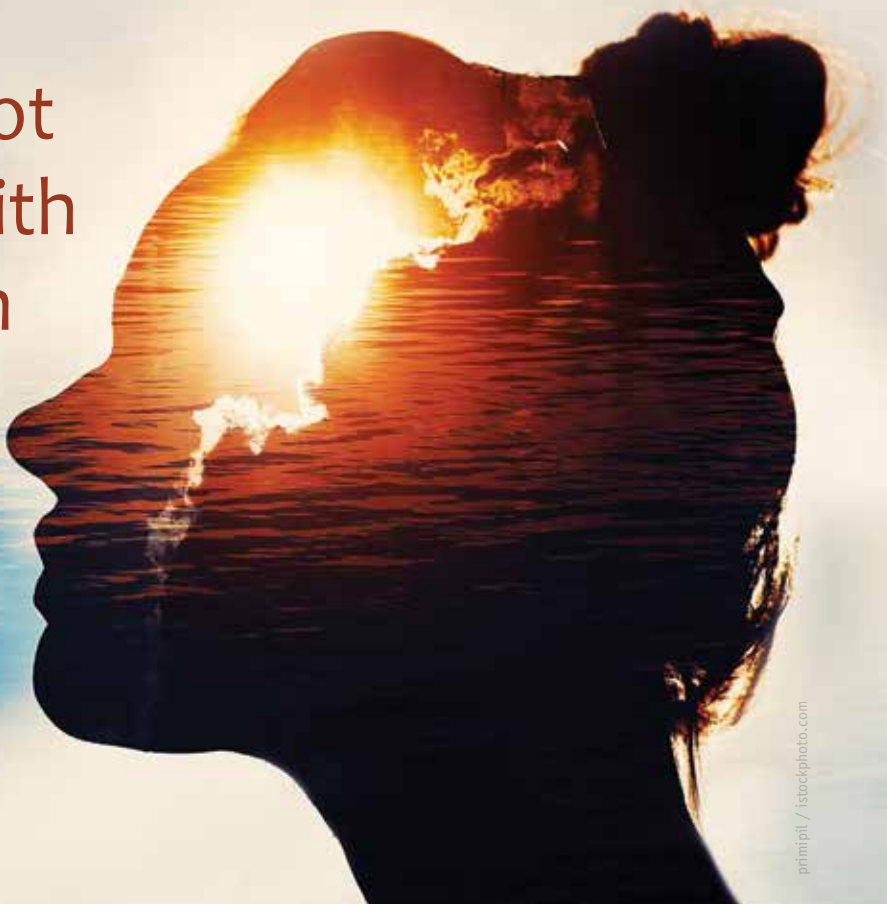


Getting to the Root of Health Issues with Medical Intuition

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Intuition is defined as “the perceived knowing of things and events without the conscious use of rational processes, using all of the senses to receive information” (Potter & Frisch, 2009, p. 141-142). In *Holistic Nursing: a Handbook for Practice*, the Holistic Caring Process states: “Holistic assessment involves evaluation of data not only from a rational, analytic, and verbal (or left brain) mode, but also from an intuitive, nonverbal (right brain) mode” (Potter & Frisch, 2009, p. 147).

Holistic nurses and energy healing practitioners frequently talk about getting an intuitive “hit” about a patient’s or client’s condition, or the source of their pain. But they may not have comprehensive training in intuition skills or be able to get to the root issues in a methodical way.

Medical intuition is designed to assess energetic imbalances in both the physical body and subtle energy systems of the body (the “biofield”) that may correspond to illness, imbalance, and disease (Colter, 2022). In addition, medical intuition can help to evaluate the energetic influence of thoughts, beliefs, and emotions and how they may impact our health and wellbeing. Medical intuition is intended to support physical, emotional, mental, and spiritual wellness for a comprehensive whole-person approach to health (Colter, 2022, p. 26).

Tools of the Trade

Holistic nurses call on a deep “toolkit” of techniques to support optimum wellbeing for their clients, as described in *Holistic Nursing: Scope and Standards of Practice*. Based on an initial intake, holistic nurses may use a wide range of mind-body

techniques – from breath-work, meditation, prayer, spiritual practices, guided imagery, and biofeedback, as well as energy healing approaches, such as Healing Touch, Therapeutic Touch, Reiki, and Qi Gong (ANA & AHNA, 2019, pp. 27-32).

Holistic nurses may also assess the patients’ biofield through the use of various energy healing modalities. Made up of the chakra system and the auric field, the biofield is defined as “a field of energy and information that surrounds, permeates, and influences the human body” (Rubik et al., 2015).

For all of the useful and important tools a holistic nurse can employ, medical intuition is designed to bring together all of the relevant data into a cohesive whole. It can enhance a holistic nurse’s practice and support a patient’s or client’s deeper quest to “get to the bottom” of their health issues. In her book *Essentials of Medical Intuition: A Visionary Path to Wellness* (2022), author Wendie Colter, a professional medical intuitive with a practice of more than 20 years, describes how medical intuition can be used by holistic nurses in hospitals, in clinics, and in private practice.

The Medical Intuitive Assessment

Colter relates the origins of her experience as a medical intuitive and teacher:

Intuitive from a young age, I could often ‘tell’ when someone was not feeling well, though I could not have told them why! Later, in my practice as an energy healing practitioner, I noticed that some of my clients returned for sessions again and again with the same issues, regardless

of the positive experiences they may have had in prior sessions. I found I was able to intuitively see into and communicate deeply with my clients' physical bodies and biofields. I was also able to intuitively see the origins of imbalances in their life histories. Through this in-depth intuitive assessment, a wealth of information could be discerned. I was curious to find out if a deeper awareness of their body's messages might make a difference in my clients' abilities to heal.

Colter began offering a Medical Intuitive Assessment before (and eventually in place of) each energy healing session (Colter, 2022, pp. 39-40). With this information, she found that her clients were able to release deeply stuck energetic patterns. Colter's clients repeatedly pointed to these intuitive assessments as a crucial turning point in their health journeys. "When doctors began calling me for under-the-radar assessments for their patients with challenging issues, I understood the critical need for this skill to be integrated into health care. I developed a streamlined and systematic method of medical intuition to train nurses, doctors, and healthcare professionals," she says.

Intuition Research

For more than 30 years, holistic nurses have been at the forefront of peer-reviewed research on the use of intuition in nursing (Melin-Johansson et al., 2017), and the subject of intuition in health care has gained a strong foothold and growing interest from the medical community.

Although research specifically on medical intuition has been sparse, the studies that have been done have yielded fascinating results. Colter's exploratory research, created with the support of Dr. Paul J. Mills of the Center of Excellence for Research and Training in Integrative Health at the University of California San Diego, was published in the peer-reviewed *Journal of Alternative and Complementary Medicine* in 2020. A group of her certified graduates and a cohort of 67 volunteers participated in a series of medical intuitive sessions. The medical intuitives were blinded to the participant's health history and current complaints, and the intuitives' eyes were closed during the session. Post-session surveys completed by the participants revealed a subjectively assessed 94 percent accuracy rate for the medical intuitives' location and evaluation of their primary health issues. Additionally, they rated the medical intuitives as 94 percent consistent with their known medical diagnoses, and 98 percent accurate in describing events from their lives that related to their health issues (Colter & Mills, 2020).

The Future of Medical Intuition

What might a future of health care that includes medical intuition look like? Colter (2022) interviewed many of the leading lights in holistic healthcare for her recent book, including AHNA past-president Lucia Thornton, ThD, RN, and legendary physician Gladys T. McGarey.

Dr. McGarey is an internationally recognized pioneer and advocate of holistic medicine. She feels strongly that intuition must be incorporated into the clinical setting to help medicine progress: "Unless we can accept this, we will be working only with diseases and pain and not with the patient themselves," she said (as quoted in Colter, 2022, p. 143). Dr. Thornton points out that without an understanding of our energetic and spiritual natures, the current narrow medical model will remain out of balance: "It is so important for medicine to begin to understand that we are spiritual beings, and not just biomedical entities" (as quoted in Colter, 2022, p. 144).

It is time to acknowledge the role of intuition in health care and welcome trained and qualified medical intuitives as integral members of the healthcare team.

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