

Counseling and Health Services

Wellness Papers

2004 - 2005

HELPING UCI BE FIT FOR EXCELLENCE

By Thomas A. Parham, Ph.D.

Assistant Vice Chancellor, Counseling and Health Services

Director, Counseling Center



UCIrvine

A Collection of Articles from:

Alexander and Jane Nakatani - Honor Thy Children -
“the killing power of human and self denigration”

Ms. Paula L. McGee - Is Your Career Your
Calling - “your passion directs you to your
calling”

Wellness Papers

In this issue

Welcome Letter & Explanation	1
Honor Thy Children Mr. and Mrs. Nakatani	2-4
Counseling and Health Services Units ...	5-7
Is Your Career Your Calling Ms. Paula L. McGee	8-10
Six Dimensions of Wellness	11
Wellness in an Academic Environment	12
Editor	Angela Mayeda

Welcome



Greetings! Welcome the second edition of the Wellness Papers. Within these pages you will find different perspectives and a broader look at health and wellness. Alexander and Jane Nakatani share their perspective on “Honoring Thy Children.” Their moving life story, filled with tragedy and triumph reminds us all about not taking life for granted. Reverend and former All-American basketball player Paula McGee invites us to distinguish between our career choices and our true passion. Each of these presentations is provocative and moving.

In providing you with this information, it is also my hope to challenge your sensibilities about the nature of health, and the need to expand our definitions beyond the physical realm. After all, restricting our focus to physical health alone and ignoring emotional, social and even spiritual dimensions of health is a posture that we must rethink. Indeed, true wellness is a holistic construct that demands a more comprehensive focus.

During the past eight years, I have had the opportunity to lead a cluster of units on UCI’s campus known as Counseling and Health Services. These units are charged with coordinating the delivery of a broad range of mental and physical health services, which are designed to meet the needs of students and other members of the campus community.

Counseling and Health Services units are challenged to elevate our domains of intervention from tertiary levels to primary preventions. After all, it is primary prevention that offers the greatest hope of addressing a myriad of health related concerns. In that spirit, we offer this booklet to help disseminate information about health promotion efforts.

I am proud to share with you this information and hope that these materials will serve as your personal invitation to a more healthy lifestyle.

Sincerely,

Thomas A. Parham, Ph.D.
Assistant Vice Chancellor,
Counseling and Health Services
Director, Counseling Center

Honor Thy Children

by Alexander and Jane Nakatani

Keynote Address for the Wellness Symposium 2003



Al and Jane Nakatani were living the American Dream. Al, a clinical social worker, and Jane, a much-beloved elementary school teacher, had successful careers, a comfortable home, and were the proud parents of three bright children. Like millions of other parents, Al and Jane were blind to the strains that family, society and culture had put on the lives and self-esteem of their sons. Multi-layered discrimination, racism, and homophobia plagued their sons' search for identity and self-acceptance. Al and Jane's ignorance of their sons' struggles cost them dearly: They lost all three sons, one to murder and two to HIV/AIDS.

Inspired by the educational work of their youngest son, Guy Nakatani, who served as an HIV/AIDS educator during the last two years of his life, Al and Jane developed an educational program designed to sensitize others to what they have learned from their own personal and family experiences. The Nakatanis address issues that touch everyone, such as HIV/AIDS, discriminations against minorities, caring for the terminally ill, and dealing with death and dying. The most compelling subject addressed, however, is what the Nakatanis call *the killing power of human and self denigration*. Through their storytelling and the videos that document interviews of family friends, photos, video clips and narration by Al and Jane Nakatani, the story and video unfolds a powerful message of how human and self denigration destroys children and families. Through their eyes, the audience bears witness to their life story—their upbringing as children, college, marriage and raising a family of three children. Early on, their lives personify the American dream, but as the story unfolds, an imbedded pattern of denial, ignorance and insensitivity—*“the killing power of human and self denigration”* — is revealed.



Within the context of these difficult issues, the Nakatanis ultimately share messages of personal and family reconciliation, dignity and honor, hope and survival. Most importantly, however, is that the Nakatanis make a strong case for the need to *better understand and manage the human and self denigration process*, to promote comfort in cultivating rather than denigrating others for their diverse human characteristics.

Purpose of the Story: At approximately 8 a.m., on Saturday, Sep 20, 1986, I received a call from the coroner of San Diego County informing us that our 2nd born son, Greg Nakatani, was shot and killed during an argument with two men. That jarring phone call was the beginning of a dark and chilling period in the lives of our family, a time that Jane and I would watch each of our sons eerily perish every four years, beginning in 1986 with Greg and ending in 1994 with Guy. During that 8-year period we not only tried to right our sinking ship; but also initiated the process of trying to make sense of everything that was happening to us. Over time, we came to understand that our life experiences which included the premature and preventable deaths of all three of our sons was due, in great part, to the killing power of human and self denigration. Many folks, rightfully so, experience confusion whenever I make a reference to the killing power of human and self denigration. After all, did not Glen and Guy die from HIV/AIDS, and wasn't Greg shot to death? One might ask, what is the relationship between human and self denigration and dying from HIV/AIDS and being shot to death? Well, by telling you our story, we are confident that you will see the relationship.

History will record that the Nakatani family consisted of 5 members. However, we say that our family members were six in total. The sixth member was not a person, but rather an entity, as it continues to live. The entity took residency with us on our wedding day in 1960. It lived with and within our family, hiding in the dark crevices of our human condition, waiting for those opportunities to strike and destroy us, individually and collectively. Living virtually undetected amongst us, it preyed upon our respective human weakness in ways that led to the near total destruction of our family. We have since given a name to this entity, we call it human and self denigration. We have a great deal of respect for the entity, so much so that we begin our story by my telling you a little about it. So, as promised, let's start the story with an introduction of the entity, a life force that infused itself into the life processes of each Nakatani member. Its name is human and self denigration and possesses the following characteristics.

- Human denigration is the complex human process that can degrade, disenfranchise, disempower, diminish and destroy someone on the basis of their diverse human characteristics without any consideration as to the nature of their conduct.
- The manifestations of human denigration are reflected in the attitudes and behaviors that are abusive and violent in nature, directed to people based on their human characteristics and social standing, such as race, color, gender, age, national origin and nationality, religion, physical and/or mental disability, economic and social class, sexual orientation, and other such characteristics.
- Human denigration targets children; women; spouses; people of color; gays, lesbians, bi-sexual, trans-genders, and inter-sexed; the poor; homeless; newly-arrived immigrants; religious minorities; the physically and emotionally disabled; persons living with HIV/AIDS, the large and small bodied people; and others that may be viewed as “different”, in the negative sense of the word.
- Human denigration is part of our human condition, existing in individuals, families, cultures, communities, institutions and nations; and here in the United States, is so systemic as to be woven within the very fabric of our society.
- Its destructive powers have the greatest impact on our young people; as the minds, emotions and souls of young people are still undergoing development; and young people, relative to adults, often lack sufficient information, experiences and life management skills, to effectively understand and manage their human denigration experiences.

- Self denigration is the process that develops when a child/young person, cognitively, emotionally and spiritually incorporates his/her human denigration experiences into their sense of self. When a child self denigrates, that child is at greater risk to engage in high risk behaviors when seeking a sense of balance, acceptance, respect, dignity and love; love of self, love from family peers and ultimately, love from an intimate other.
- Some manifestations of self denigration are: reactive depressions, silence and withdrawal, sudden changes in behaviors, substance abuse, underachieving behaviors, eating disorders, suicidal ideation and behaviors, abuse and violence towards others and other self-destructing behaviors. Because human and self denigration can result in an individual being severely diminished and destroyed, both figuratively and literally, we say that human and self denigration has a killing power.

Closing Remarks

Today's program is titled, Honor Thy Children, One Family's Journey To Wholeness. In a way, the title is a bit misleading, as it concludes that our family has already achieved wholeness. However, our reality tells us that our journey to wholeness is one that is still evolving. Perhaps, what is of greater significance is not becoming whole in and of itself, but rather to understand the process that leads to wholeness. Much of our growth must be credited to our willingness to search deeply into ourselves and root out those qualities and characteristics about us that contributed to the premature deaths of our sons. We are still in the process of collectively determining what it was that led to our failure to provide safe passage for our sons. Our searching has taken us to examine our early childhood experiences and to identify those familial, cultural, community, religious and societal values and behaviors that can have devastating impact and effects on the mind of children and young people. The more we searched, the more it became apparent that residing within each of us as individuals there is the potential to degrade, disenfranchise, disempower, diminish and destroy another human being, as well as ourselves, for whatever reason or reasons we can use to justify our attitudes and conduct towards others. We now know this to be human and self denigration. We now know that our journey to wholeness requires our being able to sufficiently understand human and self denigration to where we can maximize our abilities to manage this terrible and destructive process.

“Perhaps what is of greater significance is not becoming whole in and of itself, but rather to understand the process that leads to wholeness.”

In keeping with the spirit the Nakatani family brought to the campus, the Counseling and Health Services cluster would like to encourage you to:

- Commit to supporting the dignity and humanity of each person.
- Remember that self affirmation should never be rooted in the denigration and dehumanization of other people.
- Never miss an opportunity to boldly challenge an inequality or speak out against social injustice.

(Thomas A. Parham, Ph.D., 2004)

Counseling and Health Services

Career Center

Mission: The mission of the Career Center is to provide students and alumni with the tools and support necessary to successfully attain their life development goals. The Career Center will collaborate with the campus community as an indispensable partner in the education and development of students, and provide exceptional customer service to our employers while recognizing individual recruiting needs.

100 Student Services Building I
(949)824-6881
www.career.uci.edu

Counseling Center

Mission: The University Counseling Center is committed to helping students achieve maximum benefit from their UCI experience. To that end, our intention is to support students in performing well academically, to assist them through the developmental tasks associated with their college student years, to help facilitate positive coping strategies, and to learn how to be more effective in developing, maintaining, and negotiating relationships with others. The Center is also committed to managing psychological crises (emergencies) which arise as a result of students' inability to cope with the pressures associated with a stressful academic environment.

202 Student Services Building I
(949)824-6457
www.counseling.uci.edu

Health Education Center

Mission: The UCI Health Education Center promotes healthy lifestyle choices through education, leadership opportunities, and campus programming.

206B Student Center
(949)824-WELL
www.health.uci.edu

Student Health Center

Mission: The fundamental purpose of the Student Health Center is to enable students to maximize the academic experience by supporting them in maintaining the best possible physical and mental health in a confidential, safe and nurturing environment.

501 Student Health
(949)824-5301
www.shs.uci.edu

Career Center

The central services and resources of the UCI Career Center focus on the career “fitness” of UCI students – undergraduates and graduate students. Our two primary goals are to assist students with career focus and/or graduate school planning; and to cultivate relationships with diverse employers seeking college educated talent.

Career success depends on a clear desire or goal orientation, appropriate career development behaviors, and excellent resources and support services. A student’s career “fitness” depends on their psychological and emotional conditioning; awareness and integration of personal values and ethics; positive connection to others, (family, community, and friends); and intellectual and academic development. These dimensions of wellness are the underpinnings or building blocks that support and foster clarity of personal direction and potential career success.

Our UCI Career Center core services assist students in the development of a career focus. Some examples of key resources include diverse workshops and seminars to support students and alumni as they search for internships or jobs or apply to graduate schools. Career Nights, Graduate School Day, Career Fairs, Internship Seminars, an Annual Ph.D. Job Search all day event are just a few of the activities. In addition, one on one career counseling, peer counseling, individual mock interviews on video tape, as well as drop-in advising provide multiple access points based on a student’s readiness to engage in the process. Individual specialty panels have focused on industries such as journalism and communications, hospitality, fashion design and marketing, and sports related career paths.

Career development occurs throughout the span of one’s college education and far beyond. The mission of the Career Center is to foster and promote career exploration and discovery as well as life long career management skills.

Counseling Center

Creating an Academic Community of Wellness:
The Role of the Counseling Center

The diverse staff of the Counseling Center is committed to supporting the mission of the Student Affairs Division and the Counseling and Health Services cluster in its aim to create an academic community of wellness. Through a holistic orientation to mental health services, the Counseling Center strives to promote a strong mind and spirit in an effort to support the achievement of academic excellence. This holistic orientation impacts not only students, but the entire UCI campus community.

The Counseling Center operates in a proactive, developmental model to promote positive mental health and enhance student success. Among the various dimensions of the wellness construct, we are in a position to impact most directly the psychological/emotional dimension and the spiritual/values/ethics dimension. Since wellness is influenced by a number of psychological factors such as attitude and self-esteem, Counseling Center staff is uniquely qualified to contribute to the health and wellness of students and the campus community.

A holistic orientation to the creation of an academic community of wellness emphasizes the interconnectedness of body, mind, and spirit, as well as the individual and his/her family, community, and environment. Counseling and treatment plans where students take an active role in developing strategies on their own behalf are encouraged and valued. Counseling Center staff support and encourage a healthy and balanced lifestyle by teaching effective coping skills and drawing upon the power of supportive relationships in developing treatment plans.

Health Education Center

Our core services respond to issues that threaten student academic success and long-term health, such as alcohol abuse, drug and tobacco use, poor sexual health management and nutrition habits. We work toward these goals using multifaceted health promotion strategies including sharing accurate information, promoting risk reduction skills development, and resource referral regarding various college health issues. Topic areas with direct relevance to students' health and academic success include alcohol and substance use, nutrition, sexual health, stress management, and smoking. Multiple formats are used to promote awareness and risk reduction including academic instruction, individualized consultation with professional health educators and trained student peers, health fairs and special events, web-based information, and passive educational displays.

This year, Health Education has directed energy and resources to creating passive educational displays that are transportable, novel and eye-catching. In the fall, the Sex Box was featured at various locations with high foot traffic (e.g. Ring Mall, Student Center) and was viewed by over 500 students. Of the 100+ students surveyed for feedback, over 98% stated that they had learned something new about sexual health, and 93% stated that they learned something new about risk reduction behaviors. The Mannequin project debuted winter quarter and more than 400 students provided feedback about its effectiveness as a tool for informing students how to care for a friend who is drunk. The response was overwhelmingly positive. In spring quarter, students who walk through a corridor created by the walls of Smoke Trails will learn about the risks and ramification of smoking.

Now in its third year, fall quarter Survival orients freshmen and transfer students to the many campus programs and resources that support healthy behaviors and contribute to academic retention and success. This year, 29 students and 14 student guides (Survival alumni) participated in the program. Survival's growing reputation as an experiential program that results in new students developing a sense of belonging with their peers, student clubs, and campus departments has led to a new partnership with the academic advisors in Biological Sciences. This spring, with their assistance, Health Education will outreach to biology major freshman on academic probation.

Student Health Center

Rather than just a medical clinic, the Student Health Center would like to be thought of as a Public Health facility for the UCI campus community. For we do more than just treating a cold or the flu, a sprained ankle or a tummy ache.

While the most visible of our functions is in the delivery of direct patient care, Student Health actively promotes a number of wellness measures. Top of the list is immunization, proven to be the most cost effective preventative intervention in the history of medicine. Student Health offers most basic vaccines including MMR (measles, mumps and rubella), Td (tetanus and diphtheria), hepatitis B, A, and the new combined form, polio, meningococcal meningitis (menomune), influenza, etc. Student Health has played an active role in the screening for tuberculosis among the campus's entering students for years. We have also been in active partnership with the Orange County Health Care Agency in the tracking, testing and treatment of individuals following exposure to communicable diseases of public health concern, including tuberculosis and meningitis.

Student Health believes in mind and body wellness. Whereas a patient may present on the first visit with a physical complaint, our physicians are astute in detecting underlying emotional issues and will make appropriate, timely referral for psychological services. Our Mental Health professionals treat anxiety, depression, adjustment disorders, learning disabilities, addiction problems such as tobaccos, and drugs, as well as major psychosis and the more common forms of eating disorders. Often our approach is multidisciplinary, involving a team of professionals including physicians, nurses, counselors, nutritionists, as well as outside resources to bring about a patient's healing.

Another important wellness initiative that Student Health actively promotes is reproductive health maintenance. In addition to family planning and contraceptive services, our Women's Health Clinic screens and manages breast disorder, pelvic infections, and gynecologic cancer, all these in a private and confidential environment. Screening for sexually transmitted infection in both genders enables early detection and treatment of diseases, with the goal to prevent further disease transmission and future infertility.

Is Your Career Your Calling

by Ms. Paula L. McGee

Keynote Address for the Wellness Symposium 2004



There are hundreds of books, tapes, and workshops on choosing a career. Several tests identify skills that help us choose the right career path. Even as children we are bombarded with the question, “What do you want to be when you grow up?” We are expected to answer with clarity this deep question and encouraged to choose a career. Our goal, however, should not be to just choose a career, but to choose our calling. If we choose our calling, we will find our career.

Your vocation or calling is your purpose in life—your gift to the world. If you choose your calling you will find a job that you love and as the saying goes, “Find a job that you love and you will never have to work a day in your life.” The people who only choose a career instead of their calling usually wake up each morning regretting that they have to go to work—repeatedly hitting the snooze on the alarm clock. They hate facing another day. Yet, if you find your calling and pursue it, it will inspire you. You will want to go to work each day. Life will become an adventure—an exploration as you eagerly look for what life will present you.

Many of us have been working at our careers for so long that we are just numb. We go from appointment to appointment in over-booked days—days that are full, yet empty of passion and joy. We never experience what it is like to do what we are called to do. We work hard at our career. Yet, the days and years go by and we still find ourselves unfulfilled. We climb the corporate ladder to arrive at a place we are not sure we really want to be. After many years of sacrifice and long hours we wonder, is it worth it? Many of us feel empty and we find ourselves with a life void of passion.

Your passion directs you to your calling. If you follow your passion, it will lead you to your calling. Your passion is the beacon of light, no matter how faint, that will lead you to the place of your calling. The search for your calling may take some time. It is not an overnight exploration. You must be open to accept that the Creator has something just for you—a divine purpose. When you are confident that your life has a purpose, you will be receptive to knowing what your calling is.

“Your passion is the beacon of light, no matter how faint, that will lead you to the place of your calling.”

One reason that many of us do not know what we are called to do is that we associate a “calling” only with the religious meaning. We assume that only clergy are “called.” We are taught that only the priest or the minister is called. Each of us, however, has a calling. The Creator does not discriminate and only call a few people. We must expand our understanding of being called to reach outside the walls of the church, cathedral, or synagogue. The invitation or calling is extended to all.

There is something unique and special for each of us to do. There is no shortage of work. No task or job is too big or too small. We must be intentional of not putting God in one of our boxes and limiting

the many possibilities. “When the pupil is ready, the teacher will come.” When we are open, we can begin to hear the divine whisper of God leading and directing us—or more specifically—calling us.

When I am working with people to find their calling, the first question I ask is, “Who are you?” I ask them to complete an “I am” sentence. “I am a _____.” I insist that they be specific. “I am a lawyer,” “I am a doctor;” “I am a homemaker.” I ask them to answer by sharing *who they are* and not just with *what they do*. You may be a professor—that’s what you do—your career. That does not necessarily mean, however, that’s “who you are”—your calling. Your career is that of a professor, but your calling may be a “writer” or “researcher.” Being a college professor simply affords you the opportunity to write or to do research. It is important to not only talk about what you do, but to be specific and identify that which speaks to your spirit. I was a basketball player, and I was very good at it, but it wasn’t my calling; it was only my career. If you would have asked me if basketball was my calling, my reply would have been “no.” I would have said, “This is what I do, not who I am.”

A calling is “who you are.” A career is “what you do.” There are a lot of people who write because of their career; their job requires it. But, they are not writers, even if they spend the majority of their time doing it. They would not identify themselves as writers. They would never say, “I am a writer.” If writing is your calling, however, then you readily identify with “I am a writer.” Some people teach as a career and then there are those teachers who are called to teach. They can’t pass up the opportunity to teach, even if their job title does not say “teacher.” Their career and job title may be corporate trainer, coach, or counselor. Their calling—what resonates with their spirit, however is “teacher.”



Many of us are unable to make the “I am” statement because we are not the subject of our own story. We are living out scripts written for us by other people. For years I could not say, “I am a preacher.” Fear always surfaced when I tried to say it. I was afraid of others’ responses. I was afraid of the commitment of my words. It was only after a few years of preaching and facing my own fears that I could confidently say, “I am a preacher.” Now I am settled in my “I am statement” and each day I continue to learn what that means.

A calling is 24-7-365. A career is from 9 to 5. When you are called to do something, however, it is not limited to nine to five. You do it whenever you can because you love it. If you are an artist who is called, you do not only paint on the clock. You feel compelled to capture an image on canvas when you are moved or inspired. You may work from nine to five for the discipline, but your calling is not limited by a workday. No schedule or time clock is able to harness the desire, creativity, and passion to do what you are called to do. Called teachers can’t pass up the opportunity. They are compelled to teach whether it is during the school day or not. When you are called, your work cannot be measured by a nine to five schedule. The only adequate measurement for a calling is a lifetime.

A calling is what you would do for free. A career is what they have to pay you to do. What is the one thing that you love so much that you would do it for free? What would you do if money were no issue? Sometimes we miss our calling because we think that we can’t make money doing it. We immediately assume that it is just a hobby or a pastime. Many of the services and things that we give away might be exactly what we are being called to do. The wonderful thing about America is that you can make a living doing almost anything.

On the other hand, there are some of us who have not pursued our calling because we think that if we earn money by using our gift or talent, the gift will, in some way, become contaminated or cursed. We find ourselves captive to old teachings that say, “Money is the root of all evil.” We have bought into the notion that there is some glory in suffering. We are the martyrs and suffering artists. We are often confused about our calling and money. **Let me be perfectly clear: just because you would do, what you are called to do for free doesn’t mean you have to!** The fact that you would do it for free is just an indicator of your passion and love for it. You must take a balanced approach to money when it comes to recognizing your calling.

Money and fame should never be the primary factor in determining your calling. You will never find your calling if making money and being famous are your motivations. Wealth and fame may be the results of pursuing your calling, but they should never be the primary focus. No amount of money or fame can equal the peace and sense of wholeness that comes from doing what you are called to do. If your focus is fame and money, fame and money will control your life. They will determine your destiny. Focus on your gifts and talents and listen for the quiet still voice. Money and the noise usually associated with the pursuit of fame will make it difficult to hear the divine whisper. Understand that if you honor the calling in your life and follow God’s leading, you will arrive where you need to be. Whether that means wealth and fame—or not—you will be where you are supposed to be.

A calling is what you have to give. A career is about what you receive. A career is usually just about how much money and what benefits you will receive. Your calling is about what you have to give. Although you may be thankful for the many benefits, income, and accolades that may accompany the pursuit of your calling, a calling is about the opportunity to do what you are called to do. It is about sharing that which God has given you.

I heard a minister give one of the best definitions of a calling. He said that a calling is “a sincere sense of ought—that something ought to be done and that I ought to do it.” It is the one thing that you just have to do. What is it that you wish to share with the world? The world is waiting for what only you have to give—the song, the book, the business, that can only be created by you. What is it that you have to give?

The Creator is always speaking and inviting us to accept our calling. It begins with our decision to do it—not to settle for anything less than what we are called to do. When we take the first step, the Creator will begin to open doors. And when we dare to choose our calling we will find our career.



Paula McGee shares a moment with the Health Education staff.

Counseling and Health Services

Six Dimensions of Wellness

Counseling and Health Services believes that academic excellence is facilitated and strengthened when students have a strong mind, healthy body, enlivened spirit, and clear aspirations, nurtured in a supportive environment. At UCI, we strive to create an academic ambiance which reflects the building blocks to Wellness. Through instructional and co-curricular experiences, students learn to master the six building blocks to a healthy academic experience, and a brighter future ripe with possibilities.



Wellness is a Way of Life at UC Irvine

Wellness in an Academic Environment

Counseling and Health Services would like to remind you that wellness in an academic environment provide the following opportunities:

