
  - Electrical nerve & cranial stimulation for anxiety & pain
  - Pulsed electromagnetic fields for union of bone fractures
NCCAM
Five Primary Domains

- Alternative medical systems
  - Ancient medical systems of Ayurvedic & Chinese Medicine, Naturopathy, Homeopathy, Osteopathy & Environmental medicine
- Biologically based therapies
  - Active chemical or natural substances that are invasive, such as Chelation therapy, dietary supplements, herbal preparations, special diets, orthomolecular & biological therapies.

NCCAM
Five Primary Domains

- Manipulative, body-based, & energy therapies
  - Chiropractic, massage, rolfing, reflexology, Feldenkrais method & therapeutic touch

Research Barriers

- Drug Companies provides most money spent on medical research in the U.S.
- Quantitative model of research most widely accepted
Culturally Diverse Community

Cultural Beliefs & Healing Practices (Tarmon, 2000)

Home remedies & the African-American Culture
- Colds- Turpentine & sugar
- Diaper Rash- Corn starch
- Diarrhea- Flour & water
- Asthma- Black Coffee
- Burns- Cobwebs
- Body Aches- Vinegar & Egg
- Bee Stings- Mud
- Urinary tract infection- Dandelion Tea
- High blood pressure- Raw garlic
- Toothache- Whole cloves

Cultural Competence (Purnell & Paulanka, 1998)

- Developed an awareness of one’s own existence, sensations, thoughts, & environment without undue influence on those of other backgrounds
- Demonstrated knowledge and understanding of the client’s culture
- Accepted and respect cultural differences
- Adapted care to be congruent with the client’s culture
Ethical Consideration
(Purnell & Paulanka, 1998)
- Incorporating beliefs into the plan of care demonstrates respect
- The outcome is that considering culture increases compliance, produces positive responses, and enhances the quality of the health care experience

Incorporating Alternative Therapies into your Practice

Key Points for Incorporating into Practice
- Understand the alternative approach
- Integrate alternative and conventional therapies together
- Educate yourself
Strategies for Incorporating CAM in Assessment

- Become aware of your personal beliefs
- Be sensitive to the uniqueness of each person
- Care should be relevant to lifestyle
- Be knowledgeable about culturally diverse groups and individuals
- Consider yourself as teacher and learner

Strategies for Incorporating CAM in Assessment (con’t)

- Work with clients at their level of functioning: focus on their strengths
- Be tolerant and non-judgmental
- Ask open-ended questions, respond to what patients tell you with positive comments, & invite open-ended discussion
- Encourage patients to reveal use of alternative therapies to primary providers

Strategies for Incorporating CAM in Assessment (con’t)

- Understand, research or ask for information about the specific cultural beliefs and healing practices used
- Discuss the avoidance of alternative therapies when risk is identified by fostering an educational environment
Eisenberg Survey
(1990 & 1998)
- 4:10 Americans used CAM
- 1:2 Americans between ages of 35-49
- Total visits to CAM practitioners up 47%
- Creating a $ 21.2 billion industry
- Less than 40% of CAM use was disclosed to healthcare professionals

Are Healthcare Professionals Questioning Use?

Holism & Nutrition
- Chinese medicine
  - Food maintains health, balance & well-being
- Other considerations
  - Preparation & combination
  - Thoughts & feelings associated
- Demonstrates interplay between humans & nature
  - Lifestyle changes-mind, body & spirit
  - Ridding body of toxic substances

Holism & Nutrition
- Ayurvedic medicine-India
  - Freedom from sickness depends on contacting our own awareness, bringing it into balance & extending it into balance to the body
- Deepak Chopra MD
  - No radio, reading or conversation over meal
  - Allow for reflection time
  - Bless & reenergize the food
  - Food takes on energy from earth
  - Drink warm beverages, small amounts
  (Perfect Health, 1991)
Holism & Nutrition

- Hippocrates- referred to food as medicine
- 1988-US Surgeon General acknowledged the connection between diet & health
- Nutritional value effected by
  - Processing
  - Chemical additives
  - Degeneration of environment

Food Treatments & Cures

- Fast
- Juice therapies
- Enzyme therapies
- Yeast-combating diets
- Macrobiotic diets
- Elimination diets
- Low-fat, high carbohydrate
- High-protein or low-protein
- Mediterranean diets
- Anticancer diets
- Cardiovascular diets
- Antiobesity diets

Resources
Alternative Therapy or Nursing Practice?

• What happened to massage, guided imagery & therapeutic touch
• Core nursing practice is caring
• Need to redefine “alternative therapies” as focused nursing interventions

“If healthcare workers viewed their interventions as alternative therapies, then the practice base would be a lot richer” [and more respected]

Healthcare workers need to remain attentive to the changing practice acts of other health professional groups to assure that your right to practice is both protected and appropriately expanded
New Options for Practice?

Work can become an extension of self rather than just a job.

Self development & self care are the core

The more you learn about yourself & allow for reflection

The clearer you are & the more light you can resonate to others