The Role of Resilience and Mindful Leadership in Nursing

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Learning Objectives

- Describe the concept of resilience and identify specific attributes relevant to nursing
- Identify key tenets of mindfulness and relationship to nursing
- Explore research opportunities integrating mindfulness and resilience as key concepts in nursing leadership

Common Terms – Compassion and Compassion Fatigue

- **Compassion**
  - Central value of nursing; described in ANA Code of Ethics
- **Compassion Fatigue** - Components
  - **Compassion Satisfaction**
    - meaning and joy nurses derive from providing care to patients
  - **Secondary Traumatic Stress**
    - feelings of despair; may elicit physical and/or psychological symptoms
  - **Burnout**
    - perceived demands outweigh perceived resources

(Schmidt & Haglund, 2017)
Compassion Fatigue

- Combination of factors – generally outside personal control
- External stressors
  - High patient census
  - Patient flow challenges
  - Patient demands
  - Focus on patient satisfaction
  - Organizational financial goals
  - Experience of critical incidents
  - Interprofessional conflict
  - Intraprofessional conflict

Common Terms – Burnout

- May be directly linked to job satisfaction; work environment
- Exhibited as
  - Frustration
  - Exhaustion
  - Depression
  - Hopelessness
- If not addressed may lead to compassion fatigue
  (Schmidt & Haglund, 2017)

Resilience

- Defined as “personal qualities that enable one to thrive in the face of adversity” (Connor & Davidson, 2003, p.76).
- In healthcare, the ability of nurses to grow stronger from adversity
  - Developing the ability to withstand and, ultimately, overcome adversity
- Characteristics
  - Perseverance – determination to carry on
  - Equanimity – balance perspective, roll with the punches
  - Existential aloneness – unique life path, some experiences must face alone
  - Self-reliance – self-belief, strengths/limitations
  - Meaning – life has purpose, able to contribute to others
  (Meyer & Grants, 2010)
Resilience

• Another definition describes as a multidimensional and learned ability that nurses may use to support functioning at a high level when facing adversity (Rutter, 1987).

Mindfulness

• Described as awareness or personal understanding of how the mind works
• Work is needed to:
  • Gain greater self-awareness that is intentional
  • Integrate into practice
  • Lead in challenging situations
  • Receive feedback and group support
  • Open and accepting
  • Allows individual to respond rather than react

(Marm, 2017; Rhee, 2015)

Mindfulness, Coping and Resilience

• Nurse shortage
• Aging workforce
• Enculturation of new nurse graduates
• Workplace incivility
• Increase in organizational mergers
• Healthcare as a business
• Research in field is growing
Scholarly Inquiry
Mindfulness Based Stress Reduction (MBSR)

- Various strategies evaluated
  - Short workshops
  - Multi week programs
  - Mindful attention to breathing, awareness of thoughts
  - Yoga
  - Intentional activation of self-compassion, kindness

- Results
  - Increased relaxation states, fewer physical symptoms after MBSR
  - Ongoing mindfulness practice and integration into routine of self-care is critical
  
  (Halm, 2017)

Scholarly Inquiry
Mobile Applications Supporting Resilience

- Study of Provider Resilience mobile application (PRMA)
  - Oncology nurses
  - Evaluate use of PRMA to support resilience/reduce compassion fatigue
  - No significant difference in pre and post test scores of 3 groups in study
  - Further investigation is needed for nurse use
  - Numerous studies looked at use of mobile apps for patients
  
  (Jakel et al., 2018)

Scholarly Inquiry
Impact of Shift Work on Nurse Resilience

- Importance
  - Shift work is necessary
  - May affect physical/mental health; impact care delivery

- Key Findings
  - Some studies reported negative psychological outcomes resulting from shift work
  - Other studies found no evidence of poor outcomes
  - Numerous measures used – resulting in inconsistencies

- Impact
  - Results may assist nurse leaders to support shift workers more appropriately
  
  (Tahghighi, et al., 2017)
Role of Nursing Leader

- Clinical experts
- Technology advocates
- Stewards of organizational finance
- Compassionate mentors
- Demands of the role
  - Competing priorities
  - Maintain quality outcomes (safety, satisfaction, nurse-sensitive indicators)
  - Maintain fiscally productive workforce
  - Need to compromise personal beliefs

Scholarly Inquiry
Self-Care for Nurse Leaders

- Stress linked to behavioral, emotional, cognitive changes
- Can compromise caring, limit leadership decisions, potential affect patient outcomes/satisfaction
- Successful nurse leadership incorporates self-care practices to reduce adverse events/potentially improve patient satisfaction
- Thrive on challenges/personal pride in accomplishment

(Over et al., 2018)

All Nurses Are Leaders

- Support emotional and physical journey of patients/families
- Strive to ensure that care delivery is of the highest quality
- As a result, all nurses are "leaders" at the point of care (not just nurses with organizationally delineated leadership positions)
- Each nurse must develop process of resiliency
- Many lack true self-awareness/impact of actions on patients
- Effective leadership – not intuitive
  - Must be nurtured/developed
  - Important to incorporate strategies to promote resiliency
All Nurses Are Leaders

- Authentic nurse leaders
  - Consistently incorporate personal values into practice
  - Build trustworthiness in relationships
  - Demonstrate personal discipline
  - Establish balance between extrinsic and intrinsic motivators
  - (George, 2014)

- Leadership development
  - Typically consists of training, some development programs, limited mentoring (formal/informal)

- Excluding significant percentage of nurses from exposure to leadership development strategies is counterproductive
  - (Rishel, 2015)

Incorporation of Mindfulness Strategies to Support Resilience

- Various strategies may be used
  - Meditation, prayer, reflective exercises, yoga, discussions with others that are introspective

- Incorporating one, or more, supports
  - Improves effectiveness in navigating daily care environment
  - Calm, thoughtful approach – organizational issues, difficult care challenges

- Self-awareness

- Self-compassion

Where Do We Go From Here?

- Future studies on use of techniques to promote resilience
  - Which strategies are most beneficial?

- Planning a study focused on oncology nurse perceptions of current work environment, components of healthy work space

- Be clear on focus of research – know what you are working with
Challenge to Nurse Leaders
Future Studies

• Consider changing work environment
• Staffing patterns
• Care delivery model
• Incorporating "Zen" breaks into work shift
• Schedule regular debrief sessions
• In addition to adding mindfulness education/techniques to nurse's toolbox

References

References


