

Finding and Holding the Passion in Nursing

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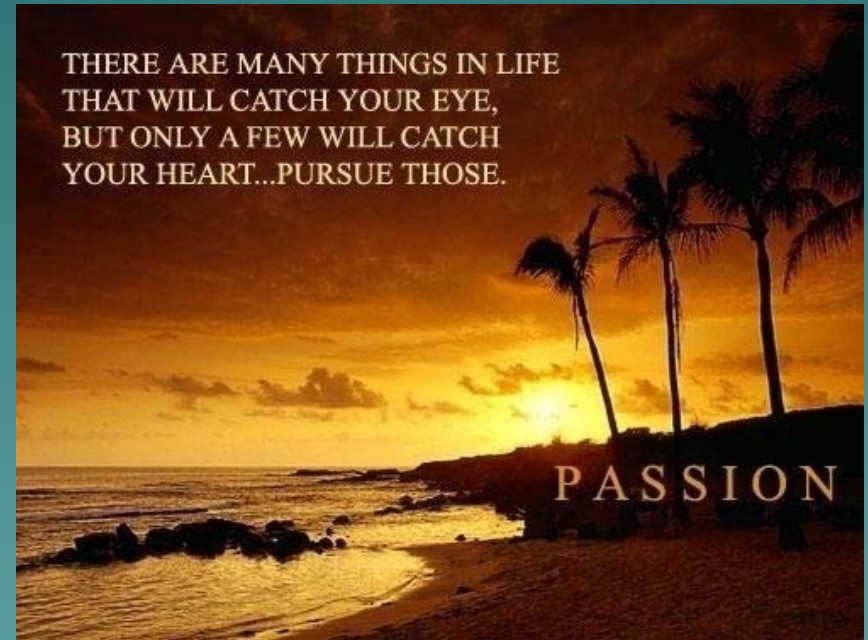
Director Interprofessional
Practice, Outcomes &
Education

TSH

A stylized silhouette of a mountain range in shades of teal, located in the bottom right corner of the slide.

What is Passion?

- ◆ Remember why you went into the profession
- ◆ Remember those moments that made your heart sing as a nurse
- ◆ Remember what keeps you going on those awful days
- ◆ That is YOUR passion



My Mantra

- ◆ Everyone needs a nurse!!!
- ◆ The moments where nurses make a difference
- ◆ The relationship between nurses and patients – to make “it” happen
- ◆ The trust that the public has for nurses
- ◆ The importance and centrality of nursing in the health care arena

Nursing is:

- ◆ Working with individuals, families, groups and communities
- ◆ Assisting and supporting the “patient” through anticipated and unanticipated life events
- ◆ formal and informal support
- ◆ strategic action
- ◆ advocating for health and wellness (with a focus on social determinants of health)

What does access to a nurse look like?

- ◆ Changing fear → Belief in self
- ◆ Overcoming inabilities → Coping and thriving
- ◆ Moving deficits → Potential realized
- ◆ Being in pain → To being pain-free
- ◆ Viewed by others as incapable → Being the best one can be
- ◆ Living with inequalities → Benefiting from nurse as change enabler

This is what being a nurse means to patients and to the health care system

So why is nursing often invisible?

- ◆ Omnipresence → invisibility
- ◆ Leaders in health care may not understand or perhaps value the work and so invisible
- ◆ Nursing viewed as an interchangeable commodity
- ◆ Touching of the body, laying of hands, getting “dirty”, wearing a uniform not well valued in society overall and often not in health care
- ◆ Interchangeable parts (some “nurse is a nurse” issues)
- ◆ Support for professional nursing practice often seen as a luxury and not a necessity
- ◆ Nurses buying in to the above or giving up!!

Ways to help nurses become visible

- ◆ As nurses – believe in what you bring to care
- ◆ As nurses – use your voice, until people listen
- ◆ As nurses – have a vision for your profession – what supports it, what inhibits it
- ◆ As leaders – spend time in clinical areas, really seeing and understanding the everyday life of the nurse and use this knowledge to inform decision-making
- ◆ For both – make any biases you have around nursing evident and work them through

Visibility and Professionalism

- ◆ If the practice and essence of nursing are understood then the organization can support nursing practice in meaningful ways
- ◆ If the practice and essence of nursing is understood only from a formal leadership level and not from actually experiencing and connecting with the everyday life of the nurse – then interventions to support nursing well intentioned but often meaningless/ineffective
- ◆ Our actions speak louder than our words

Actions that support professionalism in nursing

- ◆ As nurses- Speaking the truth about your reality- with possible solutions – NOT just complaining
- ◆ As nurses – Believing that you have a body of knowledge and need the time to use it properly
- ◆ As leaders- be visible in the clinical areas of leaders – not just to “glad hand” but to listen and observe
- ◆ As leaders - really listen to understand and not assuming or judging that you know what is happening for the clinical nurses

Other actions that support professionalism in nursing

- ◆ Setting clear expectations and using language and examples that have meaning in the everyday practice of nurses
- ◆ Help nurses meet these expectations and then hold them accountable to them – mediocrity is not an option, not are the expectations optional
- ◆ Hire and retain to the highest level. Don't hire just to fill a spot
- ◆ Learn how to give and receive feedback. Neither clinical staff nor leadership are often highly skilled at this- accept that and make it an overall goal

Other things to consider

- ◆ Role descriptions, job descriptions and job postings should not be a list of tasks but rather based on an expectation of a holistic practice philosophy
- ◆ Remember: If the system sets up a task focused approach –that's all that you get
- ◆ Clinical nursing staff should be on key decision making committees and assisted (salary paid) to attend. This demonstrates a commitment that clinical nurses know what is needed and have the solutions
- ◆ Orientation, performance management and professional development should be based on competencies, not skills and should include knowledge, skill, aptitude and attitude

Final Comment

“ If your actions inspire others to dream more, learn more, do more and become more...., then you ARE a leader”

John Quincy Adams

This, in a sentence, IS nursing!!
Embrace it, Speak of it, Be it.