

Let's Not Forget Why We Love Nursing

[VIDEO TRANSCRIPT – February 3, 2022]

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Hi, this is Anne Dabrow Woods, Chief Nurse of Wolters Kluwer Health Learning, Research and Practice and I want to talk to you today about “Let's not forget why we love nursing.” Now as many of you may know I actually still practice as a critical care nurse practitioner in a prn program for a local hospital. So I've been right there with you handling this pandemic over the past two and a half an now into the third year. And it's really caused me to pause at times and say, “Why am I in this profession? Am I making a difference? Why do I love nursing?”

So I want to share with you some of the thoughts that I came up with and see if they resonate with you. The first thing that I really realized was that caring for others brings peace to my soul and gives me a purpose. It really does give me a reason to get up out of bed every day and have a positive impact on someone's life. You know we talk about nursing as a calling, and I have to say it truly is mine. It's really at the core of who I am. And the fact is I chose to care for others and I'm sure many of you feel the same way.

the other thing that I've learned over my 38 years of being a nurse is that there is no greater privilege than to be with people at the best and at the worst times of their lives. You know the best days in a person's life -- when there's a birth or hearing that they're cancer-free or recovering from a catastrophic illness and they get to go home. Those are great times. But over the last two and a half/three years we've been taking care of patients in the worst times -- hearing they or their family member have COVID, maybe telling a patient that they're going to die, or telling their family the patient isn't coming home. But the bottom line is it's a privilege to care for them during these times.

The other thing that I've learned is that learning that communicating just by being present is one of the greatest forms of loving another human being. You know there's a quiet spirit in what we do and sometimes it's hard to appreciate due to all the chaos, but it's there just under the surface. The simple act of holding someone's hand, stroking a forehead, smiling with our eyes behind our masks... you know we speak volumes with our calm demeanor in the most chaotic of situations reassuring our patients. We're here for them and they are not alone.

Nursing has really helped give me the strength to fight for what is right and let's face it doing what is right is often the hardest road because it's often not the easiest road. As a nurse I am the voice for my patient when they can't speak up for themselves and I ensure they receive equitable health care in all situations. I am an advocate for our profession supporting the necessary changes to ensure safe work environments, adequate competent staffing, training and education.

Nursing has really taught me the value of life. Living is not about the quantity of time we spend here on earth rather it's about the quality of time we have and what we do with it. So often we see our patients dying surrounded by technology and being kept alive as a shell of their former self simply because no

one took the time to have a crucial conversation with them on how they wanted their life to end. But we know as nurses there is a better way; death can be a blessing and that same patient can die peacefully and pain-free surrounded by their loved ones with a nurse at their bedside.

So let's not forget about why we love nursing. In the face of the pandemic it's really easy to lose sight of why we went into nursing in the first place but let's remember you are the constant in your patient's life, you value their life, you inspire their trust, you care for them in the most challenging of circumstances, and when it's time you help them to release their spirit. Nursing is the purest form of loving our neighbor and that's why we love nursing.

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