***Coaching for Inner Peace: Negotiating the inner journey of the mind and emotions***

***Dr. Seema***

When a woman is diagnosed with breast cancer, her life comes to a grinding halt. Perhaps she was super busy caring for others as a mother, wife, sister, aunt, daughter, or grandmother. Now, she is forced to stop and focus on her health. There are many decisions she will face. Choices about treatment, medication, radiation, and surgery. Many of these will be discussed today. On the outer plane, there is certainly much to explore and do.

Yet what about what’s going on inside?

What about her feelings and thoughts? What about her perspective and mindset? What inner resources are available to her that might help her negotiate the inner journey while she moves through diagnosis and treatment? Studies show that women who participate in support groups fare better with breast cancer than their counterparts who are not provided this assistance. We also know that stress plays a role in nearly all illnesses yet to simply say she needs to decrease her stress levels would not be very helpful.

As health care practitioners, we need to do more. We can do more.

Ever since I was a young medical student in the 1990s, I was fascinated with exploring the role of the mind and emotions in healing and illness. I read everything I could. I attended every workshop possible within the demanding schedule of medical school and residency. After completing my pediatric residency, for ten years I practiced complementary healing arts including Ayurveda, homeopathy, Reiki, mind body medicine, meditation, and yoga.

However, it was not until I experienced chronic pain that I realized that the true healing we seek must come from within. I am not talking about mind over matter or wishing our ailments away. Rather, we all have within us a limitless reservoir for inner peace, love, and light. I stumbled upon this space using the teachings of *A Course in Miracles* and I experienced a profound healing – not just of my body but my mind and emotions as well. After my healing and recovery, I developed Coaching for Inner Peace – a simple, elegant, inclusive, holistic, and expansive approach to healing that integrates the outer journey of the body, illness, doctors, imaging, and surgeons with the inner journey of the mind and emotions. Coaching for Inner Peace empowers individuals, couples and families facing mental and/or physical health challenges to use their pain, stress, and discomfort as an impetus to go within and experience deep, transformational healing of body, mind, and soul.

Coaching for Inner Peace is a bridge we can traverse with confidence as we attend to the whole, leaving no parts of our experience behind. I look forward to meeting you all at the conference and sharing a template of Coaching for Inner Peace that you can use to support your healing or help facilitate healing in your patients.

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