



Mind Body & Spirit: Spirituality



The theme for NJSNA Healthy Nurse Health Nation is mind, body and spirit. Busy professionals can sometimes forget to take care of themselves. Connecting with spirituality is essential in strengthening one's own inner strength and peace. This is important because nurses touch the lives of so many others. According to Sheldon (2013), there are four components that enhance a nurses' inner strength:

- Mental strength - manage stress and make time for relaxation and joyful activities
- Moral strength - maintain moral standards
- Physical strength - get exercise and eat nutritiously
- and Spiritual strength which includes three factors - faith/belief dimension, life/self-responsibility, and life satisfaction.

Exercising and good nutrition are helpful to gain energy and maintain physical strength. Managing stress and making time for relaxing and joyful activities are helpful for mental strength. Maintaining moral standards will enhance moral strength (Sheldon, 2013).

According to Hungelmann et al. (1996), spiritual well-being is multidimensional. There are three broad factors to spiritual well-being including the faith/belief dimension, life/self-responsibility and life satisfaction/self-actualization (Hungelmann et al., 1996).

Nurses may struggle more with life satisfaction/self-actualization factor than with the other two factors. Self-actualization can be defined as "the desire to become more and more what one is, to become everything that one is capable of becoming" (Burlison, 2005). Spiritual strength is beyond a religion or strong belief.

To achieve self-actualization and life satisfaction the following are a few recommendations (Burlison, 2005):

- Be creative
- Facilitate self-learning for personal growth
- Maintain a positive affect
- Be open-minded in thought
- Volunteer

Self-actualization is an important component in developing spiritual strength. Spirituality improves the mind-body connection and strengthens inner peace.

Buffy Reilly and the Healthy Nurse Healthy New Jersey Team

References

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<http://www.nursetogether.com/journey-your-inner-nursing-strength>

National Nurses Week "Nursing: The Balance of Mind, Body and Spirit" concludes, our team would like you to read the following inspiring Healthy Nurse Healthy Nation message:

Mind, Body & Spirit: Diet and Exercise



Sometimes that first step towards making a lifestyle change--even a small one, can be very difficult. We have all been there at one time or another.

“I’m exhausted.”

“I’ve got so much stuff going on right now. I’ll eventually get there.”

“I’m going to start working out, but right now my schedule is crazy.”

“Once this weather changes I can start exercising.”

“I *will*...eventually.”

Sound familiar?

For those of you who are choosing healthy foods and engaging in some form of regular exercise, congratulations and keep up the good work. For those of you who are *still* talking about doing something, this is your clarion call! In last week’s newsletter we addressed the importance of nourishing one’s spirit, but this week’s focus is the body—specifically with respect to diet and exercise. It’s time to make some changes. But just what are we talking about here?

The latest scientific research on exercise suggests that on average people who engage in daily moderate activity only tend to burn about 200 calories more per day than sedentary types.¹ Our bodies control our metabolism in order to maintain energy stores. That means regular exercise alone is not enough to achieve weight loss goals. In order for weight loss to take place, one needs to burn more calories than one consumes. It is well established that both dietary modifications in combination with exercise work best. Once the desired weight loss goals have been met, regular exercise can be instrumental in maintaining a healthy weight.

We are nurses. We all know what we *should* be doing. But we are human. Most of us wear many hats, and by the end of the day our patience and self-control have been taxed. However, we deserve to invest in ourselves and to see to it that we keep moving towards a better state of health.

If you are having trouble fitting into your clothes or if you calculated your BMI and fall into the “overweight” or “obese” categories, it’s time to grab the reins and come up with a clear goal. Keep it simple (for example, “I will fit back into the smaller scrubs” or “I need to lose twenty pounds to make it back to a “normal” BMI”). Give yourself a time frame so that you don’t feel overwhelmed; losing 1-2 pounds per week is a reasonable goal, and in order to do that you will have to reduce your caloric intake by about 500 – 1000 calories per day.

² Incorporate as many minimally processed foods as you can. Decide when and for how long you will exercise. Start simple and progress. And by all means, protect that time for yourself! Will it be thirty minutes of walking in your neighborhood, a light jog or a fun Zumba workout from YouTube? Why not vary your workouts? Decide which days you will do it and try to stick with it. Get outside, listen to the sounds of your environment or create a music playlist which brings you joy. Reward yourself with a non-food prize when you reach your goals.

You *will* sometimes “fall off the wagon”. Don’t let it stress you out. You are not perfect, after all. The important thing is to keep *one hand on the wagon* at all times. Forgive yourself and get back up there. You deserve it.

Good luck on your journey! Don’t stop trying.

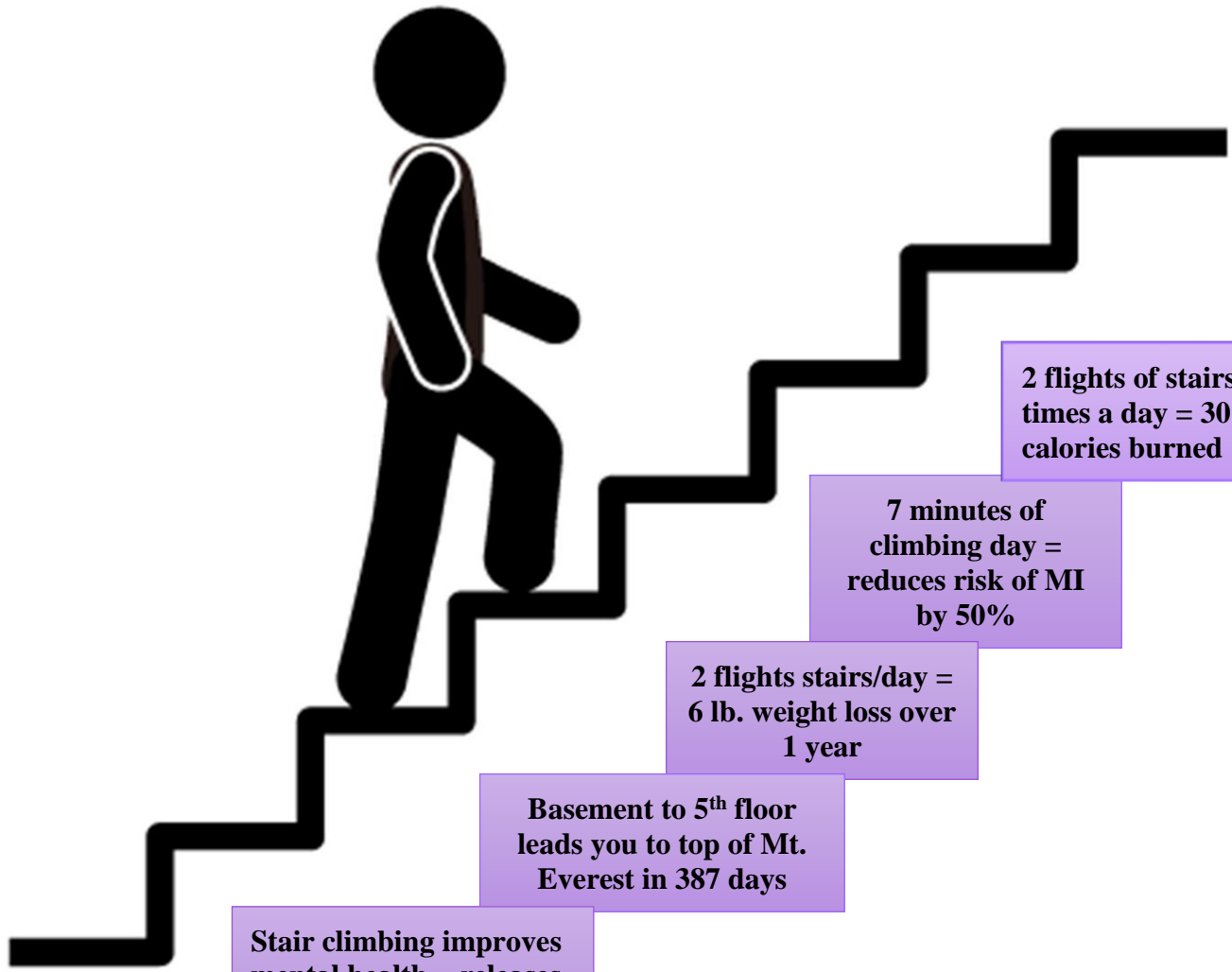
Lisa Ertle and the Healthy Nurse Healthy New Jersey Team

**Author’s note: Six or so years ago I was wearing size “small” scrubs. Within a few years I moved up to a medium. (After all, if a patient’s family brings jelly donuts, isn’t it terrible if you don’t eat one?) Two years ago, I tried on the size small top. It got stuck. No nurse was available, so I was forced to page a woman from housekeeping to extricate me from it. I felt terrible but it still took *two years* to do something about it. A colleague invited me to join her six-week Crossfit/Paleo challenge. I am happy to report that after a month and a half of showing up for class and modifying my diet, I’m back in that shirt. I’m sure you can guess the first person I told!

¹ Pontzer, H. (2017, February). The Exercise Paradox. *Scientific American*. 26-31

² NIH, NHLBI Obesity Education Initiative. Clinical Guidelines on the Identification, Evaluation, and Treatment of Overweight and Obesity in Adults. Retrieved from https://www.nhlbi.nih.gov/files/docs/guidelines/ob_gdlns.pdf

Get Fit, Take the Stairs!
See the following on the health benefits of stair climbing.



Improves strength, bone density, and muscle tone

Stair climbing improves mental health = releases endorphins

Basement to 5th floor leads you to top of Mt. Everest in 387 days

2 flights stairs/day = 6 lb. weight loss over 1 year

7 minutes of climbing day = reduces risk of MI by 50%

2 flights of stairs x 3 times a day = 30 calories burned

Methodist Healthcare. (2014). Retrieved from: <http://www.methodisthealth.org/articles/methodist-south-hospital-encourages-fitness-through-stairway-to-health-initiative/Get>
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May is National Fitness and Sports month. Look within yourself and find your inner child.

Remember when the thought of being outside wasn't even a thought? Make the best use of your daylight hours and go for a bike ride, or a walk, stop and smell the flowers or go to the park.

Busy at work for a 12-hour shift Find your colleagues and go outside, in fact have a recess period, OR take a minute to view this video and find your inner child again.

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=TuUhqDPh7TE&feature=em-share_video_user

Hope we made you smile and that you can enjoy a recess period!

Maggie Richardson, Veronica McEvoy, Marycarol Rossignol and the Healthy Nurse Healthy New Jersey Team