



December 2018

Dear Members of the NFI,

There are two ways of spreading light: to be the candle or the mirror that reflects it.

Edith Wharton (1862-1937) American novelist, short story writer, playwright, and designer

When I was a Harvard graduate student, I learned about Kuhn's theory of how models develop and then shifts occur to replace them with new paradigms (*The Structure of Scientific Revolutions*, 1962). Kuhn describes how the life cycle of a model begins with "normal science", practice guided by an evidence-based foundation. When problems or difficult issues arise which appear insurmountable "model drift" begins to occur. Models unresponsive to new challenges can enter a crisis state that can ultimately result in paradigm change.

I have been thinking about our Synactive Theory and its expression: NIDCAP. We have a powerful model whose very nature is dynamic. It has the capacity to evolve and develop to meet changing needs and demands. Informing our work, for over thirty years, are NIDCAP's core principles:

- becoming "the voice of the infant", by translating each infant's unique behaviors and adapting care and the environment to these expressions, benefits brain, mental and physical well-being
- supporting the infant's family as the infant's primary and lifelong caregivers enhances parental well-being and infant development
- customizing and adapting hospital organizations, including education, mentorship, and support for staff, guides the care of each baby and family through their hospital experience

The NFI has sustainability challenges which threaten our organization's survival, including obtaining much needed human and financial resources and challenges to our model of being assumed by other approaches. The European Foundation for the Care of Newborn Infants (EFCNI) just launched an important initiative, *European Standards of Care for Newborn Health*. This ambitious undertaking will support premature and ill newborns and their families from Europe and around the world. At our recent NIDCAP Trainers Meeting, we were introduced to the EFCNI's proposed framework "Infant- and family-centered developmental care". Our members noted that this approach is based on NIDCAP and our core principles listed above (rather than merely an example of a type of intervention). If NIDCAP is going to weather its current challenges and meet the needs that it was designed to address, it is imperative that our NFI community *credit* and *champion* NIDCAP. It will be our collective efforts to address this issue that will honor and sustain our model, our training, our research efforts, our organization and ourselves. And most especially this is how we will assure that NIDCAP realizes its potential for *a global society in which all hospitalized newborns and their families receive care in the evidence-based NIDCAP model*.

Hope your celebrations of World Prematurity Day (WPD) were successful and rewarding. We invite you to share your activities and happenings with us by sending your stories and photographs

to shareyourstory@nidcap.org. Please visit our [World Prematurity Day](#) page to see the ways 2018's WPD was marked by our members around the world.

As people from all around the world celebrate this *season of light* with celebrations, ceremonies and festivals, the NFI sends wishes of peace and renewal to all.

Yours in support of the NFI,

Deborah

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