

# ALWAYS A NURSE



Sigma Theta Tau International  
Honor Society of Nursing®

*Newsletter*

JUNE 2015

## Welcome

Welcome to the June 2015 issue of *Always a Nurse*! This issue shares news from the Honor Society of Nursing, Sigma Theta Tau International (STTI), information from other STTI members, and much more!

View past issues of *Always a Nurse* online at [www.nursingsociety.org/Membership](http://www.nursingsociety.org/Membership); click on "Always a Nurse." Your feedback is valuable to us! Please email suggestions or questions to [alwaysanurse@stti.org](mailto:alwaysanurse@stti.org) or call us at 888.634.7575 (U.S./Canada toll-free) or +1.317.634.8171 (International).

## In this Issue

- » 2015 International Nurse Researcher Hall of Fame inductees named
- » Getting a spine. You need one to survive and thrive!
- » Meet Eileen Richardson

## Inside the Society

### *Mark Your Calendar*

- » **26th International Nursing Research Congress**  
**23-27 July 2015**  
Puerto Rico Convention Center  
San Juan, Puerto Rico  
[congress.nursingsociety.org](http://congress.nursingsociety.org)
- » **43rd Biennial Convention**  
**7-11 November 2015**  
Aria Resort & Casino  
Las Vegas, Nevada, USA  
[convention.nursingsociety.org](http://convention.nursingsociety.org)

## 2015 INTERNATIONAL NURSE RESEARCHER HALL OF FAME INDUCTEES NAMED

[STTI] will induct 19 nurse researchers into the International Nurse Researcher Hall of Fame at STTI's 26th International Nursing Research Congress, 23-27 July 2015 in Puerto Rico. On Saturday, 25 July, the 19 nurses, representing the countries of Australia, Belgium, Canada, and the United States, will be presented with the International Nurse Researcher Hall of Fame award and participate in a conversation with STTI President Hester C. Klopper, PhD, MBA, RN, RM, FANSA.

Created in 2010, the International Nurse Researcher Hall of Fame recognizes nurse researchers who have achieved significant and sustained national or international recognition and whose research has improved the profession and the people it serves. The honorees' research projects will be shared through the Virginia Henderson Global Nursing e-Repository, enabling nurses everywhere to benefit from their discoveries and insights. The award presentation is sponsored by Wiley.

"These 19 honorees have achieved life-changing results through their research," says STTI President Hester C. Klopper, PhD, MBA, RN, RM, FANSA. "In keeping with the STTI mission to celebrate nursing excellence in scholarship, leadership, and service, I congratulate the 2015 Nurse Researcher Hall of Fame honorees. I look forward to learning more about their contributions and sharing them with our members worldwide."

"We are honored to sponsor STTI's International Nurse Researcher Hall of Fame awards and congratulate each recipient," says Wiley Publishing Manager for Nursing Kassie Stovell.

"Their insight, expertise, and integrity have greatly impacted the profession and improved the lives of the patients they serve."

— Kassie Stovell  
*Wiley Publishing Manager for Nursing*

"Wiley recognizes the contributions of these 19 inductees for their outstanding research, leadership, and efforts in advancing health around the world. Their insight, expertise, and integrity have greatly impacted the profession and improved the lives of the patients they serve."

STTI's annual international nursing research congress attracts nearly 1,000 nurse researchers, students, clinicians, and leaders, who learn from evidence-based research presentations. The theme for the 26th congress is "Question Locally, Engage Regionally, Apply Globally." To view details and register for the event, visit <http://congress.nursingsociety.org>.

*This article was published in Reflections on Nursing Leadership (RNL): STTI's e-magazine. Read more about the International Nurse Researcher Hall of Fame induction and meet the inductees at [www.reflectionsonnursingleadership.org](http://www.reflectionsonnursingleadership.org).*



# Getting a spine

## *You need one to survive and thrive!*

By Sharon M. Weinstein

Have you ever felt used, abused, taken advantage of, insecure? Chances are we have all felt that way at one time or another, especially in childhood. I grew up with very little — if any — self-esteem, and yes, I was walked on — and over — many times. I gravitated to folks similar to me. One of my first boyfriends was a wonderful guy who would give you the shirt off his back and never ask for a thing in return. And everyone took advantage of his generosity and kind spirit.

Being known as Mr. Good Guy may work for a while, but it certainly cannot last forever. At some point, even the most generous of us will finally say, “Enough!” Chances are, when that does happen, things have come to more than enough, and we are at our wits’ end trying to decide how to get on with our lives and assert ourselves.

Think back to your clinical rotations in school. Did you ever fear the supervisor who oversaw your unit? Were you amazed that no one — especially you — would ever stand up for what was needed at the time? Would you question a physician’s order? Did you sometimes feel as if schedules, patient acuity levels, and the workload were unfair? Did you just go with the flow and not wave any flags, so the day would be peaceful and you could eventually go home? When you got home, how did you feel? Were you wasted, exhausted, drained, emotionally spent? Does any of this sound familiar?

How much of a spine — or backbone — do you have? To answer that question and

determine where you stand and what you need to do to get out of your own way, ponder these questions. Respond honestly.

- Is the whole world out to get you?
- Do you moan and groan?
- Do you worry too much about what other people think?
- Do you avoid taking a stand?
- Are you easily distracted from your goals?
- Do you avoid all risks, even small ones?
- Do you control what you will do each day, or do others control you and your behaviors?

If your responses are anything like mine were at one time, it may be a good time to grow that spine, get a life, and move on! There’s no time better than now!

Where to begin? Think *assertiveness*. If you want to have better self-esteem and get your own needs met, you must learn how to assert yourself. At the very heart of assertion is knowing who you are and what you stand for and then expressing it in your everyday activities and encounters with others.

Assertion is not manipulation. It is a way of looking at life and knowing that you matter, that you count! Assertion is growing a spine, and when that happens, it is empowering. Once you feel good about yourself, you can go through life — and your workdays — with a healthy sense of pride, dealing with challenges that come your way. Make a commitment to be assertive, and be patient. A spine does not grow overnight. It takes months to develop, so focus on the big picture and what is important.

Now that you're feeling good about yourself, or at least better than before, stop apologizing for everything and everyone. I have a beautiful granddaughter — of course, everyone's granddaughter is beautiful — who, at age 3, has learned to manipulate her two older brothers to her advantage. When she gets her way, she smiles coyly and says, "I'm sorry."

How often do you find yourself apologizing and saying, "I'm sorry"? Practice standing up for yourself, and trust your voice. This is an ongoing process, and it begins with these easy tips:

### **Communicate effectively**

There is a reason we have two ears and one mouth — to listen more and speak less. Good communication mandates that we listen to others and express our feelings appropriately. Begin sentences with "I" rather than "you." Think carefully about why comments and approaches of others sometimes offend you.

Years ago, I participated in a Marriage Encounter weekend aimed at enhancing communication between partners. It took a long time to learn to say, "When you \_\_\_\_, I feel \_\_\_\_." But I learned to do it, and I improved my ability to share my feelings and thoughts openly. By avoiding blame, we improve understanding and are better able to accept the words of others.

Nonverbal communication is equally important. Check your body language. How you present yourself to people around you is important. Stand up straight with shoulders back. Relax your arms to communicate openness and confidence. Make eye contact, and smile.

### **Relax**

Stop and smell the roses. Take a deep breath through the nose, and exhale completely. To reduce stress, learn to relax in tense situations. Think meditation, deep muscle relaxation, emotional relief techniques, and more.

### **Be authentic**

Know thyself. Use self-discovery to know who you are, what you like, and what you dislike. Discover your authentic self, and then show the world. Speak the truth, and avoid being judgmental of others.

### **Practice mindfulness**

When you are fully present to the world — both inside and out — you are being mindful. Mindfulness can change your brain and help you deal with fear in a more effective manner. When you are mindful, you appreciate joys when they come your way, you're focused on the here and now, and you are present in the moment. Mindfulness rewards you with sound sleep, relief of stress, and an overall sense of well-being.

### **Be tenacious**

The world is filled with doubters who question our motives, our ideas, and our dreams. Some may be family members or co-workers. Tenacity is our ability to persevere, regardless of challenges we face. It is our ability to continue to pursue our dreams, to follow our heart, to do what is right. And we need lots of it!

We are all familiar with "Next!" Perhaps it is a tryout for a part in a play, an interview for an incredible position within an academic medical center, or an opportunity to shine as a Magnet coordinator for our health system. Sometimes, we are overlooked for a part, a position, or a role. When that happens, don't give up! Continue to advocate for yourself.

Yes, we need that spine to survive and thrive. A strong backbone will help us in our personal lives, career, family, and many other areas. It does not grow overnight. It requires commitment, confidence, and concentration, but when it appears, the impact is life-changing!

*This article was published in Reflections on Nursing Leadership (RNL): STTI's e-magazine. Read more about the Sharon M. Weinstein at [www.reflectionsonnursingleadership.org](http://www.reflectionsonnursingleadership.org).*

## Meet Eileen Richardson

Nursing has been part of my life for almost as long as I can remember. The association began in November 1955 when I became a student nurse at the Royal Infirmary of Edinburgh [Scotland]. Nursing continued for me from my teenage years until 2007 when I finally retired. By then I had spent the majority of my career teaching nursing and managing the programmes of a school of nursing. With so many years committed to the profession, it seemed that it was part of my life and therefore might continue beyond retirement.

Thus today, eight years after retirement, I still have several commitments which are nursing related. The most recent and now the most engaging is my role in Phi Mu Chapter, the England chapter of STTI. I have been secretary to the chapter since its inception as an honour society in 2009 and during its transition through chartering to become a chapter in July 2011. My first introduction to STTI came with a visit to the biennial convention in 2001, when I discovered what the organisation stood for and the benefit it could provide for its members. I continue to enjoy my work with the chapter and have seen the increase in our membership and its spread through the country, which has been very rewarding.

STTI has many global organisations and groups forming regional committees. Being part of the Europe Region, I have been a member of the membership involvement group since its inception. I also attended the last biennial convention as a delegate in Indianapolis [Indiana, USA] and look forward to a further opportunity to help represent the chapter at Las Vegas [Nevada, USA] in November this year.

During my last employment in the School of Health and Social Care at Bournemouth



University [England], the school became a member of a European organisation called COHEHRE; this stands for the Consortium of Health and Rehabilitation Institutes of Higher Education in Europe. This consortium has membership across Europe and provides a forum for many international activities. Bournemouth University withdrew its membership in 2012, but as a long-term member I was offered the opportunity to become an honorary member. I felt honoured to be offered this opportunity and have continued to lead a group within the organisation which is committed to developing and teaching intercultural care. Three members of the group developed and ran a three-day workshop with this title for members of the organisation in Bruges [Belgium] and Istanbul [Turkey], and it is anticipated that a further workshop will take place in Barcelona [Spain] next spring.

My last role in the university was as international co-ordinator, which provided me with opportunities to work with nursing colleagues both in Europe and North America. This left me with many contacts, some of which have continued. One of the last projects incorporated a partnership with Tallinn Health College in Estonia as well as two Scandinavian colleges. This link with Tallinn Health College has continued, and I have been asked to attend when they run their international week each year. I have enjoyed supporting them as they have become more assured in their participation in international work.



This involvement with international work is reflected in my third role in retirement, that being vice president of the European Transcultural Nursing Association. Although described as European in recent times, it has become more international, having attracted members from both the U.S. and Australia. My involvement in the previous project led me to join and become an active part of this organisation. This summer the organisation will hold its annual conference in Budapest, the capital of Hungary. Planning for this was possibly while I attended the COHEHRE conference in Budapest in April.

Lastly I have a great interest and involvement in the Retired Nurses National Home, which is situated in Bournemouth. Until the end of March this year I was a trustee, but the home is now part of a larger charity and my role will now continue as a volunteer. The history of the home is fascinating, built in 1938 when nurses had to live in the nurses home at the hospital during their working lives and had no property and very little pension when they retired. With the situation for nurses in today's world being quite different on retirement, the need for the home has to a large extent dissipated; however, there are still around 50 retirees for whom this is home and will be until they die. As a trustee, I was involved in many of the decisions about the way the home was run, but for me the greatest interest and pleasure was

in getting to know the residents and their stories. This is so important, and a successful application has been made to the UK Heritage Lottery Fund, and we have just been granted £9400 [roughly US \$15,000] to record the memories of these nurses and create a display of nursing memorabilia which will be temporarily available to the public and then form a permanent display at the home itself. The story of the home and its residents is important to conserve, and plans are afoot to do so.

While associated with the home, I have also carried out monthly meetings with the residents. Sometimes I have simply shown slides of my travels around the world, but more importantly I have been able to keep them up to date with changes in nursing and health care in England. They are very keen to debate such issues as they emerge. My connection with the home has also made it possible for the residents to liaise with nurses at the university, particularly to present today's students with evidence of the historical nature of the profession.

These activities enable me to keep up to date with developments in the profession and have given me the opportunity to develop working relationships with faculty both in Europe and the U.S. I feel privileged to have been given these opportunities, and hope I have used them well.

*Submitted by Eileen Richardson*



Sigma Theta Tau International  
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550 W. North St.  
Indianapolis, IN 46202 USA  
888.634.7575 (U.S./Canada toll-free)  
+1.317.634.8171 (International)  
members@stti.org  
[www.nursingsociety.org/membership](http://www.nursingsociety.org/membership)