



# THE CORRECTIONAL NURSE

Inspiring

## Professional Correctional Nursing Practice

July 2023

I was visiting recently with a good friend of mine who is a Family Practice Nurse Practitioner and a Psychiatric Nurse Practitioner and asked her for a topic for this newsletter. She immediately said she is seeing a great deal of compassion fatigue and burnout in her co-workers, to the point where individuals are quitting, and she wondered what she could do to help.

The World Health Organization defines burnout as an occupational phenomenon, not just affecting healthcare staff. It is caused by the individual having unrealistic expectations, lack of sleep and other work-related stressors. For nurses, these include the number of patients for whom they are responsible, long shifts, and the specialty in which they work. The workplace culture is important as well; those in which there is poor teamwork or poor collaboration tend to have more nurse burnout. Conflict, poor communication, lack of cooperation and even outright bullying are all attributes of an environment that promotes nurse burnout.

Nurse burnout does not only affect the individual nurse, but it affects the employer, coworkers, and patients. Nurses are at risk of developing mental health conditions like depression and anxiety, and of actually quitting their job. For the employer, turnover and lack of staff means that patient care can be negatively affected, which also impacts on its reputation and bottom line. For the patients, nurse burnout can directly affect the quality of the care they receive and their health.

So, what can we do as correctional nurses to prevent burnout? We talk about patient advocacy as a very important aspect of correctional nursing, but we also must be advocates for ourselves. If there is a workplace culture issue as discussed previously, then address it directly with supervisors and facility administration. Be sure to take vacation time and "get away" from the facility. Use coping methods that have been shown to help, like calming breathing techniques; developing a post-work relaxation routine; engaging in regular physical activity and journaling. Seek out the support of other nurses/colleagues with whom you can discuss your frustrations and challenges working in the correctional environment. Sharing best practices can often help immensely, and at a minimum, verbalizing the issues allows you (and them) to feel heard. If that is not possible, then go to a therapist or counselor to discuss the issues. Get to know yourself and what activities/techniques work best for you, and then be sure to adhere to them every day. They will quickly become a routine that can really help de-stress, which will actually have a positive effect on your mental and physical well-being. You are definitely worth it!

If any of you reading this are feeling depressed or hopeless, please see a therapist or counselor right away – truly, they can help.

### Newsorthy Notes

The American Correctional Nurses Association has just issued its call for nominations. This year, open positions are President-Elect, Secretary, and one At-Large Board Member. If you don't want to run for office, but want to be more involved, consider working on one of the many committees at ACNA. Check out the [website!](#)

Upcoming conferences include NCCHC Mental Health Conference - July 15-16; the American Correctional Association Conference - August 3-6. and the NCCHC Fall Conference September 30th - October 4, 2023.

[The Western American Correctional Health Services Association](#) will hold its annual conference on October 26th and 27th in Sacramento, CA. Dr. Roscoe will be speaking at the pre-conference, Women and their Allies on October 25th. We hope to see you there!

Remember that you can find our past Newsletters on the CorrectionalNurse.Net website in the Newsletter Archive.

Thanks for all you do, and Be Safe!

## CorrectionalNurse.Net

This month at [CorrectionalNurse.Net](#) we will be discussing Patient Advocacy. Our clinical discussion includes Abdominal Pain and Assessment.

As always, announcements for new blog posts will be posted on our FaceBook pages and on Instagram.

Please [FOLLOW US](#) and check back often to ensure that you get notification of new posts!

VISIT CORRECTIONALNURSE.NET NOW

## Correctional Nurse Educator

Our 50% off featured class this month at The Correctional Nurse Educator is [Clinical Judgment for the Correctional Nurse](#). I hope you enjoy it!

Remember The Correctional Nurse Educator will work with your group to provide accredited continuing education classes at a discounted and affordable cost.

VISIT THE CORRECTIONAL NURSE EDUCATOR NOW

## Nursing Behind the Wall

This month at [Nursing Behind the Wall](#) you will meet Ms. Weffing, a woman with newly diagnosed Hypertension. You are the nurse providing Health Education for Hypertension to her.

VISIT NURSING BEHIND THE WALL NOW

In closing, I appreciate you taking the time to read this newsletter, and I hope that you will find our sites interesting and educational. Our profession of Correctional Nursing is unique and sometimes challenging, but always very important to our patients. The impact we make is far-reaching, even if it is not always evident as we care for our patients. I have ALWAYS been proud to say that I am a Correctional Nurse – I hope that you are as well!

Lori

## Inspiration

The Correctional Nurse LLC



THERE IS NOTHING STRONGER IN THE WORLD THAN GENTLENESS. -HAN SUYIN

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