

Notes from Open Space Topic Convenors

What was your topic or question?

How can one create a healing environment in a busy primary care office?

What were major discussion points?

- There are many demands on staff, and attention to environmental/healing issues often gets shorted.
- People want to feel at home and welcomed and to be more at ease.
- People want their time respected.
- People want open, honest communication.

What did you learn?

- Begin by blessing the office – every nook and cranny (before other people come around).
- All staff should be aware that they are healers and can be a blessing for the patients.
- Show hospitality – explain waiting time, offer beverage, ask about comfort.
- Art work, especially by office staff and family members, helps people “feel at home.”
- Music should be subtle and relaxing.
- Color of wall paint can evoke soothing and positive emotional response.
- Office staff should be welcoming, personable, smile, etc.
- Having booklets on aspects of healing and health care written by the doctors and staff is well received by patients.
- Wait until the history is taken before having the person undress and gown.
- Have a photograph of the patient on the chart so the staff can recognize him/her easily and to trigger memories that will enable more personable conversation.
- Use open communication in words tailored to the person’s understanding.
- Make use of patient education material and reading lists.
- Offer after-hours programming for exercise and other health activities.

Whom should we contact for more information?

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