

Don't Let Your Light Go Out: Finding Balance and Rejuvenation in Nursing

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Last year, I had the privilege of participating in one of ANA panels, an experience that I am honored to have been a part of. This year, I am honored to contribute to their platform by sharing some reflections on a topic that resonates deeply with many of us in the field: maintaining our own well-being amidst the demanding roles we undertake.

As a nurse, I understand firsthand the profound rewards that come with caring for others. Yet, I also recognize the significant toll it can take. We wear multiple hats: we are caregivers, parents, partners, and so much more. Balancing these roles can sometimes feel overwhelming, and if we're not careful, it can lead to burnout.

It's crucial to remember that caring for ourselves is not a luxury but a necessity. Just as we encourage our patients to prioritize their health, we too must make self-care a priority. The question is, how do we achieve this in our busy lives?

Schedule the Time

One of the most effective ways to prevent burnout is to intentionally incorporate moments of rejuvenation into our schedules. It might seem challenging with the demands of our roles, but setting aside even small chunks of time for ourselves can make a significant difference. Whether it's a short daily walk, a weekend hobby, or simply a few minutes of quiet reflection, these moments can help recharge our mental and emotional batteries.

Engage in Activities Outside of Work

To truly take care of ourselves, it's essential to engage in activities that bring us joy and fulfillment beyond our professional duties. Pursuing hobbies, spending quality time with loved ones, or engaging in creative outlets can provide a much-needed escape from the pressures of our roles. These activities not only offer relaxation but also a sense of accomplishment and satisfaction that can enhance our overall well-being.

Advocate for Change

We can also be a powerful voice for change within our profession. By advocating for better working conditions, mental health support, and resources for nurses, we contribute to a healthier work environment for ourselves and our colleagues. When we speak up about the challenges we face and suggest improvements, we not only help ourselves but also pave the way for a more sustainable and supportive practice for future generations of nurses.

Build a Support Network

Connecting with fellow nurses and healthcare professionals can provide valuable support and encouragement. Sharing experiences, seeking advice, or simply having a listening ear can alleviate the sense of isolation that sometimes accompanies our roles. Building a support network within and outside of our workplace can provide both practical help and emotional comfort.

I encourage you; don't let your light go out. Our profession is both demanding and deeply rewarding, and it's essential to recognize the importance of self-care. By scheduling time for ourselves, engaging in fulfilling activities, advocating for necessary changes, and building supportive connections, we can sustain our passion and energy in the nursing field.

Let's remember that taking care of ourselves is not an act of selfishness but one of self-preservation and empowerment. By doing so, we not only enhance our own well-being but also improve the quality of care we provide to those we serve. Keep your light shining bright—you share so much hope and compassion for others, so be kind to yourself and don't let your light go out! ■