

What are the experiences of spirituality for HT Practitioners and Instructors?

by

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As a way of ascertaining from Healing Touch (HT) practitioners their experiences of spirituality and how they live out the holistic philosophy of HT in their daily lives and spiritual practices, this exploratory descriptive research study used a qualitative interpretive methodology to answer the research question: *What are the experiences of spirituality for HT Practitioners and Instructors?*

The research study was conducted in two phases – firstly, an initial emailed questionnaire; and secondly, focus group interviews at/after a Healing Touch Retreat at Shadowcliff, CO. Following ethics approval through the primary author's employer, Australian Catholic University, the initial survey was completed by 35 North American Healing Touch Certified Practitioners/ Instructors prior to the Retreat. The survey informed the development of 10 questions for eight focus groups - six were held at Shadowcliff, later, one was held in Chicago and one was held in Brisbane, Australia.

Data analysis of the focus group data was completed by an immersion/crystallisation process identified by Miller and Crabtree (1992). The early themes from the focus group data analysis include: *Coming home to Healing Touch; Starting the Healing Touch journey; Coming home to nursing; Coming home to self; Coming home to community; Searching for a life purpose; Something sacred happens; Caring for self; Caring for the earth; Experiences that deepen spirituality.* Each of the themes is currently being further analysed to deepen the understanding of the phenomenon. For example, the first theme of *Coming home to Healing Touch* has been further analysed to reveal the following sub-themes: *Beginning the Healing Touch journey: on the same wavelength; Walking on the earth as a stranger, an alien: feeling of not belonging before HT; Being with my tribe: experiencing belongingness in HT; You really don't know who I am: a HT group is not like other groups; Feeling unsafe and scared like a child: coming home to a safe place; They kept it sacred: taking time to experience home.* A publication relating to the first theme and its sub-themes is currently in preparation.

Stay Tuned! A link to the completed manuscript will be provided when publication is completed.