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# Vitamins for Nurturing the Nursing Soul

**Kathleen Vollman**  
ADVANCING NURSING THROUGH KNOWLEDGE & INNOVATION




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# Disclosures

- ▶ Consultant-Michigan Hospital Association Keystone Center
- ▶ Subject matter expert for AHA/HRET: CAUTI, CLABSI, HAPI, Sepsis, Safety culture
- ▶ Consultant and speaker bureau:
  - △ Stryker's Sage business
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# Objectives

- 🔗 Discuss the challenges to the nursing soul that affect job satisfaction and retention.
- 🔗 Identify the critical vitamins (behaviors, skills) necessary to thrive and excel in both personal and professional lives.
- 🔗 Outline a personal recipe for growth to identify behaviors that will help in making one significant change in the work environment within the next six months.



**Reboot/Reset**



# Life Coming Out of a Crisis

*Life is about how much you can take and keep fighting, how much you can suffer and keep moving forward.~ Anderson Silva*

*Don't dwell on what went wrong. Instead, focus on what to do next. Spend your energies on moving forward toward finding the answer.  
~Denis Waitley*

*If everyone is moving forward together, then success takes care of itself.  
~Henry Ford*

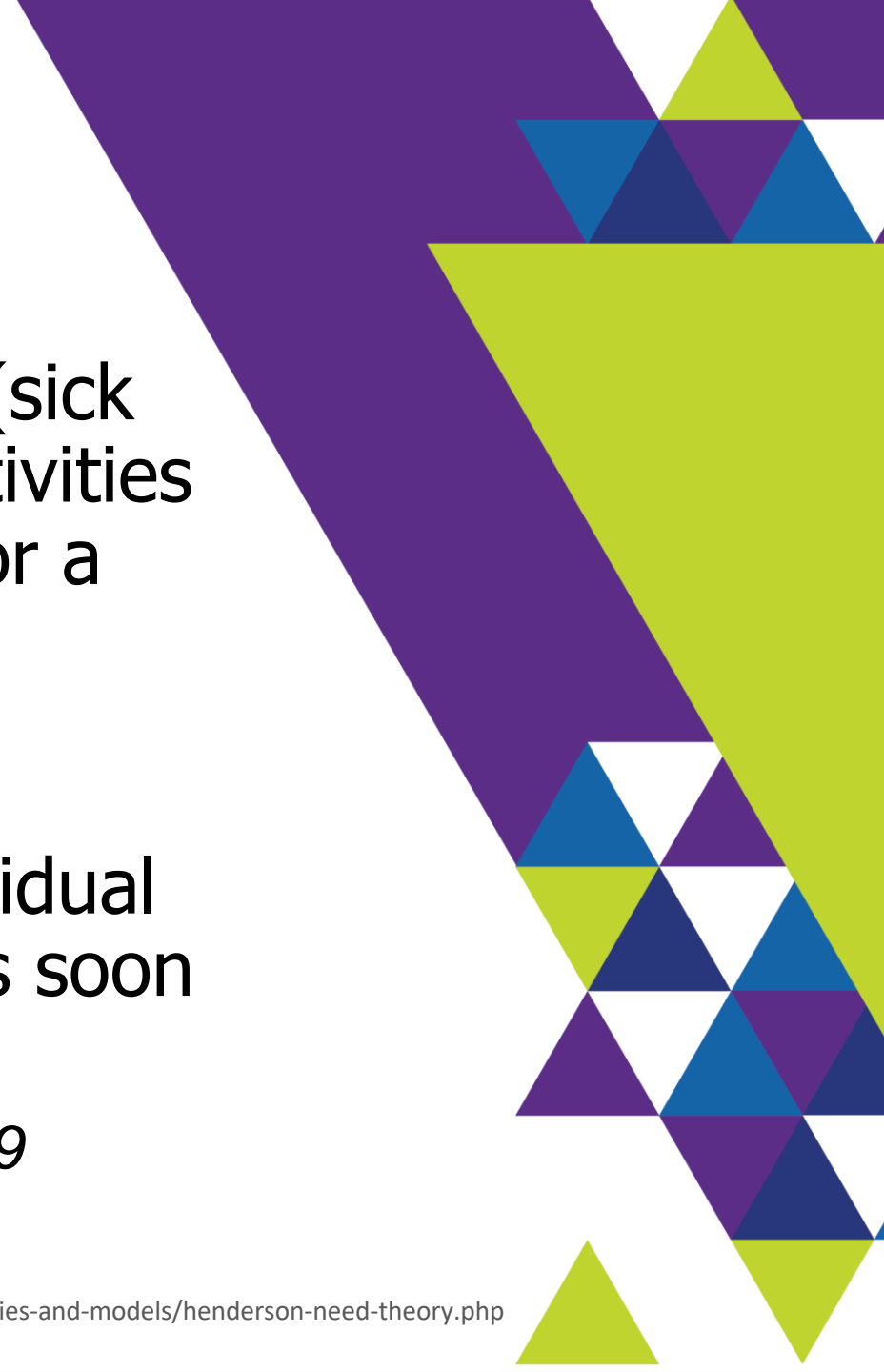
*One day? Or day one. You decide.*



# Capturing the Essence of Nursing

“Nurses primarily assists the individual (sick or well) in the performance of those activities contributing to health, or its recovery (or a peaceful death) that he would perform unaided if he had the strength, will or knowledge. It is likewise the unique contribution of nursing to help the individual to be independent of such assistance as soon as possible.

*Henderson 1969*



# Factors That Can Chip Away at Our Nursing Soul

- ▲ Unhealthy work environment<sup>1</sup>
- ▲ Self Image
- ▲ Inappropriate communication<sup>3</sup>
- ▲ Rising workloads<sup>1,3</sup>
- ▲ Challenging collegial relationships<sup>2</sup>
- ▲ Change fatigue
- ▲ Burnout (15% to 45%)<sup>3</sup>
- ▲ Lack of understanding nursing true contribution to patients & families




1. Bamford M, et al. J of Nursing Management, 2013;21:529-540
2. Dempsey C, et al. Nurs Admin Q. 2018;42(3):278-283
3. Accessed 03 09 2022  
[https://info.hospiq.com/hubfs/HIQ\\_StaffingSurvey\\_Collateral\\_FNL.pdf](https://info.hospiq.com/hubfs/HIQ_StaffingSurvey_Collateral_FNL.pdf)

# Factors that Keep Us Nursing



- ▲ Positive practice environment<sup>1,2</sup>
- ▲ Supportive manager<sup>1,2</sup>
- ▲ Congenial staff<sup>2</sup>
- ▲ Meaningful recognition<sup>1</sup>
- ▲ How we feel about ourselves: If we feel good, greater confidence, we want to give back<sup>2</sup>
- ▲ Ability to participate versus being told<sup>1,3</sup>
- ▲ Being supported, listened to, consulted with<sup>1</sup>





# The Vitamins Necessary for Thriving and Growth within the Nursing Profession

# Vitamin A

 Attitude

 Advocacy



# Attitude

- 🔗 A confident person controls their attitudes, instead of attitudes controlling them
- 🔗 Confidence is impossible without a positive attitude
- 🔗 Confident nurses take the same negativity, but they have learned to say that the garbage that goes in now needs to go out!!!!

“Use a Personal Attitude Interrupt (PAI):  
Intentional physical change on our part to stop the negativity from staying in our mind. It is a private signal from me, to me that I need to protect myself from incoming negativity”

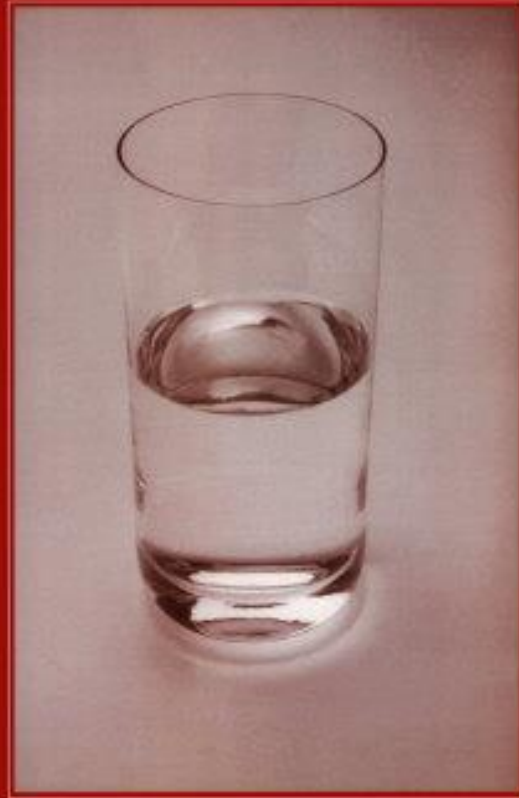
# How to Be Present

- 🌀 S: Stop for a few minutes
- 🌀 T: Take a few deep breaths
- 🌀 O: Observe where your mind is
- 🌀 P: Perceive & move on



**When We Are Present... We have Choices**

# POSITIVE ATTITUDE



*It changes everything.*

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# Sustaining a Positive Attitude Over the Length of Your Career

- ▶ The most important of all human freedoms is your attitude
- ▶ We choose how we respond to each moment
- ▶ I can complain or quit, but that gets me nothing
- ▶ I can focus on the positive..... what you focus on is what you feel

Physiology Can  
Change Feelings



# Sustaining a Positive Attitude Over the Length of Your Career



- Find someone to help you through
- Set realistic goals
- Be careful what you listen to, it becomes a feedback loop
- Attitude is contagious, make yours positive
- Find the calm within the crisis
- Develop other passions, outside interest, something to help you recharge
- Take breaks and meals, and don't work so much overtime



# Advocacy

- ▶ **Advocacy** is the pursuit of influencing outcomes — including policy and resource allocation decisions within systems & institutions — that directly affect people's current lives.
- ▶ Therefore, advocacy can be seen as a deliberate process of speaking out on issues of concern in order to exert some influence on behalf of ideas or persons.



# Advocacy Starts with Us



## Reconnect With Our Professional Purpose



“It may seem a strange principle to enunciate as the very first requirement in a Hospital that it should do the sick no harm.”

Florence Nightingale

Advocacy = Safety





# Florence Nightingale ...



- Surveillance & monitoring of patient conditions for early detection of problems
- Preventing complications

“I use the word nursing for want of a better. It has been limited to signify little more than the administration of medicines and the application of poultices. It ought to signify the proper use of fresh air, light, warmth, cleanliness, quiet, and the proper selection and administration of diet—all of these at the least expense of vital power to the patient”

Notes on Nursing (1860/1969 p. 8)

# Patient Advocacy/Safety Related to Clinical Practice

- ▲ Nurses knowledge of the evidence-based care
- ▲ Ability to deliver the care to the right patient at the right time, every time it is needed
- ▲ The ability to communicate patient concerns in a concise, data driven manner and take appropriate action
- ▲ Understanding that I am the voice of the patient

# Vitamin B

 Behavior

 Balance





## Behavior

- ▶ Your shadow
- ▶ Leader vs. follower
- ▶ Influence of peers on self and unit culture



*dare to be different*

# What Shadow Do You Want to Cast?



- 🔗 Looking at the unit cultures you can often see the nurse's reflection.
- 🔗 The reflection we see can sometimes maybe difficult for us to handle.
- 🔗 If not careful, we respond by trying to defend or to rationalize away why what we see in others is not of our own making.
- 🔗 In this way, we may fail to take responsibility for what has resulted from our actions.
- 🔗 Without taking responsibility the first steps required to change the situation becomes impossible....!



*“If your actions inspire others to dream more, learn more, do more, and become more, you are a Leader”*

*John Quincy Adams*





*“Setting an Example is Not  
the Main Means of  
Influencing Others....It is  
the Only Means”*

*Albert Einstein*





# Peer Pressure

Time is the coin of your life. It is the only coin you have,  
and only you can determine how it will be spent.

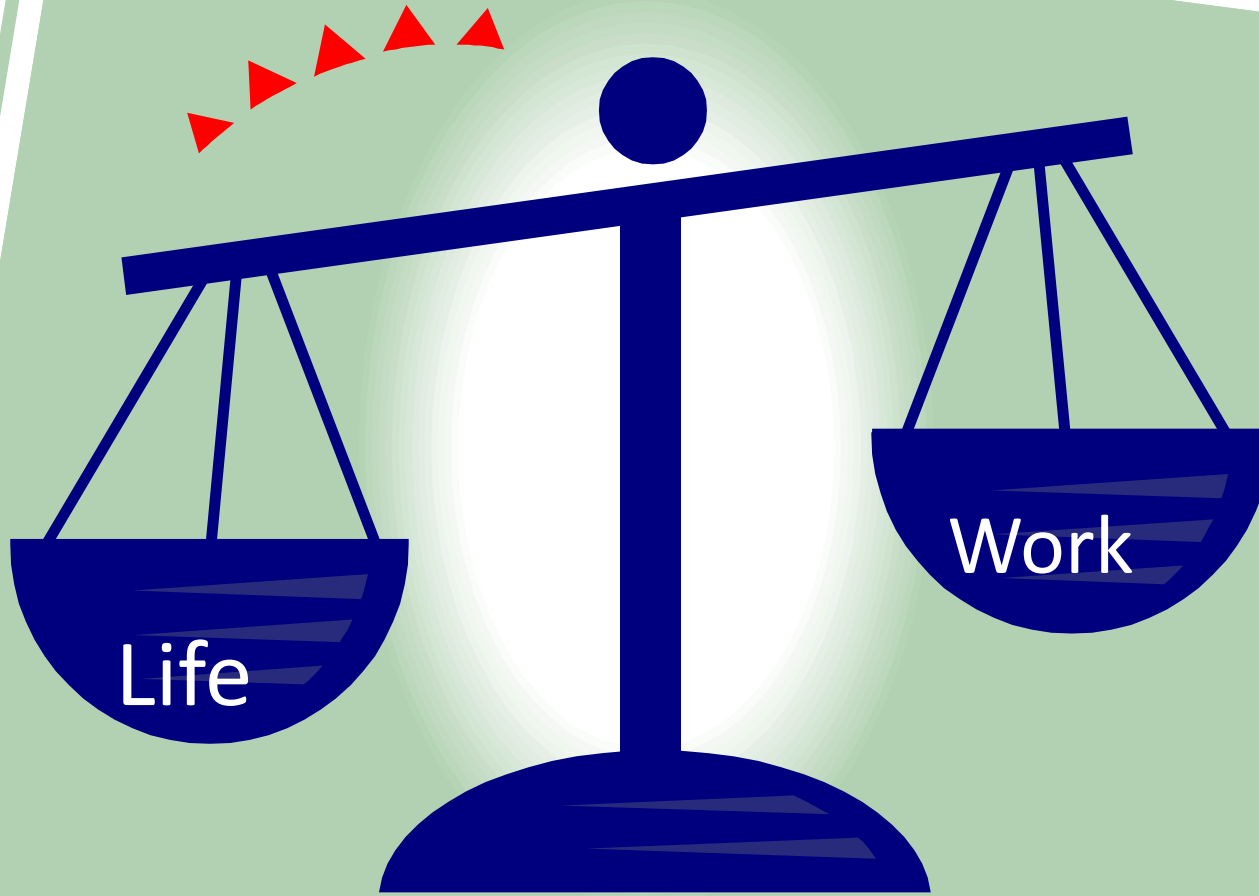
Be careful lest you let others spend it for you.

Carl Sandburg

What are your actions inspiring others to become?  
What are your actions inspiring others to do?  
What are your actions inspiring others to learn?

- ▲ Be the best person/nurse you can be
- ▲ Utilize your creativity to enhance the art & science of nursing
- ▲ Stop negativity when it comes your way
- ▲ Demonstrate respectful communication with all disciplines
- ▲ Participate on unit committees that shape your practice
- ▲ Join a professional organization and participate if you can
- ▲ Demonstrate evidence of continued learning
- ▲ Demonstrate as best as possible life balance

# Balance



Mental and Emotional Steadiness





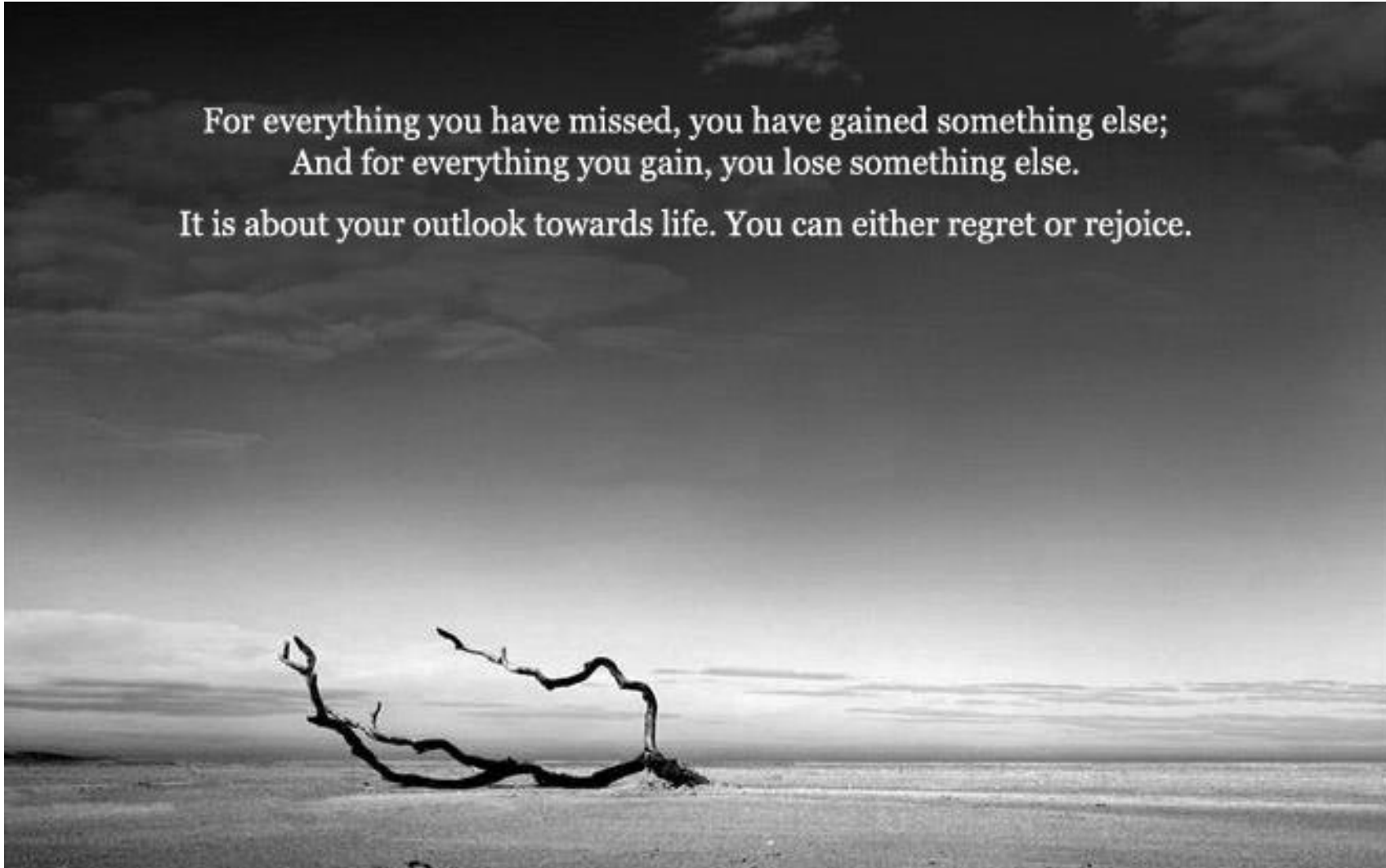
# Perfectionism

- ▲ Are you a perfectionist?
  - △ Protective mechanism
  - △ Defense mechanism
- ▲ Can be a form of psychological torture
  - △ More stress
  - △ More anxiety
  - △ More depression
  - △ It can immobilize you..what is it costing you
- ▲ Put it in its place
  - △ Don't believe everything you think
  - △ Challenge your thinking
  - △ Squash your inner critic





For everything you have missed, you have gained something else;  
And for everything you gain, you lose something else.  
It is about your outlook towards life. You can either regret or rejoice.



Knowing yourself helps with understanding factors that affect your life balance and happiness as well as finding your purpose in life



# Strategies for Helping with Life Balance



## Manage time or it will manage you

- △ Set times to respond to e-mails
- △ Turn off the phone.... Take time for yourself
- △ It is a personal thing, and it must work for you

## Manage the environment by examining your habits and attitudes

- △ 51% felt work was a means to an end
- △ 24% found it a source of personal fulfillment
- △ Find enjoyable work that may not pay the bills or unhappy work that pays the bills
- △ Start to discover.. decide what to love...
- △ Habits are comfortable...even habitual unhappy work



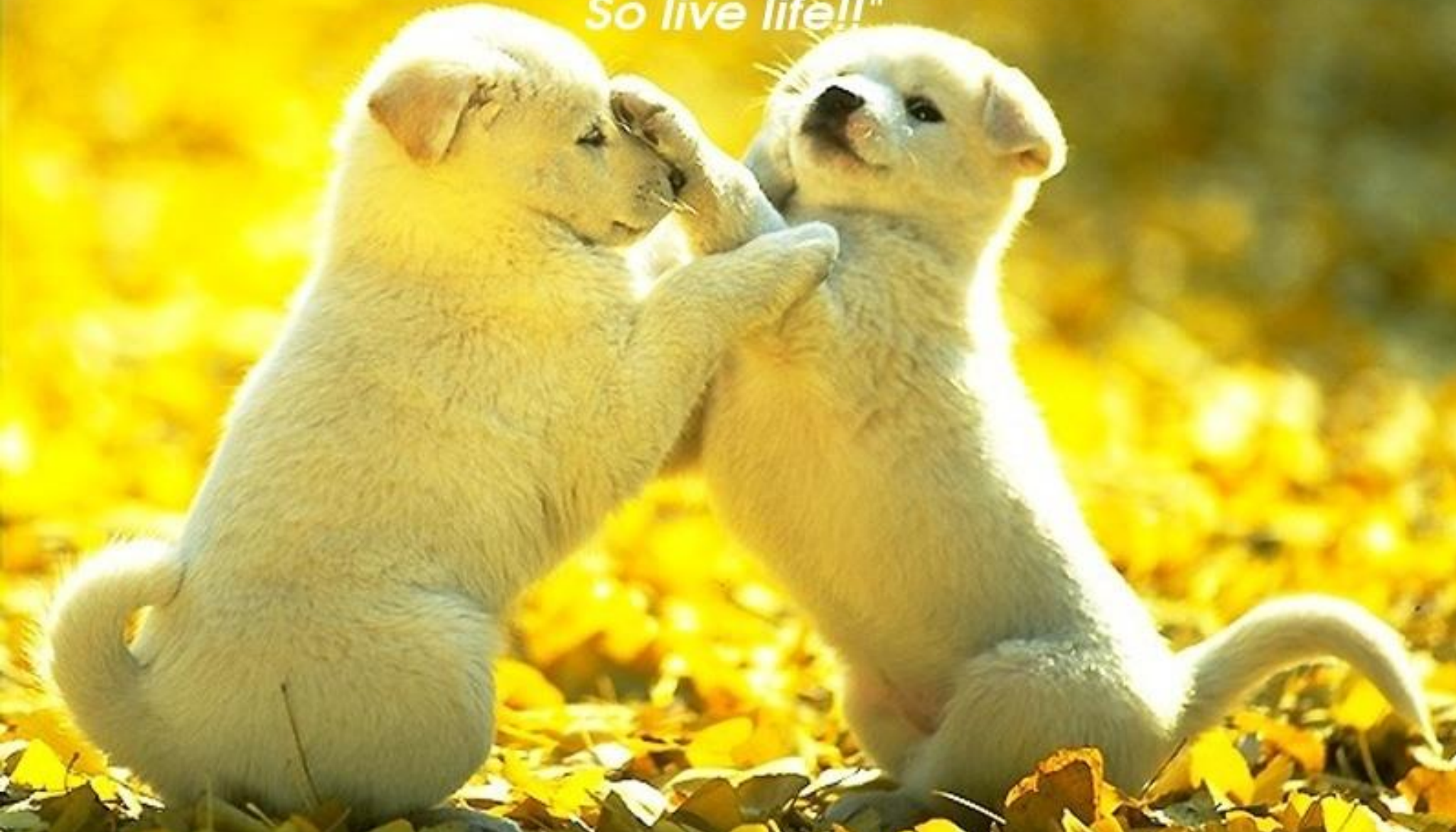
# Strategies for Helping with Life Balance



- 🌀 Mindfulness-paying attention in a particular way: on purpose, present in the moment and non-judgmentally
- 🌀 Achieved by regulating one's attention-focusing attention on one's thoughts and emotions
- 🌀 Greater frequency of practice likely to yield greater benefits
- 🌀 Benefits:
  - △ Improve mental focus and reduce mind wandering
  - △ Discourage black-and-white thinking
  - △ Assist in staying organized, managing time and setting priorities
  - △ Lifts us from constant low-level panic and guilt
  - △ Improves mood and emotional stability
  - △ Build self-monitoring capacity
  - △ Reduce burnout



We don't stop playing  
because we grow old....  
we grow old because we  
stop playing.....  
So live life!!"





**WHEN WOULD NOW BE A  
GOOD TIME TO DO THIS?**



# Vitamin C

 Communication/Culture/Courage

 Change/flexibility

 Competency/Continued learning





The single biggest  
problem with  
communication is the  
illusion that it has taken  
place

George Bernard Shaw

# Why Effective Communication May Be Challenging for Nursing





# The Silent Treatment: April 2011

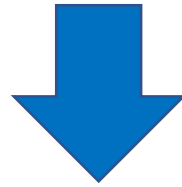


- 🔗 85% of workers reported a safety tool warned them of a problem that may have been otherwise missed & could harm a patient
- 🔗 Safety tools include handoff protocols, checklists, COPE, automated medication dispensing machines.
- 🔗 58% said they got the warning, but failed to effectively speak up & solve the problem
- 🔗 3 “undiscussable” issues: dangerous short cuts, incompetence & disrespect (4/5 nurses)
  - △ 1/2 say shortcuts lead to near misses
  - △ 1/3 say incompetence leads to near misses
  - △ 1/2 say disrespect prevented them from getting others to listen or respect their opinion
- 🔗 Only 16% confronted the disrespectful behavior



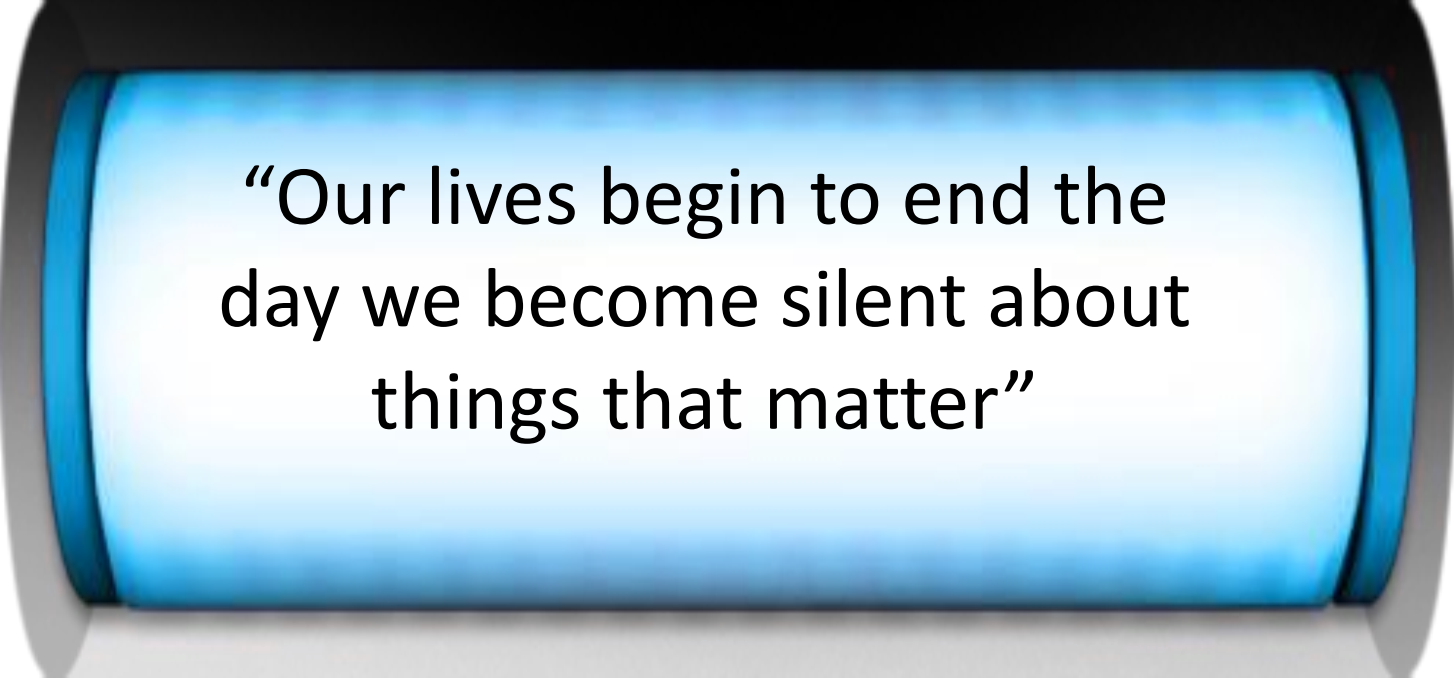
# OSHA: Definition of Workplace Violence

“Any physical assault, threatening behavior or verbal abuse occurring in the workplace”



Study of 8780 staff from 210 hospitals found that 46% of nurses experience 1 or more types of violence (emotional abuse, threats, physical assault, verbal sexual harassment & sexual assault in the past 5 shifts they worked

**Almost 70% of abuse towards nurses is not reported**



“Our lives begin to end the  
day we become silent about  
things that matter”

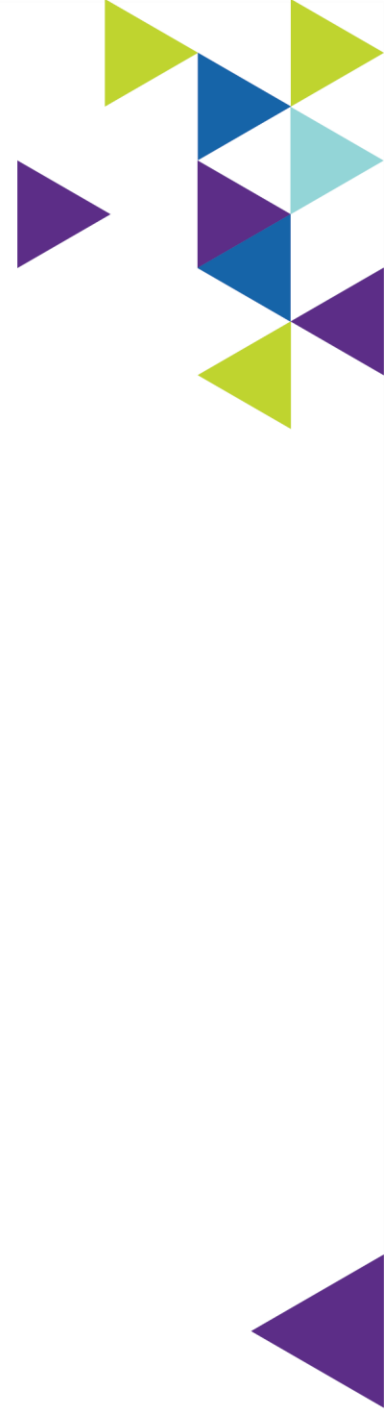
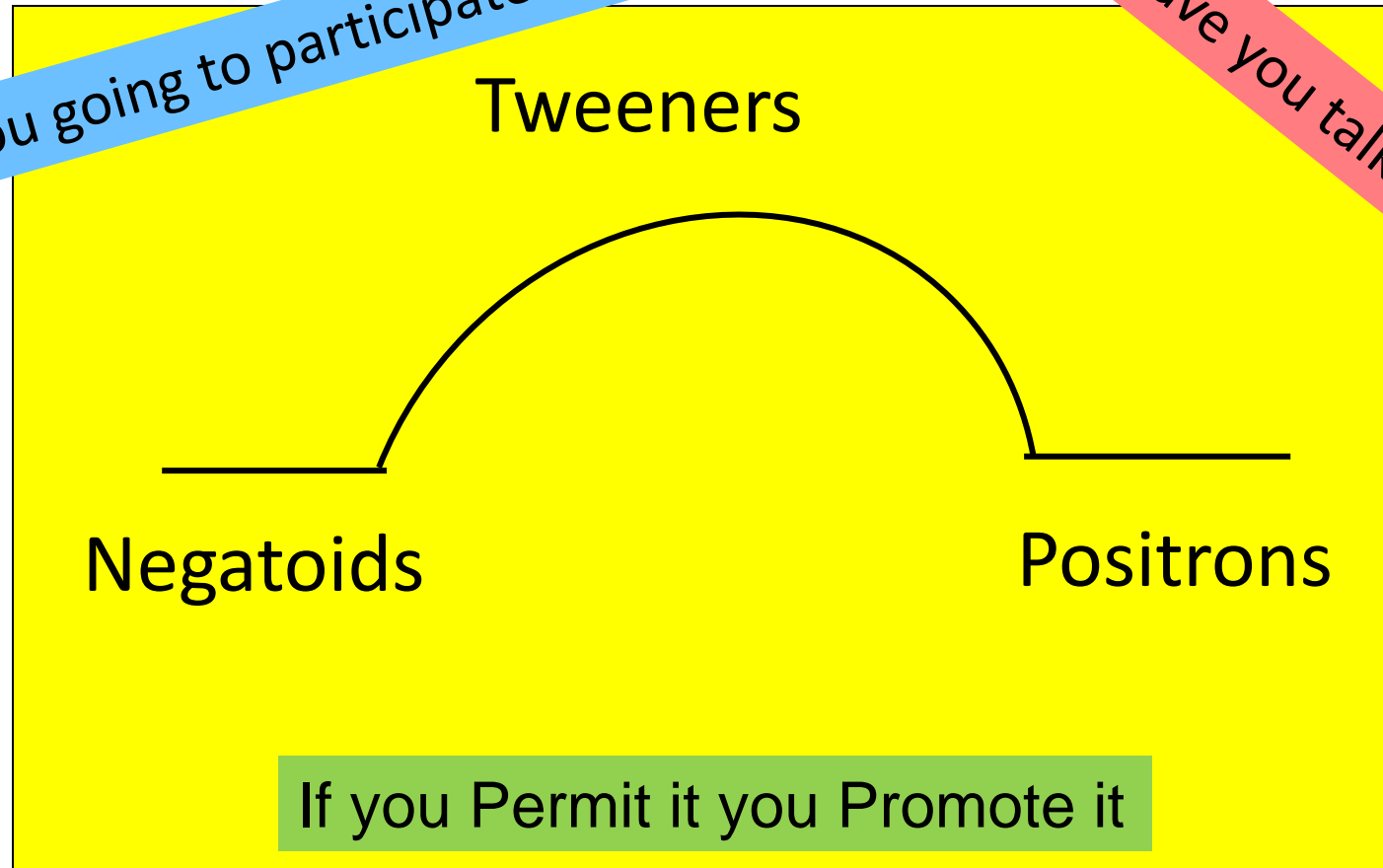
Martin Luther King Jr.




# Understanding Your Culture & Communication Strategies

How are you going to participate in fixing it?

Have you talked to.....



A blue scroll with a white border, tilted at an angle. The scroll has a rolled-up top edge and a rolled-up bottom edge. The text is written in white, sans-serif font.

A good word is an easy  
obligation; but not to speak  
ill requires only our silence;  
which costs us nothing.

John Tillotson



# Speaking Up: Does a Plan Education Program Improve Advocacy



- △ Quasi-experimental design
- △ Intervention design to increase speaking up behaviors among nurses in situations where patient safety is in jeopardy
- △ 2 hospitals, same health system
- △ 51 RN's control group, 53 in intervention group
- △ Intervention; remove any sanctions, viewed video from CNO & CMO expressing commitment to back speaking up, discussion of organization obstacles, then individual obstacles, generate a personal action plan, planned peer support
- △ Results:
  - △ Significant increase in speaking up behaviors vs. control ( $p < .0001$ )



# Courage



“Courage is what it takes to stand up and speak. Courage is also what it takes to sit down and listen”

Winston Churchill

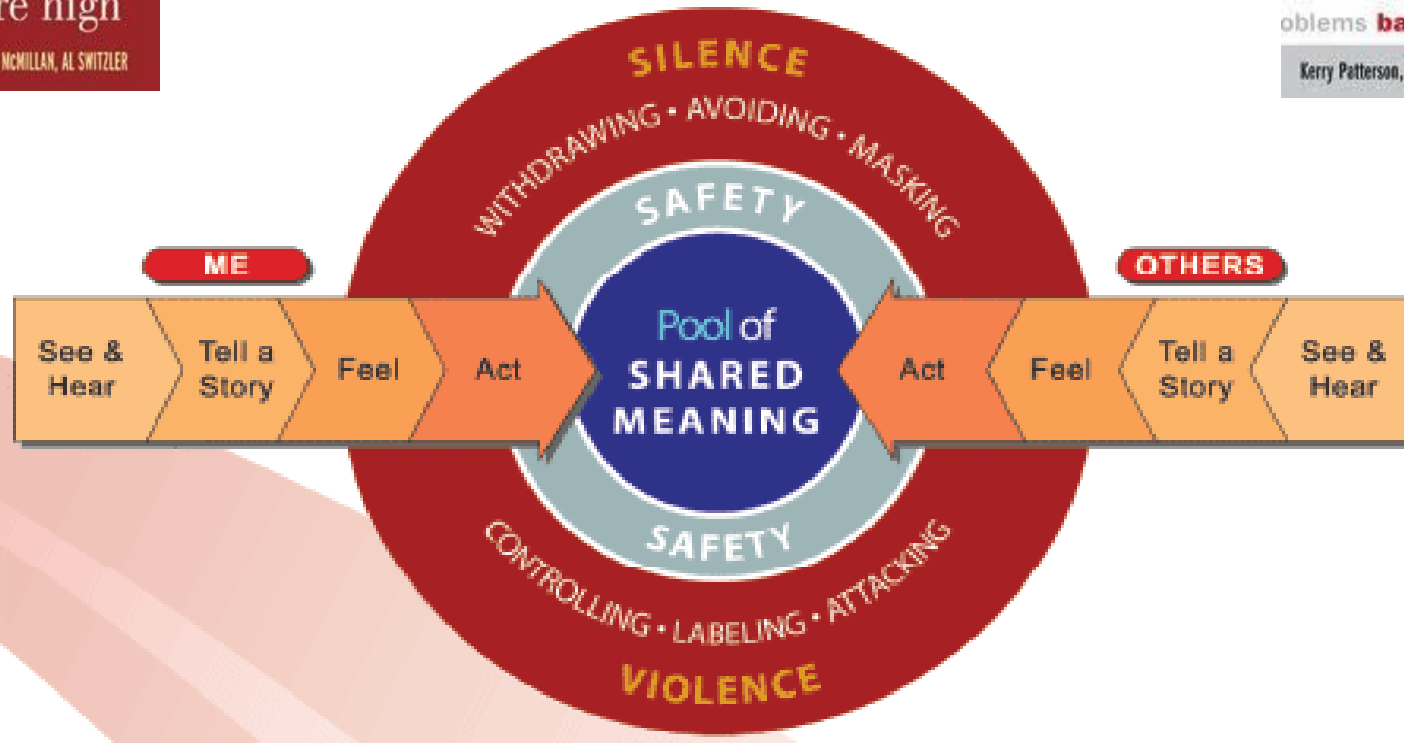
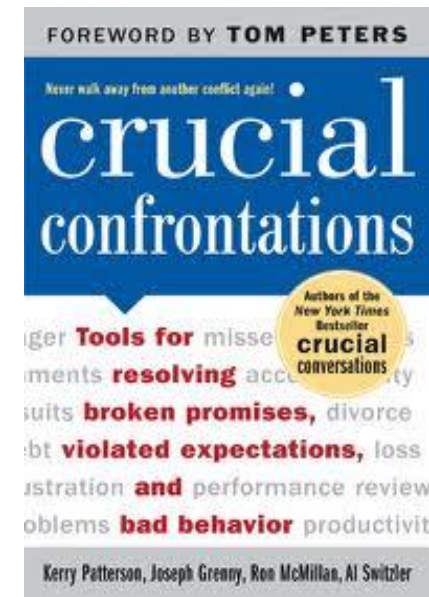
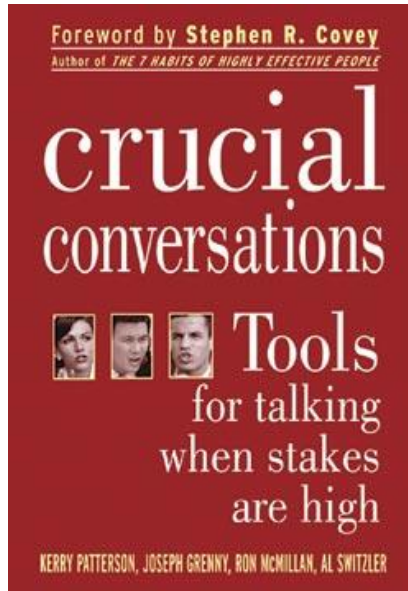
# What to Do Individually?

- ⚙️ Prevent from occurring through training on effective communication
- ⚙️ Deal in real time to prevent staff or patient harm
- ⚙️ Initiate post event reviews, action and follow-up
- ⚙️ Make it as transparent as possible
- ⚙️ Zero-tolerance policy and procedure
- ⚙️ Intervention strategy: code white





# Communication Training



# Communication Strategies

## Tools to help structure communication

- △ SBAR for communication with Doctors: **S**ituation, **B**ackground, **A**ssessment and **R**ecommendation
- △ CUS Words: I am **C**oncerned, I am **U**ncomfortable, This is not **S**afe

Use CUS words when assertion of your communication fails...things go wrong...concern expressed but mutual decision not reached or proposed action doesn't happen in time frame agreed upon

# Comprehensive Unit-Based Patient Safety Program (CUSP)

- Assess culture of safety (SAQ & AHRQ)
- Educate staff on science of safety  
<http://www.safetyresearch.jhu.edu> house staff orientation
- Identify defects
- Learn from one defect per quarter
- Assign executive to adopt unit
- Implement team/communication tools
- Reassess culture annually



# Healthy Work Culture Standards

- 🔗 Skilled communication
- 🔗 True collaboration
- 🔗 Effective shared decision making
- 🔗 Appropriate staffing
- 🔗 Meaningful recognition
- 🔗 Authentic leadership

A healthy culture begins with each person & is enhanced by self work, healthy relationships & system supports

# Change/Flexibility

- Change is constant, and it's impacting everyone. While you may not be able to change the circumstances around you, what you can change is yourself/your reaction and sometimes that changes everything.
- To manage change.....you need to develop new and improved attitudes and habits. When those new attitudes and habits meet the skills and knowledge you already possess, anything is possible.



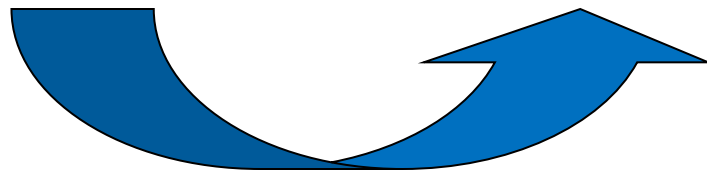
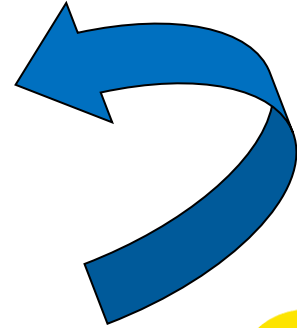
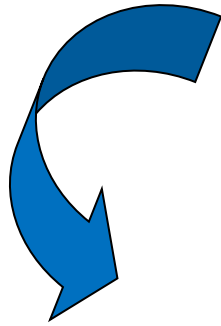
# Comfort Zone



# Opportunities for Growth

Challenges

Change





*The greatest difficulty in the world is not for  
people to accept new ideas but to get them to  
forget the old ones*

*John Maynard Keynes*





# Competency/Continued Learning



- ▶ Competency is multifaceted and evidence of your actions
- ▶ Clinically competent peers are the number one attribute of a satisfying unit culture in which nurses gave the highest quality care
- ▶ It is the highest attribute of the eight essentials of magnetism
- ▶ How is competent performance demonstrated?
  - △ Adequacy with standards of practice
  - △ Having sufficient knowledge, judgment and skill



# Certification is a Measure of Competency

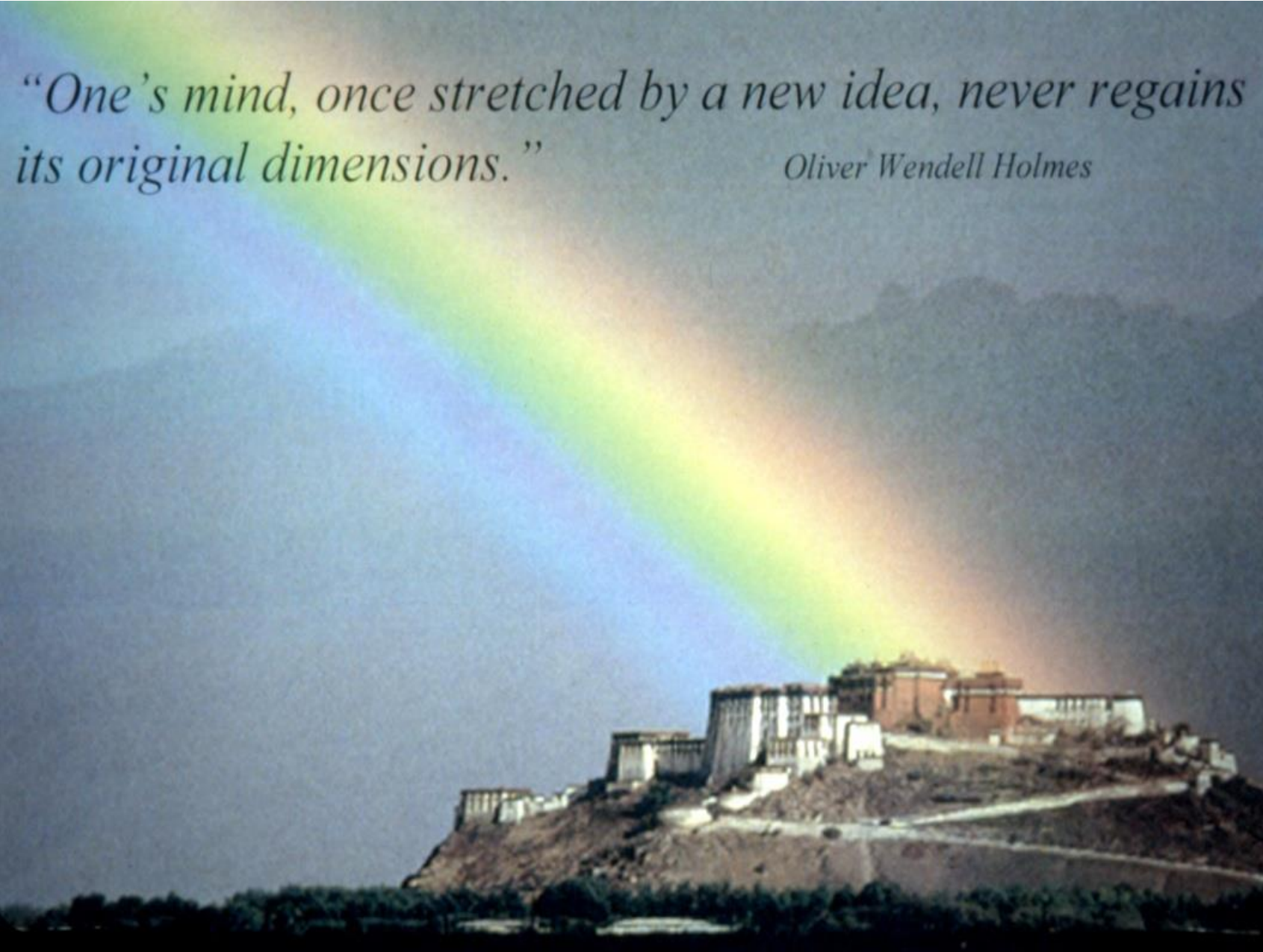


- ▲ Certification validates clinical knowledge, skills and abilities
  - △ Certified nurses feel more empowered and less likely to leave their current position
  - △ Improves patient care and satisfaction
  - △ And earns praise and recognition from peers
  - △ Shows demonstrated improved productivity, engagement and job satisfaction
  - △ Magnet hospitals have a higher percentage of certified nurse



*“One’s mind, once stretched by a new idea, never regains  
its original dimensions.”*

*Oliver Wendell Holmes*



# Vitamin D

 Doing/Take action

 Dedication/Passion





# Bucket Board



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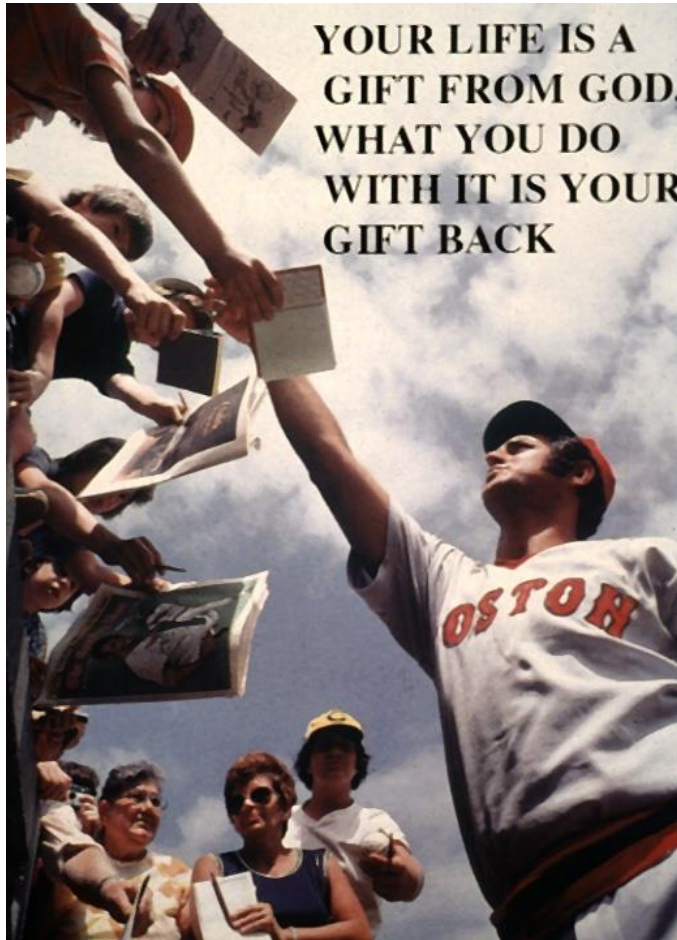


*“You gain strength, courage  
and confidence by every  
experience in which you  
really stop to look fear in  
the face. You must do the  
thing which you think you  
cannot do.”*

*Eleanor Roosevelt*




# Dedication/Passion



What ultimately determines who you become  
and what direction your life goes in?



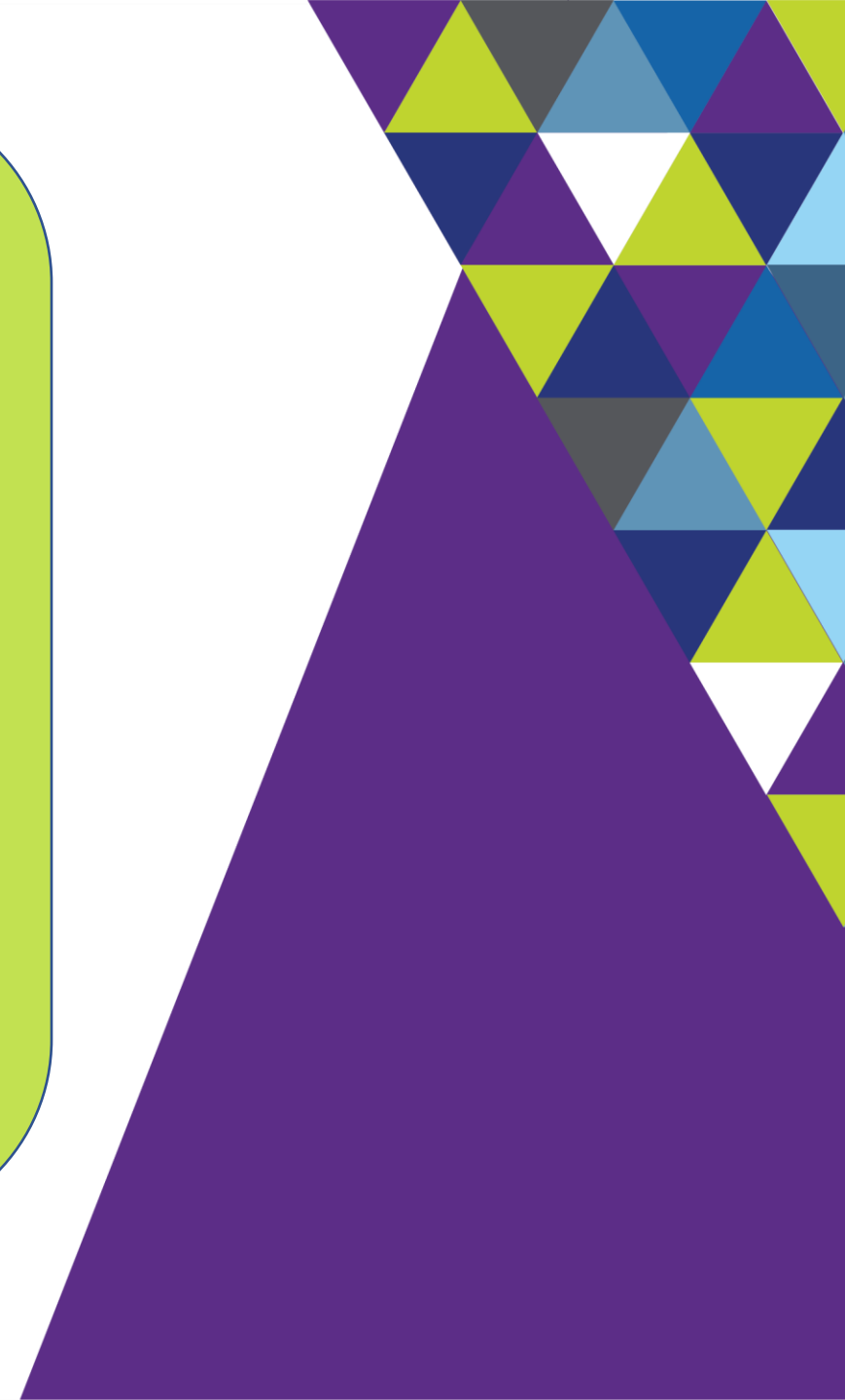


It's our decisions,  
not the condition  
of our life or  
environment  
that determines  
our destiny.





**The only limit to  
what you can achieve  
is the extent of your  
ability to define what  
it is you want and the  
Persistence & Passion to  
get it**



# **Create A Life Mission Statement**

**The purpose of my life is to love  
myself and others, make a  
difference and be playful.**



# Vitamin E

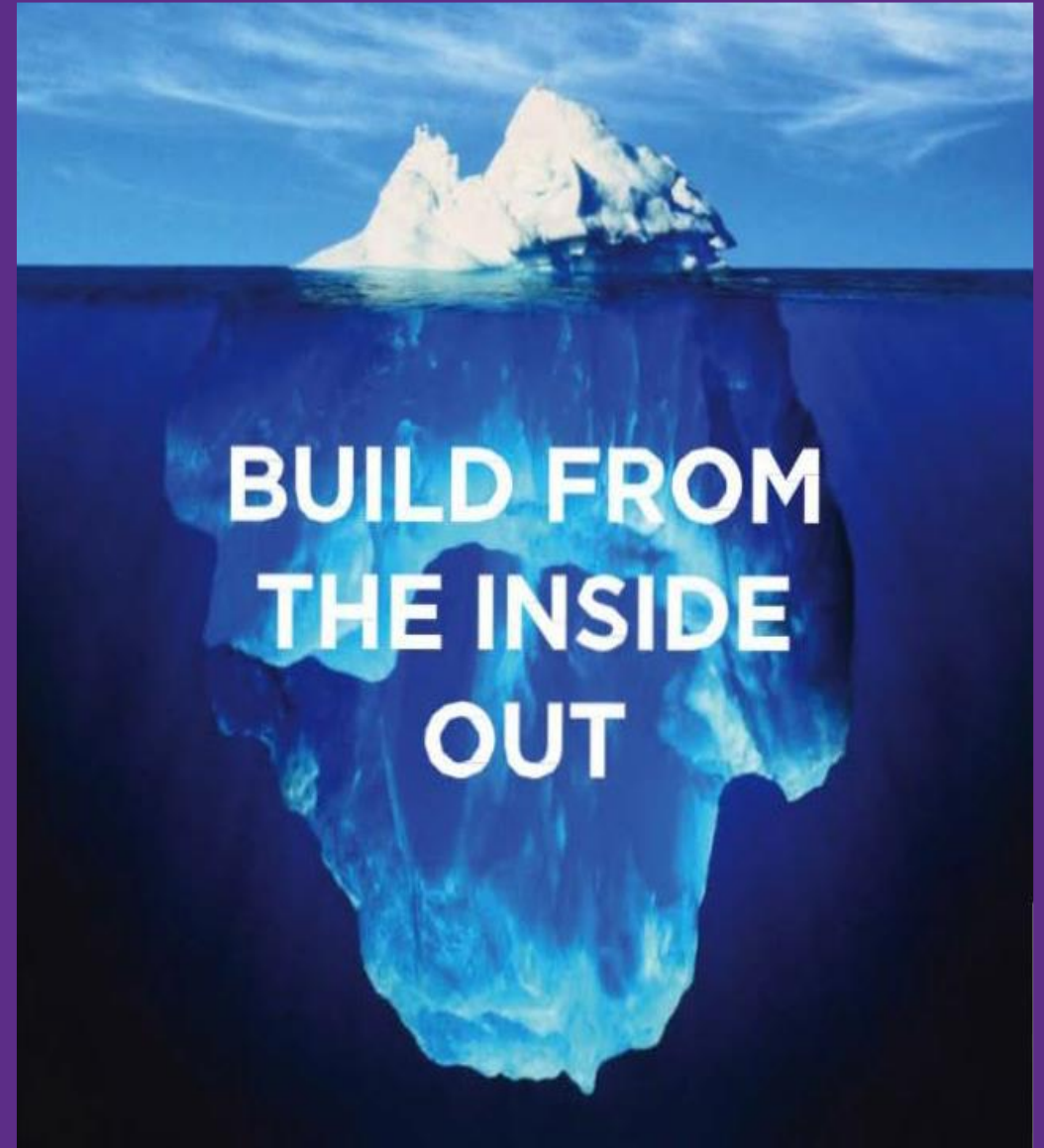
 Excellence

 Evidence-based



## ► The Foundation for Excellence

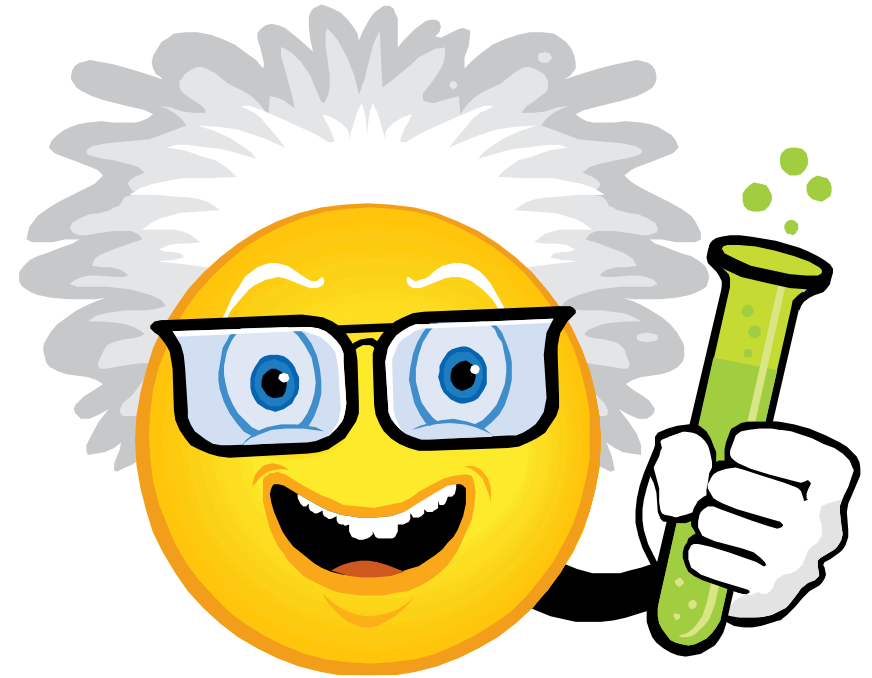
- ▲ Management of your inner circle is crucial
- ▲ Small, consistent changes are key to establishing personal success
- ▲ Always be in motion-learning and doing



# Evidence-Based

“When you stand on the foundation of the evidence you stand on a much firmer platform on which to make a decision, whether it is in your professional or personal life.”

Kathleen Vollman



Let the Evidence Help you Make Your  
Decisions

*“Your Future  
Depends on  
Many Things,  
but Mostly  
Yourself.”*

*Frank Tyger*





# Make the Change on Your Terms!

- There may come a point in your career where you must put yourself first and say it may be time for me to start a second career or change it up by selecting a different unit or specialty



Diane English



# Most Important Words of Personal Responsibility



The 10 most important words: I won't wait for others to take the first step.

The 9 most important words: If it is to be, it is up to me.

The 8 most important words: If it is not me, who? If not now, when?

The 7 most important words: Let me take a shot at it.

The 6 most important words: I will not pass the buck.

This 5 most important words: You can Count on me.

The 4 most important words: It **is** my job!

The 3 most important words: Just do it!

The 2 most important words: I will.

The one most important word: Me



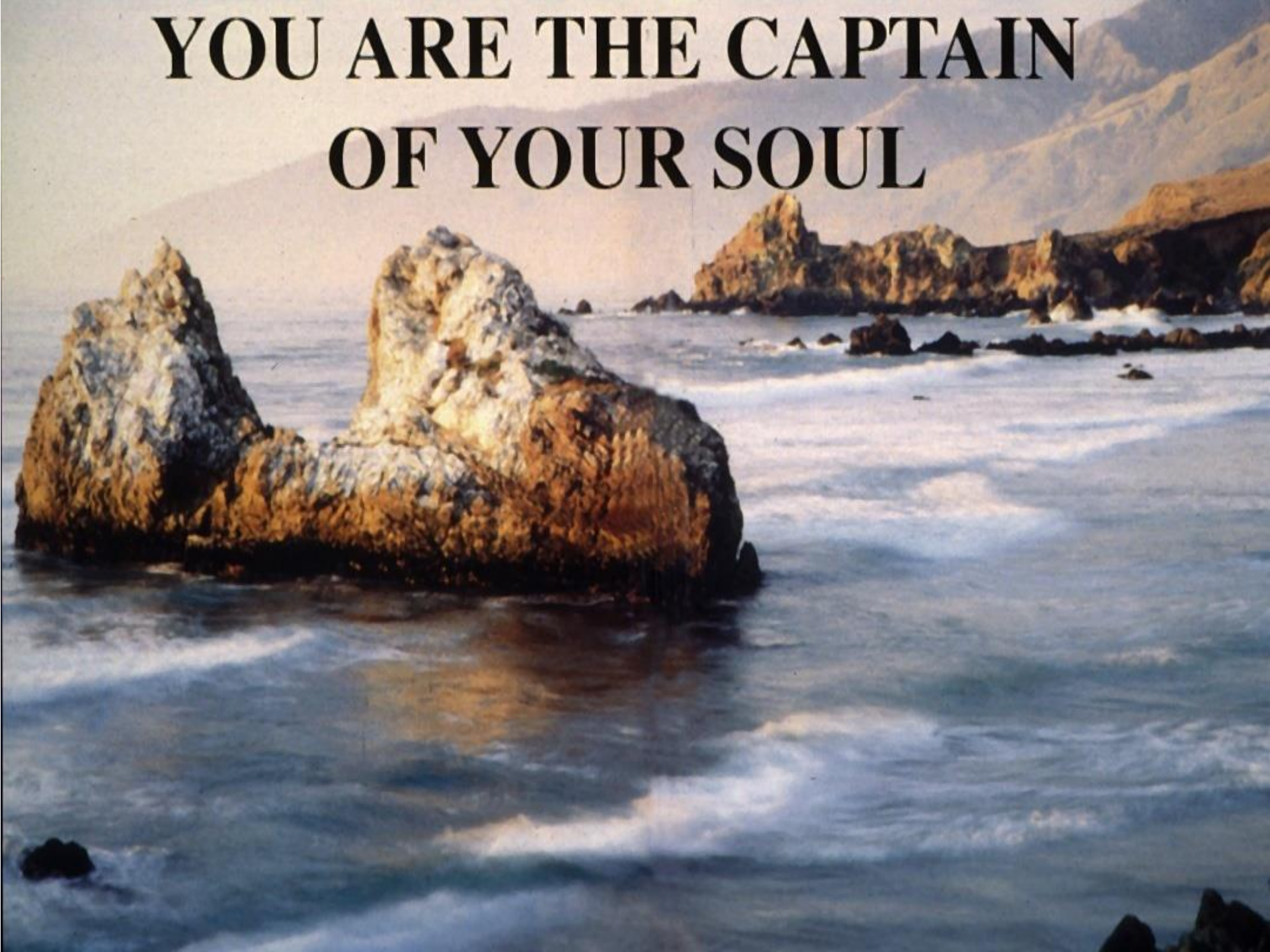
# The Front Line

We as tattered nurses stand on the front line, taking care of others dealing with the body and mind. Attempting to heal patient's wounds and help them go on with life..lending an ear when in need, listening to their pain & strife. Teaching some to deal with illness, telling them what the future holds...good, bad, indifferent we nurses help patients be bold. We're always on the front line dealing with a never-ending fight....

## The Front Line (cont'd)

health, healing and wellness...sometimes we nurses need to take flight. For we need time to heal emotionally within ourselves...outlets to cope and learn we can't always put our feelings on the shelf. Somewhere there must be a middle ground where we can all go and rest, and soon we'll return to the front line whereas nurses we can be our best.

**YOU ARE THE CAPTAIN  
OF YOUR SOUL**





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