

## 5<sup>th</sup> World Congress on **Cancer Therapy**

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### **New models of care—Using storytelling as a way to better understand cancer survivor's needs**

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The reality of oncologic illnesses obliges those of us in healthcare to consider the paradox of living life while preparing for death. Or, conversely living when the struggles make the thought of death come as a welcomed guest. It is within this chaos of illness where the rhythm of the universe lies. This is the state of the sacred whereby energy flows toward an expanding awareness of healing and wholeness. The patient and the healthcare practitioner join in a story of each other—we become parts of each other's story.

By fostering the richness and depth of stories rather than the quantitative data that simply re-categorizes what is already known, and by looking beyond the lens of nursing and medicine this project uses storytelling to form a picture of how the needs, and ultimately the decisions the individual makes, shape the patterns of the group.

Likewise story telling is a way to learn of the “problematics” that too often go “un-narrated”. Some of the greatest concerns of the person seem small in comparison to what they had been through with treatment until we begin to hear them through the filter of cultural conformity and the social structures which embrace—or constrain—the cancer survivor.

This project explores the emic wisdom gained from storytelling and can be used in practice and in teaching. Acknowledging that when one steps beyond the boundaries of our particular profession into that of another we can explore the needs of populations more fully. In practice, it is used as a therapeutic model to elicit the survivors own knowledge to help them heal. As a teaching model it is used as a foundation to educate students about all ways of knowing.

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