

Graduate Nurses Experience the Sacred During Transcendental Meditation®*

Joyce B. Perkins, PhD, BS, MA, MS, RN, AHN-BC, CHTP, RMP-T, *St. Catherine University*; Catherine Aquino-Russell, PhD, BScN, MN, RN, *University of New Brunswick*

Abstract

This qualitative study enhances understanding of lived experiences of graduate nursing students practicing Transcendental Meditation (TM). Findings are viewed through the lens of Perkins' (2004 2018, in production) perspective of emerging consciousness as found in Unitary Caring Science (Watson, 2012). A Giorgi's (2009) descriptive phenomenological method was used to examine journals kept by participants for four months following the introduction of TM. When practicing this simple technique, students found themselves authentically present and balanced with enhanced job performance. Feelings of bliss, peacefulness, and integrity potentiated the experience of sacred space amid daily stressors while care, compassion, grace, gratitude, and appreciation resided within.

Keywords: Transcendental Meditation, nursing students, unitary caring science, phenomenology, consciousness, inner peace, life balance, sacred

We have witnessed the stress that students experience while engaging in the teaching–learning process of becoming degree-prepared registered nurses. Meditation is becoming popular as a stress-reduction strategy (Kabat-Zinn, 1993). It is also a complement to conventional medical therapies and practiced worldwide (Bonadonna, 2003; D. W. Orme-Johnson & Barnes, 2013; Roth, 2002). Transcendental Meditation (TM) has been researched with positive stress-reduction findings (Gravois, 2005; Grosswald, Stixrud, Travis, & Bateh, 2008; Oman, Hedberg, & Thoresen, 2006; D. Orme-Johnson & Walton, 1998) as well as other health benefits.

Hundreds of scientific studies have been conducted on the benefits of the TM program at more than 200 independent universities and research institutions worldwide i.e., Yale, Harvard, and UCLA Medical School. The National Institutes of Health have awarded more than \$26 million to research the effectiveness of TM for reducing stress and stress-related illness with a focus on cardiovascular disease. Findings have been published in leading, peer-reviewed scientific journals, including *The American Journal of Cardiology* and the American Heart Association's *Hypertension and Stroke* (David Lynch Foundation, 2017).

Researchers have verified the effectiveness of the TM technique in reducing stress and contributing to health in mind, body, and behavior (Barnes, Monto, Williams, & Rigg, 2016; Chalmers, Clements, Schenkluhn, & Weinless, 1989; David Lynch Foundation, 2012; Nidich, Nidich, Salerno, Hadfield, & Elder, 2015; D. W. Orme-Johnson, Wallace, & Dillbeck, 2011; Schneider et al., 1995; So & Orme-Johnson, 2001; Walton et al., 2002). Others have found that university students who practiced TM regularly demonstrated significant increases in IQ over a two-year period compared to control subjects (Travis et al, 2009; Wallace, Orme-Johnson, &

Dillbeck, 1990). As well, students with ADHD practicing TM have been found to have improved brain functioning (R. Travis, Grosswald, & Stixrud, 2011).

The TM technique has been taught by certified TM educators worldwide since 1957. The TM program consists of a traditional form of meditation with origins in the ancient Vedic tradition (Oman et al., 2006; Walton et al., 2002). Maharishi Mahesh Yogi, His Holiness (2001) is credited with reviving and restoring this meditation practice in accordance with classical Vedic texts. Millions of people worldwide have participated in the standardized TM program over the last 60 years (Maharishi University of Management, 2017). TM is considered a simple, natural, effortless mental technique, practiced twice a day while sitting comfortably with the eyes closed. Moreover, TM has been introduced in schools around the world to help students and to transform learning (Campion & Rocco, 2009; Rosenthal, 2011; Roth, 2002). Quantitative measures have been completed as mentioned above; however, phenomenological findings are lacking (Rosaen & Benn, 2006) making this project in a college or university school of nursing a vital contribution to the literature.

The purpose of this project was to enhance health care professionals' and university nursing professors' understanding of what it is like for graduate students to practice the TM technique while juggling various roles and stressors. Descriptions of their lived experiences provide new insight and knowledge to inform future educational practices for nursing students in self-management of stress.

Research Question

Using A. Giorgi's (2009) phenomenological method, the research question guiding this research was “What is the meaning of the lived experience of graduate nursing students practicing the TM technique as viewed through the lens of Perkins' (2004 2018, In production) perspective of emerging consciousness in unitary caring science (Watson, 2012)?

Process for Inclusion in the Study

A mass email was sent to all students in the MAN and DNP programs at a small Midwestern college in the United States describing the research project and the TM program. Names of those students who indicated their desire and commitment to practice TM for 20 minutes, twice per day, were randomly selected to receive the standardized TM program taught by a certified teacher. The TM program was presented to the students over four consecutive days, approximately 1–1.5 hours per day, and had approximately seven follow-up meetings over four months with the same certified TM teacher assigned to the study. The students were asked to record their perceptions, once per week, in an electronic journal in response to the following interrogatory statement: “Please describe what it is like for you to practice the Transcendental Meditation technique twice per day while engaged in your graduate nursing teaching–learning journey.” They were invited to share as much or as little as they wished. Descriptions were saved on USB drives that were provided to students.

Method and Analysis

Theoretical Perspective: Perkins (2004) and Watson's (2012 2018, in production) Unitary Caring Science (UCS). Perkins (in press, 2004) defines UCS as the art and science that supports the unity of head and heart within individuals and humanity as a whole, such that the rational linear brain functions in coherent, harmonic, and resonant relationship with the heart's neural and energetic anatomy (Heartmath Institute, 2017b; McCraty, Atkinson, Tomasino, & Bradley, 2009; Perkins, in press, 2004; 2018, In production). The “direct perception” (Buhner, 2004, p. 89) of intuitive, whole-body knowing melds with conceptual information creating a coherent field of consciousness of the whole (Buhner, 2004; J. Perkins, personal communication, April 26, 2016). Indigenous wisdom is integrated with scientific rationale such that right- and left-brain balance informs decisions and conscious choice (J. Perkins, personal communication). Further, Perkins (in press, 2018) explained, the balance of mind, heart, and spirit wisdom pan-dimensionally expressed in the cosmos is revealed in three-dimensional reality via the focus of attention and intention. The choice to know and express gratitude, appreciation, love, and compassion creates a higher vibrational and resonant field within human beings, which influences health; healing; and other chemical, emotional, and behavioral outcomes in the body. We create our reality with the choice of attention and intention.

Focus on the lower frequency emotions of anger, frustration, and pain create states of stress; reduced immune response; and rigid mechanical, emotional, and behavioral patterns in the body that result in disease and ill health (Hawkins, 2002; HeartMath Institute, 2017; McCraty et al., 2015; Perkins, in press, 2004).

Realities are known as paradigms or worldviews in nursing. Paradigms reflect the focus of consciousness in human beings; we are able to hold more than one paradigm or reality within ourselves, which shift as we change the focus of our attention (J. Perkins, personal communication, April 27, 2017). These paradigms have to do with beliefs, value preferences, and cultural or familial imprinted patterns. In nursing, care and compassion reflect the art and science of the practicing nurse; caring for self and other is essential (Perkins, 2004; Watson, 2012). In the dissertation titled *A Cosmology of Compassion for Nurses Explicated via Dialogue with Self, Science, and Spirit*, Perkins (2004) explicated the larger cosmology that supports the practice of nursing at any level. This science explained how energy, or the frequency pattern that occurs at the subatomic level when love and compassion are felt in the body, sustains, heals, and revitalizes the patterns of life on earth (HeartMath Institute, 2017; McCraty et al., 2009; McCraty, 2015; Perkins, 2004). In nursing, the language of UCS (Watson, 2012) has been used to describe the science behind this healing and life-sustaining process. Theoretical perspectives in nursing, such as Rogers' (1970) science of unitary human beings, Newman's (1994) health as expanding consciousness, Parse's (1998, 2014) humanbecoming, and Watson's (2012) human caring science unite as aspects of a meta-paradigm of nursing's grand theories, which coalesce in the language and expression of UCS.

Watson (in press) wrote that a UCS begins with an ethic of belonging and includes the perennial wisdom of a universal sea of humanity that knows our human-planetary experiences are shared across time and space. UCS is an extant, evolved model of science, grounded in a moral-ethical, unitary ontological praxis that promotes and sustains human dignity, caring-healing, and health for all through compassionate service to humankind. The 10 Caritas Processes® of caring science theory identify universals of human caring and love that guide caring-healing practitioner-leadership principles for patients, nurses, and health care systems around the world (Watson, 1979, 1999, 1985, 2005, 2008, 2018, in press).

The holographic nature of this perspective of UCS also embraces the language of quantum physics (Bohm, 2002; Bohm & Peat, 1987; Haraein, 2017; Haraein, Hyson, & Rauscher, 2008), biology (Sheldrake, 2009), complexity science (Kelso & Scott, 2016), and holistic nursing (Dossey & Keegan, 2016) as well as

cosmic (Currivan, 2017) and consciousness studies (Goswami, 1995).

This leap into transcendent potentials for healing with scientific explanations to support the process makes the practice of TM an apt approach for nurses wanting to build resilience, care, comfort, clarity of mind, intellectual vigor, and emotional stability into their self-care and relationships. An authentic way of being lends itself to enhanced patient care and relationship-building. Harmonic coherence in brainwave patterns and bodily functions have been measured by researchers of the TM technique (Travis et al., 2009) and HeartMath Institute researchers (McCraty et al., 2009; McCraty, 2015). Their research supports academic and scientific rigor for the practices that build coherence in the body. Thus, one of the ancient traditional practices of Ayurvedic medicine (Nader, 1995; Schneider et al., 2014) and one of the modern approaches of Western medicine, called Quick Coherence, Freeze Frame, or Shift and Shine (HeartMath Institute, 2017a), unite in common support of these types of approaches that encourage coherence in brainwave patterns and a unitary science conceptual framework (Perkins, 2004 2018, in production; Watson, 2018, in production).

Method

This phenomenological study involved six students from any year of the MAN or DNP program. A. Giorgi's (2009) method uncovers the meaning of experiences. "Each person has a unique history, a unique internal order, and . . . ascribes unique meaning to experience" (D. Orme-Johnson, 2017, para. 11). Giorgi's method has been described in the literature as using small sample sizes, that is, from one to 21 participants (Aquino-Russell, 2003). Giorgi's analysis/synthesis process (A. Giorgi, 1975, 2009; A. P. Giorgi & Giorgi, 2003) included the following steps. Although they may appear sequential, they are not. When analyzing the data descriptions, the researchers frequently returned to the participants' words to ensure there was consistency when taking words up to a higher level of discourse. Duffy and Aquino-Russell (2007) summarized the process.

Contemplative dwelling with the descriptions.

Individual participant's written description was read repeatedly for an overall sense of the description along with a process of intuiting and discerning.

Identifying meaning units. The descriptions were examined for spontaneously occurring shifts in meaning or transition. These discrete passages of text are referred to as meaning units (MUs), expressed in the participants' words.

Identifying focal meanings. The MUs were raised to a higher level of discourse (to the abstract) and reformulated to become focal meanings (FMs) in the language of UCS used by the researchers. (Perkins, in press, 2004).

Synthesizing situated structural descriptions.

Each set of FMs was synthesized into a situated structural description (SSD) for each participant. The SSD grasps the meaning from the participant's perspective and is grounded in the participant's setting (A. Giorgi, 1985).

Synthesizing a general structural description

(GSD). A. Giorgi (1975, p. 195) considers this stage as a synthesis of the most general significance (essences) of the study phenomenon aimed at capturing the meaning of the participants' lived experience in an insightful and focused way.

Ethics and Rigor

The study was reviewed and passed through three ethical review boards at our two educational institutions. Participants signed consent forms and were instructed that they could withdraw from the project without consequence. Anonymity was preserved by the use of pseudonyms, which were used to identify each student's description. Journal submissions were sent to an administrative assistant who transferred descriptions anonymously onto another USB and then forwarded the USB drive to a co-principle investigator for analysis. Descriptions were stored on a secure laptop and USB device.

Scientific rigor of this study was addressed through consideration of four criteria commonly used to judge the trustworthiness of qualitative research: credibility, transferability, dependability, and confirmability (Lincoln & Guba, 1985). Achieving credibility involved the researchers having prolonged immersion with the participants' descriptions, presenting the participants' words in the discussion of the research, and comparing our findings with other literature while noting similarities and differences. Following A. Giorgi's (2009) method of analysis-synthesis and demonstrating its application through examples from the analysis enhances dependability. Albaugh (2003, p. 594) wrote that A. Giorgi's (1985) method "applies the concepts of rigor and precision to the study of human phenomena and ensures the capture of the phenomena according to the participant's descriptions." Transferability has been shown through similarities and linkages to other research findings even within the quantitative realm (see discussion section of this paper). These three above mentioned criteria, as well as providing an audit trail from the original participants' descriptions to our synthesized

findings and general structural description, provide confirmability.

Results

A GSD was cocreated (researchers with participants' words). It is presented via the following seven essences of the GSD as uncovered through analysis–synthesis of FMs and SSD, where researchers brought participants' words (MUs) up a higher level of discourse to the language of nursing UCS (Perkins, 2004 2018, in production; Watson, 2008 2018, in production). The GSD is written to be nonspecific, more generalized, whereas the FMs and SSDs are written as specific to the participants' contexts.

General Structural Description

The GSD is presented as a poetic expression, which Watson (2012, p. 107) wrote, “The writing of poetry was in itself a transcendent experience.” The following poem is the meaning of the lived experience for graduate nursing students practicing TM as seen through the lens of UCS (Perkins, 2004 2018, in production; Watson, 2008 2018, in production).

Experiencing Sacred Space

There is a revealing of the direct experience of qualities within that resemble the mysterious perennial wisdom expressions of the sacred and divine. This experience is not necessarily religious, but has a spiritual or soul quality of deep respect for life. The life force itself is embodied and noticed as revitalization of the unitary oneness of self, humanity, and environment as a whole. Within this inspired and creative experience of unitary oneness, patterns merge and meld such that a confluence of singularities becomes a universal, pure awareness; a synchronistic cosmic consciousness flows both locally and non-locally out of time and space, causality and limitation of any kind. Students experienced holographic thought processes, and intuitive whole body responses, as kinesthetic perception and awareness with enhanced qualities of receptivity, flexibility, patience, and trust; all guided by love and an inner discernment. This transformation was a learned quality of coherence and resonance to the creative Source, an experience of effortless commitment to flow synchronistically with the larger dynamics of the universe and cosmos. When practicing this simple technique of Transcendental Meditation®,

students found themselves authentically present and balanced, with feelings of bliss, peacefulness, and inner integrity foremost, that potentiated the experience of sacred space amidst daily stressors whilst care, compassion, grace, gratitude, and appreciation resided within.

The seven essences of the GSD, which are the meaning of the lived experience, are presented along with examples of the participants' words (MUs) and the investigators' FMs.

Essence 1: There is a revealing of the direct experience of qualities within that resemble the mysterious perennial wisdom expressions of the sacred and divine. *Meaning unit.*

I had a beautiful epiphany, a coming into, if you will. Last summer when I had to take the cosmology class, I thought to myself “what am I ever going to do with this kind of knowledge” as well, it was way beyond my metis to interpret for application in my reality. Finding meaning was challenging at best. However, from it, I learned to appreciate that which was around me. From there, was to come a couple of international trips . . . I found more meaning in the beauty of what surrounded me and then I was fortunate to be selected to be a participant in the meditation study. I had a few weeks of meditation before class was to start and my trip to [a foreign country] took place. While I found that I was approaching issues with much more calm, reserve, and thoughtfulness . . . I did . . . find that I love the practice of it, in the stillness that was brought to my life. And then I went to [a foreign country]! Having that stillness and calm, the quietness and peacefulness was like a portal into Being one with the nature and elements surrounding me. I could feel the richness of the earth, the mindfulness of the people, and the purposefulness of the wildlife, insects, and other living things. I awoke my first morning to the glory of God lifting the sun in its beauty, of the many hues of pinks, oranges, yellows, lavenders, and reds, just for me, as if He was conducting the orchestra filled with all things of living essence to greet me with their songs of awakening to the dawn of a new day, and another opportunity to be. Because I have meditation in my life, I'm beginning to know what BEING whole with all around is and appreciate the wonder of it all. The cosmology class was an essential voyage so that meditation could open my spirit for passage into just being. (MU15 Brice)

Focal meaning. (Language of nursing UCS written at a higher level of discourse) Brice (FM15), with TM practice, had a surprising aha moment of integral awareness where self and cosmos were experienced as one through the holographic nature of the whole—the eternal and infinite now.

Essence 2: This experience is not necessarily religious, but has a spiritual or soul quality of deep respect for life. *Meaning unit.*

I so appreciate that during meditation we are allowed to let all thoughts roll through and accept them for what they are and return back to the mantra. I feel so emancipated by the return of older unresolved thoughts that seem to reach the core of my spirit, so that I can let them go! It is so rewarding that issues which once upon a time set idle waiting for resolution have now been freed from my consciousness and I'm allowed to move on from the challenges they posed finding residence in my psyche; so, so emancipating! (MU6 Brice)

Focal meaning. Brice (FM6) felt grateful for the liberation of soul, which ensued from being able to release past obstructive conceptions.

Essence 3: The life force itself is embodied and noticed as revitalization of the unitary oneness of self, humanity, and environment as a whole.

Meaning unit.

The feelings of peace and clarity continue to be very apparent in my day to day life after practicing TM for 2 weeks. I have become much more comfortable with the technique. I know it is an easy technique but one still wants to ensure accuracy. I have learned... that 3AM-5AM is the most powerful time to meditate as the Universe's energy is just waking at that time. This works well for when I work a night shift. I generally become very tired during this time frame on a night shift. If I stop to meditate during this time at work I feel refreshed, less tired, and more attentive. (MU3 Aaron)

Focal meaning. Aaron (FM3) experienced perceived nuances of harmony and lucidity while striving for precision with TM. When practicing TM during the night shift, Aaron became revitalized and responsive as the earth's cycles ebbed and flowed.

Meaning unit. Life is good! Calmness follows me for about 4-6 hours after meditation. I find myself meditating extra times when I have stressful situations. I continually recognize

anxiety in others and its ill effects. Why doesn't everyone meditate? The world would be a much easier place to live for everyone. I have noticed jolts of energy sometimes when I meditate. My TM teacher has told me it is deep-rooted stress leaving my body. It is strange how our body holds onto things without us even knowing. At least now I have a way to remedy this. (MU5 Aaron)

Focal meaning. During TM, Aaron (FM3) recognized a lasting sense of peace and surprising surges of power as tension unwound, relieving stress. Pondering the unconscious grip of tension, Aaron was pleased to have a tool to ease it from now on.

Essence 4: Within this inspired and creative experience of unitary oneness, patterns merge and meld such that a confluence of singularities becomes a universal, pure awareness; a synchronistic cosmic consciousness flows both locally and nonlocally out of time and space, causality, and limitation of any kind. Meaning unit.

Meditating as I passed over the Atlantic Ocean was thoroughly exhilarating! The sense of knowing my spirit in such a vast openness was beyond comprehension! It was an emotional experience and an awakening to the potential depth of my life. I felt so comforted and secure and so grounded as I flew 30,000 feet plus above land. (MU8 Brice)

Focal meaning. For Brice (FM3), meditating while flying on a plane in the vastness of the sky surrounded by the depth of the water below was a poignant moment as Brice felt comfortably rooted yet expanded and illuminated by a sense of emergent inner being (a "re-soul-ing" of self).

Essence 5: Students experienced holographic thought processes and intuitive "whole body" responses as kinesthetic perception and awareness with enhanced qualities of receptivity, flexibility, patience, and trust, all guided by love and an inner discernment. Meaning unit.

People are starting to notice how calm I am all the time. People are actually saying this to me. . . at work. . . at school and at home. I find myself having the "upper hand" in many interactions due to an ability to stay calm and really keep my wits in stressful situations. We had a code at work the other day and the resident physician who responded asked for an ACLS book to look up steps. While she was looking for the book I took over the code. I made the right

decisions and without second guessing myself. I made the right choices and the patient did survive. Now that I have started this TM journey I cannot imagine going back to the "old" me. (MU6 Aaron)

Focal meaning. Others commented on Aaron's (FM6) consistent peaceful demeanor. Aaron noticed having a leading edge that allowed superior performance in extremely demanding contexts. For Aaron, reverting to prior patterns was inconceivable.

Meaning unit.

Lately my mind seems to work more efficiently and more quickly. I can find words quickly in conversation. I can express myself better. I know . . . sections of your brain become more connected and you unlock potential by utilizing more of your brain. I think this is true. When I meditate I think I can actually feel these new connections. It's as if my brain is turned on like an engine. . . My experience kinesthetically confirms this occurrence. I hope this feeling starts to stay with me longer! (MU7 Aaron)

Focal meaning. Aaron (FM7) finds thinking and communication increasingly effective, prompt, and articulate, verified by direct self-perceived bodily experiences.

Essence 6: This transformation was a learned quality of coherence and resonance to the creative source, an experience of effortless commitment to flow synchronistically with the larger dynamics of the universe and cosmos. Meaning unit.

The words to articulate my incredible [foreign country] journey have spewed from my lips with such ease and fluidity; there has been such a profound connection with everything, and expressing the meaningfulness of my many interactions and sheer sake of just being, is a reverent flow of purposefulness. This, I attribute to meditation. (MU10 Brice)

Focal meaning. Brice (FM10) credits TM practice with quality of expression and enhanced understanding of the significance of relationships along with a sense of unity and commitment to the universe.

Meaning unit.

At this point I have completed the initial 4 days of training and have been utilizing TM twice a day for 6 days. I instantly noticed a

profound sense of peace the first time I meditated using this method. I carry this sense of peace with me long after the meditation. Along with it comes a sense of clarity which may be related to less mind-chatter. I find this feeling so attractive it seems imperative to meditate. My body wants this state of peace and clarity. (MU1 Aaron)

Focal meaning. This tacit experience Aaron (MU1) maintained for an extended period with an inner coherence and a magnetic quality, compelling Aaron to replicate the practice.

Essence 7: When practicing this simple technique of TM, students found themselves authentically present and balanced with feelings of bliss, peacefulness, and inner integrity foremost that potentiated the experience of sacred space amid daily stressors while care, compassion, grace, gratitude, and appreciation resided within. Meaning unit.

I was impressed by my ability to realize that I had a tangible experience that I was able to articulate. I arose from the meditation feeling peaceful, calm, and serene, with an ethereal joy unlike the excitable joy that I felt going into it. The experience afforded me a calm like nothing I've ever felt before in intention; a calm that with subtlety made my presence different. (MU2 Brice)

Focal meaning. Brice (FM2) completed the meditation session feeling blissful, which was different from the edgy elation with which Brice began. This feeling of bliss could not be purposefully conceived, yet it shifted Brice's sense of self in unexplainable ways.

Meaning unit.

It's harder to find the time to meditate the full 20 minutes twice daily, but I find I don't want to go without it. Life isn't as difficult to deal with if I make sure I meditate twice a day. It seems to go easier, without so many negative interactions and situations. They still occur, but solutions seem to surface quickly and are a fit to the issue/problem. My brain is happier when I meditate. It feels better, calmer, functions at a higher level with the meditation. . . When I transcend, I can feel my brain relax. It feels like a big release, the tension is gone and feels like a big sigh of relief and release, but inside my head. And I no longer think of anything. The random thoughts are gone, even if just for a moment. (MU6 Dylan)

Focal meaning. Dylan's (FM6) reflection on the TM experience included feeling joyful, solving problems more rapidly, experiencing tranquility, and physically feeling a shift in cerebral tightness allowing Dylan to let go into moments of deep rest.

Meaning unit.

“So I have been doing this for about 4 months now. It has profoundly affected my life. I feel so calm. Almost as if I am on a drug but I am not taking any drugs. It is great!” (MU16 Aaron)

Focal meaning. Aaron (FM16) perceived self at a higher level of awareness than when first beginning and noted stabilization and peaceful continuity in everyday life. Aaron likened it to being substance-induced, but it was not.

Meaning unit.

Lately I have noticed a shift in the way I feel during meditation. It seems as though I am becoming better at the practice. I know we shouldn't have expectations during meditation but it is easy to see when you are in the “zone” and when you are not. I guess the “zone” must be transcendence? I have noticed lately this zone seems to last for about 15 minutes of my meditation whereas before it was usually about 5 minutes. I feel even more relaxed after spending these longer periods of time in the “zone.” (MU10 Aaron)

Focal meaning. Following approximately seven weeks, Aaron (FM10) perceived an alteration in sensations during TM practice. Aaron consciously registered a prolongation of this shift in direct experience that was different from the ordinary experience of self in daily activities. Aaron wondered if this shift was a reflection of divine wholeness within.

SSDs for Participants (Abridged Versions)

We have included an example of one participant's SSD to demonstrate the next step in Giorgi's (2009) method, which involves joining of FMs for each participant's context. The SSD is the meaning of the lived experience for the particular participant.

Dylan's Lived Experience of Practicing TM (SSD)

For Dylan, the TM program enhanced attentiveness and tranquility. Dylan felt able to quiet the chatter, which was previously bothersome. Dylan noticed that TM involved both having trust in the process and being open to

possibilities, which gave an opportunity to experience harmony within that Dylan had not experienced in didactic education. Dylan noted a shift in the TM experience from having intensely disturbing dreams at the beginning of the first week to having restful sleep without dreams by the end of that week. Dylan learned from the TM instructor that drifting thoughts, dreaming, and nodding off during meditation are common. Dylan appreciated that training in TM involved both linear rational presentation of material with reflective dialogue as well as the direct felt experience. Dylan found the ability to shape attention and intention in everyday routines improved the ability to release during the meditation process. In school, Dylan became more secure within self, less apprehensive, and more tolerant of others, allowing them to be who they are. Dylan became more able to digest class content without being distracted. Dylan found peace by being more flexible and open to doing things differently as noted by a shift from doing many things at once to doing one task at a time. Amid the turmoil of Dylan's hospital work environment, TM provided the ability to navigate and maintain one's own center. Dylan developed the ability to prolong the meditative state for extended interludes. Dylan's reflection on the TM experience included feeling joyful, solving problems more rapidly, experiencing tranquility, and physically feeling a shift in cerebral tightness allowing Dylan to let go into moments of deep rest.

Discussion

The practice of TM for four months in this study revealed the direct experience of novice meditators. We began with six participants, but received descriptions from five graduate nursing students. The GSD (or meaning of the experience) revealed seven essences of their experience and served to summarize the descriptions. TM, regularly practiced by graduate nursing students, offered a range of possibilities that improved performance and confidence in meeting life's challenges. Improvements included self-reported levels of reduced stress and anxiety, improved clarity of thought and feeling, stabilization of any extremes of thought and being, improved intelligence, increased appreciation and gratitude, improved perceptions, increased feelings of inner peace and calm, better work performance, more enjoyment of life, and increased compassion for others. As well, TM practice allowed students to take a deep breath of the sacred or divine nature of the universe and cosmos, to be comfortable in that experience, to sustain their personal life rhythms of practice at a higher level of performance than noted earlier, and to share that experience in their care of others. They stated the rewards of TM practice

were so great that they all intended to keep their TM practice active at the close of the study.

The findings of this study were viewed through the lens of UCS (Perkins, in press, 2004; Watson, 2012; in press) and research noted in the literature. The essences (from the GSD) reported by graduate students in nursing are descriptors of the shifts that happens within the human being as ordinary consciousness of a third-dimensional dual reality begins to expand to multidimensional proportions or pan-dimensional consciousness of a cosmic, transcendent, or quantum level of experience and understanding (Perkins, 2004 2018, in production). The holographic nature of reality becomes an aspect of lived experience (Perkins, 2018, in production). The infinite is embedded within the finite in this way (Perkins, 2003). Participants in the study shared the nature of this experience in their own words.

The participants' descriptors document the automatic self-transcending referred to by researchers (Mason & Orme-Johnson, 2010; F. Travis & Shear, 2010). This movement beyond ego expression of the everyday consciousness to the experience of a larger sense of self is a pattern that is reiterated in a consistent manner within the nurse who benefits from this larger horizon of meaning, inspiration, and experience (Perkins, in press). In TM, awareness is enhanced while the body gains deep rest. It could be said to be a state of restful alertness (Orme-Johnson, 2017). For example, Aaron wrote about his experience of rejuvenation from practicing TM while working the night shift as described above.

Coherence increases in all EEG frequencies (D. Orme-Johnson, 2017) during TM practice. This means that the frequencies of the EEG are harmonic and coherent when activity is initiated from this level of consciousness. Synchrony or effortless effort unfolds in dynamic situations where action is called forth. This transcendent pattern of consciousness with consistent reinforcement is maintained in everyday life activities. This is the science behind “the ancient prescription of transcending as preparation for more effective dynamic activity” (D. Orme-Johnson, 2017, para. 5). An example of this was illuminated by a participant, Aaron, who performed so effectively in the hospital code situation mentioned above.

This ability to transcend ordinary or everyday consciousness and maintain “restful alertness” in practice is the art and science of nursing as described in UCS (Perkins, in press). The ability to be in mutual process with others (meaning the ability to resonate to any person or situation) while bringing into the situation a purposeful calm is like being held in the embrace of the divine within. This experience is reflected in the words of Brice:

... a reencounter of a very stressful day that occurred last week. One that had me at my

wits end! Yet through today's presentation of it, I remained eerily calm, and creative towards a safe process for all . . . other patients, staff, and the patient at the focus of this attention. The calm that I sustained was an unusual presence given the intensity of the offending situation, yet I stayed present and reposeful, I believe attributable to my newly acquired meditation practices.

Graduate nurse participants demonstrated coherent processes practicing TM. The practice of nursing "presence" initiates the experience of "restful alertness" as it facilitates nurses who know how to access these expanded states of consciousness toward direct experience of flow and the synergistic unfolding of events.

Chandler's experience resulted in enhanced attentiveness, profound understanding, and integration of course literature writing:

I am finding that the readings seem to be easier to comprehend than in the past.

When I am completing our reading assignments, it is as if I can see them fitting into the puzzle of the objectives of the class.

Presence is further explicated by Brice, whose ethereal joy was mentioned above: ". . . that somehow made my presence different." A sense of joy in life along with appreciation and gratitude is exemplified by Chandler, who wrote:

I am grateful for the chance to experience TM as I believe it was a thread that helped guide and sustain me through a challenging semester. I believe TM assisted me in being more focused and able to synthesize our readings on a deeper level. I also believe it assisted me in being more organized and efficient in meeting the numerous deadlines of three classes. This is a practice I will continue.

During TM practice, when brainwaves become coherent, the whole brain settles into a state of integral function called cosmic (Forem, 1974; Maharishi Mahesh Yogi, His Holiness, 2001), transcendent (Forem, 1974), or quantum consciousness (Chopra, 2003). In nursing, we call this unity consciousness (Perkins, 2003; 2018, in production), and a UCS (Watson, 2012 2018, in production) becomes the way of being with others and with self.

Our study involved novice meditators, but the results of our qualitative findings confirmed discoveries of quantitative studies reported earlier in the literature of improved sensory motor and cognitive functioning due to the practice of the TM technique as well as decreased negative emotions. For example,

Three random assignment studies on 362 students have found that 6 months to a year of TM practice improves: creative thinking (...which requires balanced use of thinking, feeling, and intention); practical intelligence (non-intellectual abilities and attitudes that

predict success in work, love, social relationships, and . . . maintaining emotional and physical well-being); field independence (ability to find an object ... concealed in an intricate background. . .); inspection time (...assessing the speed of information processing. . . [when] encoded in memory); and culture fair intelligence (a measure of "fluid intelligence", the ability to successfully reason in novel situations. Fluid intelligence is correlated with the executive control functions of the frontal lobes, which involve keeping attention on task requirements that are understood and remembered). (So & Orme-Johnson, 2001, as cited in Mason & Orme-Johnson, 2010, p. 33)

Beyond the above examples of improved functioning, nurses in our study also felt empowered in ways not noted before the practice of TM. Ellery wrote:

Prior to TM, I found it difficult to come home from work and work on my project for class. Frequently, I would work on it for a short time, then fall asleep. I realized tonight that I now practice TM soon after I come home from work, and am then able to work on not only my project, but also accomplish much more without sitting down and falling asleep.

After a few short months, nursing graduate students were able to enhance their function from competent to expert as described in Benner's (1984) model of evolving development of the nurse from novice to expert. For example, Dylan wrote:

Busy day at work, and able to transcend easier this morning. Looked forward to T.M. tonight, focused more on that than busy work routines. Chaos at work didn't upset my focus as usual and easier to focus and remain positive, even with a very anxious patient and family.

The TM technique is a simple, effortless, and dependable process that allowed students to perform at higher levels than they had previously attained. Participants described the felt experience. Our qualitative findings support the quantitative findings described in the literature in that our beginning meditators, with regular practice, were able to develop similar patterns described by F. Travis and Shear (2010) that allowed them to sort information much faster than previously attained, and they were able to process and put it into dynamic action in the field.

When the concepts of caring and consciousness synchronize in a unitary field of "caring consciousness" in human expression, the frequencies of head and heart shift to higher levels of frequency such that the sacred, embedded within self, is known. This sense of the sacred within self resonates as well to the environmental field, allowing a deeper connection

to the natural world, for example, in the practices of multicultural and indigenous peoples (Ruth-Sahd, 2003). This feeling of the sacred within relates to the experience of enlightenment known by the mystics in former ages (Watson, 2005). For example, Brice noted a sacred experience while meditating, flying above the ocean, waking up in a new land, and experiencing a peaceful feeling of "being one with nature..." and all creation. Brice noted a "profound connection with everything ... the meaningfulness of ... just being . . . a reverent flow of purposefulness."

Health and healing become one and the same process as does this unfolding of the divine within (Chopra, 2011). It may be called forth by learning to resonate to the pattern of unconditional love. Certain practices, such as prayer (Braden, 2009; Catholic Online, 2017), transcendent levels of meditation (F. Travis & Shear, 2010), Qigong (Lin, 2016), etc., prepare the human being to enter such states of deeper wisdom, love, and compassion as well as bring this level of functioning into the everyday world.

Participants noted a sense of the sacred within and around them and felt a new sense of empowerment and purpose in their work and personal lives. A deep sense of connection and community, a relationship with all creation that harmonically played in the background of whatever became the foreground of their attention. Synchronistic moments and events helped them live life with a quality of effortless effort as the universe seemed to help them accomplish a sense of balance within and without and gain a perspective that nourished them while helping them to flourish in the everyday. "Human flourishing" (National League for Nursing [NLN], 2010, p. 10) is one of the NLN outcomes for all schools of nursing at all levels in the United States. This research study supports the practice of TM by nurses facilitating the evolving consciousness within the nurse.

Strengths and Limitations of the Study

These students were novice meditators, but the results of our qualitative findings confirmed similarities to discoveries of quantitative studies reported earlier in the literature of improved sensory motor and cognitive functioning due to the practice of the TM technique as well as decreased stress and negative emotions. Quality of life improved for our participants in stressful circumstances such that they wanted to continue TM practice beyond the study requirements. Specifically, the practice of TM enhanced the process of becoming an expert nurse able to trust what some have called intuition and inner knowing combined with mechanical and procedural skills.

Limitations include a small number of participants; however, five still provided an abundance of descriptive data of graduate

nursing students' lived experiences, which we were unable to fully report in one paper.

Implications for Practice and Research

Implications include profound rewards for students dealing with stress and anxiety related to work, study, self, and family concerns. We recommend including TM in the educational experience of nurses at any level of practice. This is the first qualitative study looking at the nature of a transcendental type of meditation with nursing students. Other research and writings on mindfulness and contemplative practices report beneficial results for nursing students and practitioners (e.g., Raingruber & Robinson, 2007; Todaro-Franceschi, 2013; van der Riet, Rossiter, Kirby, Dluzewska, & Harmon, 2015).

Benefits of each style of meditation may best relate the type of meditation to the intention of the participant, according to the paradigmatic focus. The unitary human science perspective is inclusive of objective and subjective information as well as the integral experience of oneness. Our study suggests that TM offers a way to directly access this experience. Some university nursing faculty educators are considering or researching TM with nursing students (Aquino-Russell, 2017; Perkins & Aquino-Russell, 2014) and others developing medical curricula are now including TM as an elective in their medical program, that is, Loyola University (Brown & Gruener, 2016).

Concluding Reflections

TM is a simple technique easily learned by novice meditators that brings profound improvements in quality of life. When practicing this simple technique, participants found themselves authentically present. Feelings of bliss, peacefulness, and integrity potentiated the experience of sacred space amid daily stressors while care, compassion, grace, gratitude, and appreciation resided within. We recommend that nursing students practice this type of meditation to experience their highest possible level of consciousness, care, compassion, and performance in nursing and in life. Expanding consciousness and the journey from novice to advanced beginner to competent to proficient and then to expert nurse (Benner, 1984) is expedited in the "present" moment with the practice of this "transcendent" form of meditation (TM). Note that the corresponding cognitive and kinesthetic processes that were qualitatively and phenomenologically described in this paper explicate descriptions and meaning of the lived experience of graduate nursing students practicing the TM technique. These findings explicate qualitatively the quantitative discoveries in the literature, which are discussed above. This paper articulates a unitary perspective of lived experiences that reveals a resonant, coherent, benevolent, and integral reality underlying dual

perspectives, cocreating unity of paradigmatic thought. A UCS is the art and science of nursing and is supported by the teaching-learning of TM practices in nursing education.

References

- Albaugh, J. (2003). Spirituality and life-threatening illness: A phenomenological study. *Oncology Nursing Forum*, 30(4), 593–598.
- Aquino-Russell, C. (2003). *Understanding the lived experience of persons who have a different sense of hearing*. Curtin University of Technology, Perth, Australia: Curtin Theses <http://hdl.handle.net/20.500.11937/2524>
- Aquino-Russell, C. (2017). *The lived experience of Advanced Standing Program bachelour of nursing students practicing Transcendental Meditation*. A proposal developed for the Canadian Women's Wellness Initiative. Moncton, NB: University of New Brunswick.
- Barnes, V., Monto, A., Williams, J., & Rigg, J. (2016). Impact of Transcendental Meditation on psychotropic medication use among active duty military service members with anxiety and PTSD. *Military Medicine*, 181(1), 56–63.
- Benner, P. (1984). *From novice to expert: Excellence and power in clinical nursing practice*. Menlo Park, CA: Addison-Wesley.
- Bohm, D. (2002). *Wholeness and the implicate order*. New York, NY: Rutledge.
- Bohm, D., & Peat, F. (1987). *Science, order, and creativity: A dramatic new look at the creative roots of science and life*. New York, NY: Bantam Books.
- Bonadonna, R. (2003). Meditation's impact on chronic illness. *Holistic Nursing Practice*, 17(6), 309–319.
- Braden, G. (2009). *The science of miracles: The quantum language of healing through feeling and belief*. [DVD]. Carlsbad, CA: Hay House Publishing.
- Brown, C., & Gruener, G. (2015). Physician, heal thyself: Stritch School of Medicine students give new meaning to the adage. *Chicago Medicine*, 119(1), 22–26.
- Buhner, S. H. (2004). *The secret teachings of plants: The intelligence of the heart in the direct perception of nature*. Rochester, VT: Bear & Company, Inner Traditions International.
- Campion, J., & Rocco, S. (2009). Minding the mind: The effects and potential of a school-based meditation program for mental health promotion. *Advances in School Mental Health Promotion*, 2(1), 47–55.
- Catholic Online. (2017). *Mother Teresa of Calcutta*. Retrieved from: <http://www.catholic.org/clife/teresa/>
- Chalmers, R., Clements, G., Schenkluhn, H., & Weinless, M. (Eds.). (1989). *Scientific research on Maharishi's transcendental meditation and TM-Sidhi Program: Collected papers* (Vol. 2–4). Vlodrop, The Netherlands: Maharishi Vedic University Press.
- Chopra, D. (2003). *The spontaneous fulfillment of desire: Harnessing the infinite power of coincidence*. New York, NY: Harmony Books.
- Chopra, D. (2011). *The secret of healing: Meditations for transformation and higher consciousness*. [Audio CD]. Play it by Ear Music. <https://www.amazon.com/Secret-Healing-Meditations-Transformation-Consciousness/dp/B004JFDPAE>
- Curivan, J. (2017). *The cosmic hologram: Information at the center of creation*. Rochester, VT: Inner Tradition.
- David Lynch Foundation. (2012). *Diabetes and transcendental meditation with American Indians*. Retrieved from http://www.davidlynchfoundation.org/american-indians.html#video=9r1zg9Qw_Wc
- Dossey, B., & Keegan, L. (2016). *Holistic nursing: A handbook for practice* (7th ed.). Burlington, MA: Jones & Bartlett Learning.
- Duffy, L., & Aquino-Russell, C. (2007). Le vécu des femmes atteintes de cancer: Résultats d'une étude phénoménologique exprimés par l'intermédiaire de la poésie [The lived experience of women with cancer—Phenomenological findings expressed through poetry]. *Canadian Journal of Oncology Nursing*, 17(4), 193–205.
- Forem, J. (1974). *Transcendental Meditation: Maharishi Mahesh Yogi and the science of creative intelligence*. New York, NY: E. P. Dutton and Company Incorporated.
- Giorgi, A. (1975). An application of phenomenological method in psychology. In A. Giorgi, C. Fischer, & E. Murray (Eds.), *Duquesne studies in phenomenological psychology* (Vol. II) (pp. 82–103). Pittsburgh, PA: Duquesne University Press.
- Giorgi, A. (1985). *Phenomenology and psychological research*. Pittsburgh, PA: Duquesne University Press.
- Giorgi, A. (2009). *The descriptive phenomenological method in psychology: A modified Husserlian approach*. Pittsburgh, PA: Duquesne University Press.
- Giorgi, A. P., & Giorgi, B. M. (2003). The descriptive phenomenological psychological method. In P. M. Camic, J. E. Rhodes, & L. Yardley (Eds.), *Qualitative research in psychology: Expanding perspectives in methodology and design* (pp. 243–273). Washington, DC: American Psychological Association.
- Goswami, A. (1995). *The self-aware universe: How consciousness creates the material world*. New York, NY: Jeremy P. Tarcher/Putnam, a member of Penguin Putnam Inc.
- Gravois, J. (2005). Meditate on it. *Chronicle of Higher Education*, 52(9), 1–7.

- Grosswald, S. J., Stixrud, W. R., Travis, F., & Bateh, M. A. (2008). Use of the Transcendental Meditation technique to reduce symptoms of Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD) by reducing stress and anxiety: An exploratory study. *Current Issues in Education [Online]*, 10(2). Retrieved from <https://cie.asu.edu/ojs/index.php/cieatasu/article/view/1569/614/>
- Haramain, N. (2017). *Resonance Science Foundation: Unified science in resonance with nature*. Retrieved from <https://resonance.is/>
- Haramain, N., Hyson, M., & Rauscher, E. (2008). Scale unification—A universal scaling law for organized matter. In C. Varga, I. Dienes, & R. Amoroso (Eds.), *Proceedings of the Unified Theories Conference. Unification*. Retrieved from <http://resonance.is/wp-content/uploads/SU.pdf>
- Hawkins, D. (2002). *Power versus force: The hidden determinants of human behavior*. Carlsbad, CA: Hay House Inc.
- HeartMath Institute. (2017). HeartMath tools. Retrieved from <https://www.heartmath.org/resources/heartmath-tools/>
- Kabat-Zinn, J. (1993, July 1). Meditate for stress reduction, inner peace: Excerpt from Bill Moyer's healing the mind story. *Psychology Today*, 26(4), 36–44.
- Kelso, J. A. S., & Scott. (2016). On the self-organizing origins of agency. *Trends in Cognitive Sciences*, 20(7), 490–499. doi: 10.1016/j.tics.2016.04.004
- Lin, C. (2016). Spring Forest Qigong five element qigong movements for self-healing. Eden Prairie MN: Spring Forest Publishing.
- Lincoln, Y., & Guba, E. (1985). *Naturalistic inquiry*. Beverly Hills, CA: Sage.
- Marharishi Mahesh Yogi, His Holiness. (2001). *Science of being and art of living Transcendental Meditation®*. New York, NY: Plume Book.
- Maharishi University of Management. (2017). *Transcendental meditation*. Retrieved from: <http://mums.edu/campus-life/transcendental-meditation.html>
- Mason, L., & Orme-Johnson, D. (2010). Transcendental consciousness wakes up in dreaming and deep sleep. Commentary on “The neurobiology of consciousness: Lucid dreaming wakes up” by J. Allan Hobson. *International Journal of Dream Research*, 3(1), 28–32.
- McCarty, R., Atkinson, M., Tomasino, D., & Bradley, R. (2009). The coherent heart heart-brain interactions, psychophysiological coherence, and the emergence of system-wide order. *Integral Review*, 5(20), 10–115.
- McCarty, R. (2015). Exploring the Role of the Heart in Human Performance: An Overview of Research Conducted by the HeartMath Institute. Retrieved from <https://www.heartmath.org/research/science-of-the-heart/>
- McCarty, R. (2015). *Science of the Heart, Exploring the Role of the Heart in Human Performance*. Vol. 2. An overview of research conducted by the HeartMath Institute. Boulder Creek, CA: HeartMath Institute. Retrieved from <https://www.heartmath.org/research/science-of-the-heart/>
- Nader, T. (1995). *Human physiology—Expression of Veda and the Vedic literature*. Vlodrop, The Netherlands: Maharishi University Press.
- National League for Nursing. (2010). *Outcomes and competencies for graduates of practical/vocational, diploma, associate degree, baccalaureate, master's, practice, doctorate, and research doctorate program in Nursing*. New York, NY: National League for Nursing.
- Newman, M. (2000). *Health as expanding consciousness* (2nd ed.). New York, NY: National League for Nursing Press.
- Nidich, S., Nidich, R., Salerno, J., Hadfield, H., & Elder, C. (2015). Stress reduction with the Transcendental Meditation program in caregivers: A pilot study. *International Archives of Nursing and Health Care*, 1(2), <http://dx.doi.org/10.23937/2469-5823/1510011>
- Oman, D., Hedberg, J., & Thoresen, C. E. (2006). Passage meditation reduces perceived stress in health professionals: A randomized, controlled trial. *Journal of Consulting and Clinical Psychology*, 74(4), 714–719.
- Orme-Johnson, D. (2017). *The truth about TM. The research. Cosmic consciousness and lucid dreaming*. Retrieved from: <http://www.truthabouttm.org/truth/TMResearch/ComparisonofTechniques/index.cfm>
- Orme-Johnson, D., & Walton, K. (1998). All approaches of preventing or reversing the effects of stress are not the same. *American Journal of Health Promotion*, 12(5), 297–299.
- Orme-Johnson, D. W., & Barnes, V. A. (2014). Effects of the Transcendental Meditation technique on trait anxiety: A meta-analysis of randomized controlled trials. *Journal of Alternative Complementary Medicine*, 20(5), 330–341. Retrieved from <http://online.liebertpub.com/doi/abs/10.1089/acm.2013.0204>
- Orme-Johnson, D. W., Wallace R. K., & Dillbeck, M. C. (Eds.). (2011). *Scientific research on Maharishi's Transcendental Meditation and TM-Sidhi Program: Collected papers* (Vol. 6). Vlodrop, The Netherlands: Maharishi Vedic University Press.
- Parse, R. R. (1998). *The human becoming school of thought. A perspective for nurses and other health professionals*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications, Inc.
- Parse, R. R. (2014). *The human becoming paradigm: A transformational worldview*. Pittsburgh, PA: Discovery International.
- Perkins, J. (2004). *A cosmology of compassion for nursing explicated via dialogue with self, science, and spirit*. UMI Dissertation Services, University of Colorado Denver, CO: University of Colorado Health Science Center. Health Science Center, Denver, CO.
- Perkins, J. (in press). Unitary caring science and multicultural perspectives. In W. Rosa, S. Horton-Deutsch, J. Watson, G. Hernandez, M. Raye, M. Smith, & M. Turkel. (Eds.), *A handbook for caring science: Expanding the paradigm* Publishing.
- Perkins, J. (2003). “Healing Through Spirit: The Experience of the Eternal in the Everyday”. *Visions: Journal of the Society of Rogerian Scholars*, Vol. 11, Number 12.
- Perkins, J. B., & Aquino-Russell, C. (2014). *The lived experience of graduate nursing students practicing the Transcendental Meditation® technique*. Minneapolis, MN: Augsburg College Department of Nursing.
- Raingruber, B., & Robinson, C. (2007). The effectiveness of Tai Chi, yoga, meditation, and Reiki healing sessions in promoting health and enhancing problem solving abilities of registered nurses. *Issues in Mental Health Nursing*, 28, 1141–1155.
- Research: Scientific evidence that Transcendental Meditation works David Lynch Foundation. (2017). Retrieved from <https://www.davidlynchfoundation.org/research.html>
- Rogers, M. (1970). *Introduction to the theoretical basis of nursing*. Philadelphia, PA: Davis.
- Rosaen, C., & Benn, R. (2006). The experience of Transcendental Meditation in middle school students: A qualitative report. *The Journal of Science and Healing*, 2(5), 422–425.
- Rosenthal, N. (2011). *Transcendence. Healing and transformation through Transcendental Meditation*. New York, NY: Tarcher-Penguin.
- Roth, R. (2002). *Maharishi Mahesh Yogi's Transcendental Meditation*. Washington, DC: Primus.
- Ruth-Sahd, L. (2003). Intuition: A critical way of knowing in a multicultural nursing curriculum. *Nursing Education Perspectives*, 24(3), 129–134.
- Schneider, R., Charles, B., Sands, D., Gerace, D., Averbach, R., & Rothenberg, S. (2014). *The significance of the Maharishi Vedic approach to health for modern health care and medical education*. Retrieved from <https://www.mum.edu/wpcontent/uploads/2014/07/health.pdf>
- Schneider, R., Staggers, F., Alexander, C., Sheppard, W., Rainforth, M., Kondwani, K., . . . King, C. (1995). A randomized controlled trial of stress reduction for hypertension in older African Americans. *Hypertension*, 26(5), 820–827.
- Sheldrake, R. (2009). *Morphic resonance: The nature of formative causation* (4th ed.).

- Rochester, VT: Park Street Press, a Division of Inner Traditions International.
- So, K. T., & Orme-Johnson, D. W. (2001). Three randomized experiments on the longitudinal effects of the Transcendental Meditation technique on cognition. *Intelligence*, 29(5), 419–441.
- Todaro-Franceschi, V. (2013). *Compassion fatigue and burnout in nursing: Enhancing professional quality of life*. New York, NY: Springer.
- Travis, F., Haaga, D., Hagelin, J., Tanner, M., Nidich, S., Gaylord-King, C., . . . Pearson, C. (2000). Pure consciousness: Distinct phenomenological and physiological correlates of “consciousness itself”. *International Journal of Neuroscience*, 100(1–4), 77–89.
- Travis, F., Haaga, D., Hagelin, J., Tanner, M., Sanford, N., Gaylord-King, C., Grosswald, S., Rainforth, M., & Schneider, R. (2009). Effects of Transcendental Meditation practice on brain functioning and stress reactivity in college students. *International Journal of Psychophysiology*, 71(2), 170–176.
- Travis, F., & Shear, J. (2010). Focused attention, open monitoring and automatic self-transcending: Categories to organize meditations from Vedic, Buddhist, and Chinese traditions. *Consciousness & Cognition*, 19, 1110–1118. DOI: 10.1016/j.concog.2010.01.007
- Travis, R., Grosswald, S., & Stixrud, W. (2011). ADHD, brain functioning, and Transcendental Meditation practice. *Mind & Brain, the Journal of Psychiatry*, 2(1), 73–81.
- Van der Riet, P., Rossiter, R. C., Kirby, D., Dluzewska, T., & Harmon, C. (2015). Piloting a stress management and mindfulness program for undergraduate nursing students: Student feedback and lessons learned. *Nurse Education Today*, 35(1), 44–49.
- Wallace, R. K., Orme-Johnson, D. W., & Dillbeck, M. C. (Eds.). (1990). *Scientific research on Maharishi's Transcendental Meditation and TM-Sidhi Program: Collected papers* (Vol. 5). Fairfield, IA: Maharishi International University Press.
- Walton, K., Schneider, R., Nidich, S., Salerno, J., Nordstrom, C., & Bairey Merz, C. (2002). Psychosocial stress and cardiovascular disease. Part 2: Effectiveness of the Transcendental Meditation Program in treatment and prevention. *Behavioral Medicine*, 28(3), 106–123.
- Watson, J. (1979). *Nursing the philosophy and science of caring*. Boston, MA: Little, Brown.
- Watson, J. (1985). *Nursing: Human science and human care: A theory of nursing*. Sudbury, MA: Jones & Bartlett.
- Watson, J. (1999). *Postmodern nursing and beyond*. London, England: Churchill Livingstone.
- Watson, J. (2005). *Caring science as sacred science*. Philadelphia, PA: F. A. Davis Company.
- Watson, J. (2008). *Nursing: The philosophy and science of caring*. Boulder, CO: University Press of Colorado.
- Watson, J. (2012). *Human caring science: A theory of nursing* (2nd ed.). Sudbury, MA: Jones & Bartlett Learning.
- Watson, J. (in press). *Caring science. The philosophy and praxis of nursing*. Boulder, CO: University Press of Colorado.

Author Note

Joyce B. Perkins, PhD, MA, MS, RN, AHN-BC, CHTP, RMP-T, is an Associate Professor at St. Catherine University, Department of Nursing, St Paul, MN and a Watson Caring Science Post Doctoral Scholar. Catherine Aquino-Russell, RN, BScN, MN, PhD, is Professor of Nursing, University of New Brunswick, Moncton Campus, Moncton, New Brunswick, Canada. This research was supported in part by a grant from the TM® for Women Professionals' Organization. No other conflicts of interest apply.

*Transcendental Meditation® and TM® are protected trademarks and are used in the United States under license or with permission.

Correspondence concerning this article may be sent to Dr. Joyce B. Perkins, St. Catherine University, Department of Nursing, 2004 Randolph Ave., St Paul, MN 55105, USA. Electronic mail may be sent via the Internet to jbperkins@stkate.edu
