



**Verna Hunt, ND**  
**Year of Graduation: 1982**  
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**BSc (Hons Kin), DC, ND**



*Verna has been in clinical practice for over 30 years. Her education includes: 1973 Honours Bachelor of Science degree from the University of Waterloo in Kinesiology, 1979 Doctor of Chiropractic from the Canadian Memorial Chiropractic College, 1982 Naturopathic Doctor the Canadian College of Naturopathic Medicine. Her clientele encompasses all ages and stages of the health and life cycle. In each case, she assesses the underlying causes of the individual's lack of wellness and tailors care to their particular situation while teaching them how to care for themselves over a lifetime. Verna also writes and lectures on many topics.*

**What modality do you specialize in?** I do not care for the word “specialize,” it sounds too allopathic. I specialize in human beings. My job is to listen carefully and assess who that person is in their manifestation at the moment, ascertain what got them to that moment and what could be more optimal for them in their life circumstances. I carefully question and do a complete assessment of all aspects of a patient’s life: physical, mental, emotional, and spiritual. I include a complete standard physical examination and laboratory tests and also examine unconventional aspects such as tongues and irises. You end up with more questions than answers when you begin. You have to know the person as fully as possible before you reach diagnosis.

**Please share your most useful clinical pearl.**

Careful listening and from that careful questioning. Careful meaning full of care. Adapt your care based on your patient. For example, when treating a young child you would not do a lot of verbal questioning, instead you would use touching etc. Listen and phrase your questions differently depending on your patient. Physical symptoms are often hard to express, as are emotional, mental, and spiritual symptoms. Take time and ask questions. Try to understand your patient’s aspirations. I ask all my patients “If we were having a conversation three years from today, what are the things that would have to improve in your life and health for you to be happy?” The answers are always different and interesting.

**What are the best resources that you have found and use regularly?** As an elder in the profession, my resources are hands-on versus being in print. Touch is a very important resource and I use it regularly, as well as energetic testing. There weren’t as many machines over 30 years ago when I started to practice. See the body as a physiological dynamic process from the cell to the whole, think about the functions and physiology of it. Explore the person’s relationship with the cells and how that person is in their physical world. Each one will be different based on their age, cultural, social, physiological and life experiences. Our naturopathic legacy is to see the macro in the micro and assist in the evolution into harmony.

**What is the biggest challenge you have faced as an ND and how did you overcome it?** In my early years, I ran around thinking I had to know everything. I felt that I simply didn’t know enough and wasn’t a good enough ND. Eventually I grew more confident and realized I knew how to help my clients listen to their bodies and address their health issues and that was good enough. If I needed more academic information I would go and find it. The work isn’t about me; I just bring to it every day what I can. It took a while not to get caught up in the paper chase game. I think it’s important we don’t get caught up in that as profession. I think it’s important to do research, but it’s as important to be present in the experience.

**Share a patient success story and describe your role in this.** A gentleman in his late 70’s who was dying of prostate cancer came to me because he simply wanted his death journey to be easier. We did just that, he lived longer and was as functional as possible. Good death is also a good thing. Another patient that comes to mind was a little girl, about two years old, who had been run over by a car. She was still developing, she was toilet trained and only spoke a few words, but was a very dynamic girl. Her parents had taken her to the hospital where she was discharged once they found nothing was broken. She had lacerations all over her legs and couldn’t walk as her body was twisted. I treated her using hands-on work and a protocol; I gave her arnica and used light therapy to treat the inflammation. While treating her as I asked her if she was in pain, she replied yes. As I turned away to reach something I heard her whisper “I need my arnica.” “My job is done”, I thought, “This child knows what she needs to help her!” She’s now four, quite active and back to good health.

**What advice do you have for future NDs and new practitioners?** Listen to your elders! Ask them, “What is the most important thing you can teach me?” It is important to plan, not just financially but for your business as a whole. As a practitioner, you need to start as a generalist. Do not focus on being a specialist in a certain area, i.e. homeopathy or chelation. Try many things! See the old and the young, treat a variety of conditions. It will take five to ten years before you will really get the hang of it, but you have your whole life! Find a mentor, somebody you can talk to and who can guide you as you begin to practice. Being a Naturopathic Doctor is a vocation not just a job. Embrace it, evolve yourself through your work and administer care through your heart.

**ND Profile**

*This feature will connect you with your greatest resource, each other! From seasoned practitioners to new grads, the ND profiled will share clinical pearls, resources, tips for success and personal stories. If you are interested in being profiled please call Vanessa Iannetta at 416-233-2001 ext. 222 or email [marketing@oand.org](mailto:marketing@oand.org)*