

Margaret Newman Memorial

Memphis, Tennessee

January 10th, 2019

It is an honor for me to be here with you today and to have an opportunity to share some thoughts about my dear friend and mentor, Dr. Margaret Newman. Let me first say “thank you” to Margaret’s niece, Donna Jean, for inviting me to speak at this memorial. I would also like to acknowledge Margaret’s friends and family who are here today and offer my deepest sympathy for your loss. Margaret was someone dear to each of us and we will continue to remember her in our own special way.

For me, Margaret Newman was a woman who saw beauty in all her surroundings... in her family, in the environment she was a part of and with the many people with whom she shared her life and many talents. She was a woman of character, humility, perseverance and insight.

An abstract, conceptual thinker, Margaret brought new meaning to old challenges, clearly and profoundly. Her work as a scholar revealed her complexity, her humanness and her intellect. Margaret communicated ideas with precision. She had the unique ability to say in a few well -chosen sentences what it may take others pages to describe. For Margaret, each word selected had meaning and purpose. Her insights ... especially when discussing nursing... were easily grasped by others. She provided a vision for nursing and had a high tolerance for uncertainty. She trusted the process, confident that the answer would unfold within the dynamic nurse/patient relationship.

Margaret was both deliberative and reflective. I can remember Margaret quietly listening to others during a Scholarly dialogue. Often she would be asked about her response to the discussion. Margaret, who was not quick to answer... would offer some remarks ... but then would say, *“I have already said everything I think about this issue... but*

tell me ...what you think?" Always eager to hear the ideas of other scholars ...especially students.

Margaret was a southern woman, gracious and elegant. However, she loved the "Big City", especially New York. She enjoyed the excitement... the music, the people, and the museums, especially the art museums'. For Margaret, art in all forms, brought her joy and provided an opportunity to express ideas in a way that was even more profound than her words. Just look at the symbolic artwork on the covers of the books she wrote. Through art, Margaret was able to capture her conceptual thinking and express meaningful thoughts in new ways.

Margaret's own drawings revealed a glimpse into who she was a person. For example, her artwork often contained the color red ...always had a black cat located somewhere in the picture and ... had structures, such as a building from her hometown. Margaret's paintings were a part of her physical space. They comforted her and warmed her heart, even when they were difficult for her to see them. They remained in with her until she passed.

Margaret's time at New York University allowed her to flourish. As a student and later faculty member, her time with friends and colleagues, and including Martha E Rogers herself, were filled with meaning and potential. It was in New York where her major contributions to nursing knowledge and her theory on *Health as Expanding Consciousness* (HEC) fully began to emerge.

I first met Margaret at a Knowledge Conference in Boston, during the early 90's. I had long been committed to Rogerian Science but Margaret's work resonated with my love of nursing theory, clinical practice, and inquiry in a new way. Her work supported my belief that the nurse - patient relationship was a transforming experience for both.

Margaret believed that "simply having a disease does not make you unhealthy

“(Pharris, 2005). Illness was a moment that was part of the whole person/environment experience. A time when “the nurse... guides the person through a journey of self-discovery, choice, meaning and action to promote the human experience” (Jones, 2006).

Margaret viewed illness, as part of health...a time for growth ...discovery ...new awareness ... “*wellbecomming*” as John Phillips, a former student and colleague of Margaret’s at NYU would say.

Margaret’s work reflected an unfolding pattern of her own human experience. Her theoretical contributions were “adequate to the task of changing the world, open ended, non-dogmatic, informing and grounded in the circumstances of everyday life” (Lather, 1986.

Over the years, many students and colleagues had the opportunity to meet with Margaret and dialogue about nursing and HEC. They were inspired by her words and her quiet presence. Often Scholars, including Drs. Maggie Pharris and Marlaine Smith , her dear friend and colleague Dr. Emiko Endo from Tokyo, and faculty from UT all brought students to meet with Margaret and share in the dialogue. These were joyful moments for Margaret ...it meant the work was moving forward.

A doctoral student at Boston College, Dr. Mary Antonelli, and here with us today, met Margaret a few years ago. Mary talked in depth about a dissertation study and asked Margaret if she was on the right path. Margaret said “she” needed to find the answers. Margaret believed it was up to those who followed her work to continue to help shape Nursing’s future.

Margaret’s work resonated with nurses in practice. She often quoted from an article (*The Theory is the Practice*) written by Dr. Virginia Capasso, a Clinical Specialist at Massachusetts General. Using HEC in her practice, Capasso noted, “ coming to know the person through illness, the CNS becomes a healer rather than a broker of

prescriptive care” (*Clinical Nurse Specialist* 6 (7), p. 229). Margaret’s work touched many people. Often I would hear others say, “Once you have seen nursing through the lens of Margaret Newman...you can never go back to old thinking. It changes you forever!

“Margaret was a gift to us all who study nursing and are committed to it as a discipline. Her light will shine on into the future as she laid the foundation for us all toward an evolving consciousness for nursing and our world. A heart opening Wonder Woman.”(Jean Watson, 2019 email message).

There are many memories of Margaret that each of us share today. These are gifts from our friend, mentor, scholar, and *American Academy of Nursing Living Legend*... Dr. Margaret Newman.

““Sometimes a person enters our lives and it changes us forever. Margaret was one of those people for me and for many. Her contribution to the nursing discipline lives on” (Elizabeth Barrett, e-mail, 2019).

Margaret Newman’s legacy is grounded in what she has given nursing through her work ... and will be continue to unfold with future HEC scholars who continue to define our discipline in ways yet to be realized.

In 1994, Margaret wrote:

“It is time for

A parting with the past

It is a time to

Replace the anchor of the past

With the pull of the future (Newman, 1994, p.137)

Thank you ...Margaret for continuing to be part of our living experience. As we move forward...You will remain in our hearts forever.

Presented at Margaret Newman's Memorial

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