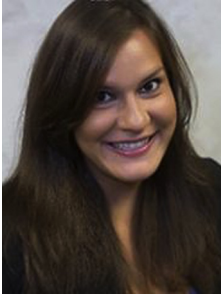


Preface

The Juxtaposition of Caring



Susan Bartos, PhD, RN, CCRN
Editor

Nursing sits at the juxtaposition of self-care. On one side is the career: the call of nursing: absolute and definitive selflessness. Nursing is the ability, skill, and desire to care for another being during a time of need and desperate vulnerability. On the other side is the insatiable, self-motivated hunger for more: more knowledge, more technology, more validation, and faster, more evidence-based advancement. The fast-paced, intense environment is magnified in the critical care unit and for those who practice within the environment. The constant push and pull are exhausting: it's tiring, it's stressful, and it burns us out.

This issue of *Critical Care Nursing Clinics of North America* was curated at a pivotal time. The well-being of the critical care clinician was a topic of interest a year ago, at the time this issue was envisioned; however, this topic has morphed into a vital necessity. Many of these titles were written pre-COVID-19, yet the fundamental messages of decreasing stress, enhancing moral resilience, coping with bereavement, and supporting those clinicians who may be practicing in multiple environments, such as inpatient and in an academic institution, are perhaps even more applicable now. Within these pages is the guiding wisdom to find the restoration of purpose, to flourish through creativity, and to finding joy in caring for the critically ill.

In the current climate of health care, a strong foundation of wellness is essential for critical care clinicians. Mental clarity, strength, happiness and joy, gratitude, perspective, and tenacity surround the foundational pillars of a critical care nurse who is guided by evidence-based practices. Multifaceted wellness programs, self-restorative practices, and solidifying wholesome purpose for critical care nurses can lead to longevity in the career while promoting safer patient outcomes and initiatives. Imagine a world where the 2 sides of the juxtaposition are not under constant opposing stress, but

are connected and balanced. Imagine living in peace, not as patients, not as nurses, but as people.

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