

5 Stress-Relief Strategies for Long- Term Care Nurses

Online Course

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Instructor

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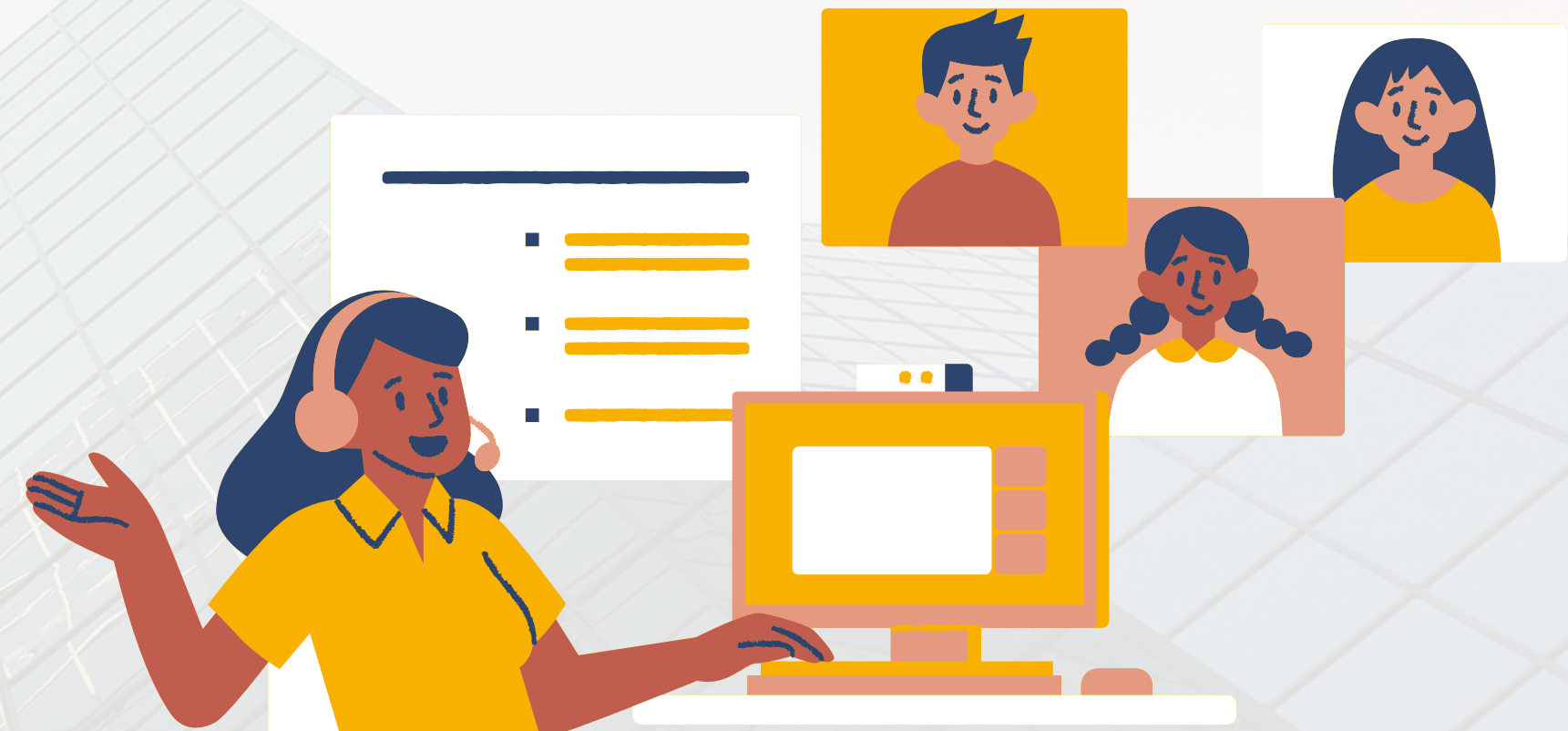
CEO, Author, and founder of NSDxpert Education and Consulting Services. I have 20+ years of experience in long-term care practice and am a consultant with the VLLIP project.

I work with facilities to develop training and orientation programs to improve compliance and staff retention and foster a healthy work environment.



In This Course, You Will

1. Identify at least three common causes of workplace stress specific to long-term care settings.
2. Apply the Eisenhower matrix to prioritize daily tasks and manage time
3. Discuss efficient and effective shift reporting strategies that enhance communication
4. Describe the elements of teamwork and collaboration
5. Discuss strategies for self-care and relaxation
6. Outline a personal development plan that includes at least two continuing education opportunities and one mentorship goal.



Introduction

“Stress is a physical and emotional reaction that people experience as they encounter challenges in life” (NIH, 2022)

The Effect of Stress on Staff

- Working in a Long-term care facility is generally stressful.
- Stress has detrimental outcomes and consequences on the physical, psychological, and emotional well-being of a person's health condition (Akpore et al., 2023).
- Effects of stress include inability to concentrate, trouble thinking clearly, headaches, and insomnia.
- Other symptoms may be emotional and include moodiness, agitation, and irritability
- Registered nurses were nearly twice as likely to report high levels of stress of conscience compared to other care providers in long-term care (Munkeby et al., 2023).
- Work-related stress is also associated with burnout, job satisfaction, and nurse retention. (Khamisa, et al., 2015).
- Poor resident care outcomes, more resident dissatisfaction and grievances.





Activity #1

List your three biggest stressors at the workplace.

Causes of Workplace Stress

- Heavy workload
 - Time constraints
 - Lack of supports
 - Lack of communication
 - Staffing shortage
 - Nurse-Resident Interactions (Behaviors)
 - Family Interactions
 - Hostile workplace
 - Poor leadership and bad management
 - Financial and Personal problems
 - Environmental factors (Noise)
- (Anioke et al. 2021)



**Could you be
contributing to the
stress at the
workplace?**



How you may be contributing to stress at work?

- Ineffective time management
- Poor communication
 - Documentation
 - Shift reporting
- Inadequate teamwork and collaboration
- Lack of training and continuing education
 - Not knowing how to do things can cause so much stress.
- Lack of social engagement
- Not completing tasks





Activity #2

Self Reflection Exercise

I'd like you to reflect on how your actions may enhance or contribute to workplace stress.

5 Core Strategies to Ease Stress at Work



- Time management



- Communication



- Teamwork and collaboration



- Personal growth and development



- Social engagement



Strategy #1

Time Management

Time management is a process involving:

- Strategic data gathering
- Analyzing data
- Planning and prioritizing tasks
- Implementing a structured daily routine
- Delegating

Strategic Data Gathering

A deliberate data-gathering process that drives informed decision-making to ease the nurse's workflow.

Achieved by gathering data from relevant resident records, such as:

- Morning meetings
- Shift reporting
- Electronic health record systems
- Nursing unit's resource documents (lab book, appointment book)
- Utilizing emails, calendars, ad hoc communication, and notes effectively
- Job description



Analyzing Data in Time Management

• During analysis of the data collected, the nurse will consider the following questions:

- What is the data communicating?
- How relevant is the information to resident safety?
- How relevant is the information to my role and practice?
- Are there any identified risks to the resident, the facility, and your role?
- What is the appropriate plan of action to take if you need to?
- Do I need to follow up with any of this information?
- What needs to be done urgently
- What is important
- Do you think this can be delegated?
- Who is best to handle this?
- What can be done later?



Planning and Prioritizing Tasks

- Develop a task outline
- Use the Eisenhower matrix for task categorization
- Balancing Urgent vs. Important Tasks
- Use of technology to manage tasks

**Take a Break
Not Everything is
Urgent or
Important!**



Urgent

Not Urgent

Important

Do it Now

Schedule a time
to do it

Not Important

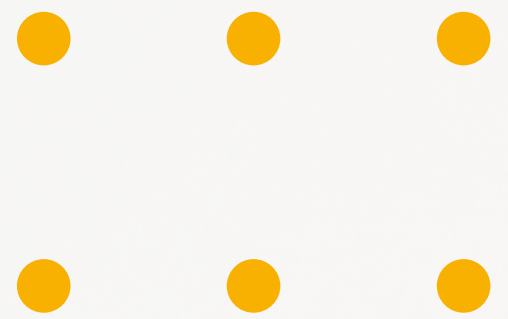
Delegate
Who can do it for
you?

Delete
Eliminate it!

Eisenhower Matrix

- Urgent and Important (Do Now)
- Important but Not Urgent (Schedule)
- Urgent but Not Important (Delegate)
- Not Urgent and Not Important (Eliminate or Minimize)

(Kennedy & Porter 2022)



Activity #3

Prioritization

1. List the tasks you plan to do today at the workplace
2. Group the task into the four Eisenhower Matrix categories
3. What lesson did you learn from this activity?

Implementing a Structured Routine



- Establishing consistent schedules
 - Designing a daily routine for predictability.
 - Time-blocking techniques for daily activities.
- Managing routine tasks efficiently
 - Best practices for medication administration.
 - Effective documentation methods.
- Adapting to Changing Circumstances
 - Flexibility in routine planning.
 - Handling unexpected events without disrupting workflow.

Delegation in Time Management

The Five Rights of Delegation

1. The Right Task

- a. Does the care element fall within your professional code of ethics guidelines, legal regulations, and job description?

2. The Right Circumstance

- a. The delegate has available resources, equipment, a safe environment, and supervision to do the task correctly.

3. The Right Person

- a. Staff will have the education and competency to complete the task.

4. The Right Direction and Communication

- a. Provide a clear, concise description of the task, including limitations and expectations.

5. The Right Supervision and Evaluation

- a. This will include appropriate monitoring, intervention, evaluation, and feedback as necessary.

Delegation in Time Management Cont'd

Delegation is effective if you

- Set realistic goals, consider the individual's job description and capabilities
- Communicate the assignment directly and clearly
- Define the limits of authority and responsibility
- Establish a time frame
- Allow delegates to make independent decisions
- Conduct timely progress checks and follow-ups
- Recognize successful completion



Strategy #2 Communication

- Communication is effective when the sender's information elicits the desired action from the recipient.
- Information will produce the desired outcome when it is clear, concise, and directed to the right recipient.
- Communication is ineffective when there is noise or other distractors such that the information received is muffled or incoherent.

Strategy #2 Communication Cont'd



To make communication effective, be...

- Transparent (No hidden agenda)
- Clear and to the point (No assumptions)
- Enhance shift reporting
 - Utilize a shift report checklist if needed
- Documentation should
 - Reflect residents' care plans
 - Be Informative and comprehensive
- Ensure phone etiquette
 - Take note of - who called, why they called, and the message they intended to deliver (write down the message, read back the message)
- Utilize agenda and take minutes at all meetings, including morning huddles
- SBAR tool.

3 Teamwork and Collaboration

A team can be defined as a group of people with complementary and overlapping skills working together to achieve common goals.

(Ediger et al. 2022)

Elements of Teamwork

- Collaboration
- Shared decision making
- Shared goals
- Mutual respect
- Clear roles

(Abbeyquaye, S. 2023)



Importance of Teamwork in an Organization

- Enhanced Productivity
- Improved Communication
- Increased Innovation and Creativity
- Enhanced Problem-Solving
- Higher Employee Morale and Job Satisfaction
- Better Patient Outcomes
- Shared Workload and Reduced Stress
- Development of Skills and Knowledge
- Increased Accountability



Team Member Versus Team Player

Team Member

- A member of a group or community
 - E.g. As an employee of a specific facility, you are a team member of that facility
- Members who come to work about their clinical tasks at a minimum and go home

Team Player

- Members who come to work, and actively engage in their clinical, operational tasks and organizational tasks.
- Members that are enthusiastic about the team's shared goals, and prioritize the organizational success over their own.
- They go above and beyond and demonstrate organizational citizenship behavior



Activity #4

Self Reflection Exercise

- 1.I'd like you to reflect on whether you are a team member or a team player.
- 2.If you are a team member, list two things you could do differently to help you become a team player.



4 Professional Growth and Development

- Enhances skills through training and continuing education
 - Minimize errors at the workplace
- Offers opportunity for increased compensation
- Creates pathways for career progression and enhances motivation and job satisfaction.



SKILL LEVEL

5 Social Engagement



- Providing effective mentorship and support
 - Be an empathetic preceptor to new hires
- Peer and leadership support
- Facilitating team-building activities
- Facilitating self-care and relaxation routines at work
- Incorporating socialization in the workplace
- Help foster a healthy work environment

Facilitating Self-care and Relaxation

- Deep breathing exercises
- Take your scheduled breaks
- Practice mindfulness
- Exercise regularly
- Journaling
- Have a hobby
- Seek professional support (Counseling, therapy)
- Maintain strong support networks with family, friends and colleagues



Activity #5

1. List two self-care interventions you currently use to ease stress at the workplace
2. List two continuing education opportunities you would explore to ease your stress at work
3. Write one mentorship goal

Conclusion

- Managing stress effectively is crucial for the well-being and performance of long-term care nurses.
- Implementing time management, communication, and teamwork strategies consistently will improve your well-being and enhance resident care and satisfaction.
- Remember, stress management is an ongoing process that requires continuous effort and adaptation.
- Do not forget to practice self-care as well

be the
CHANGE

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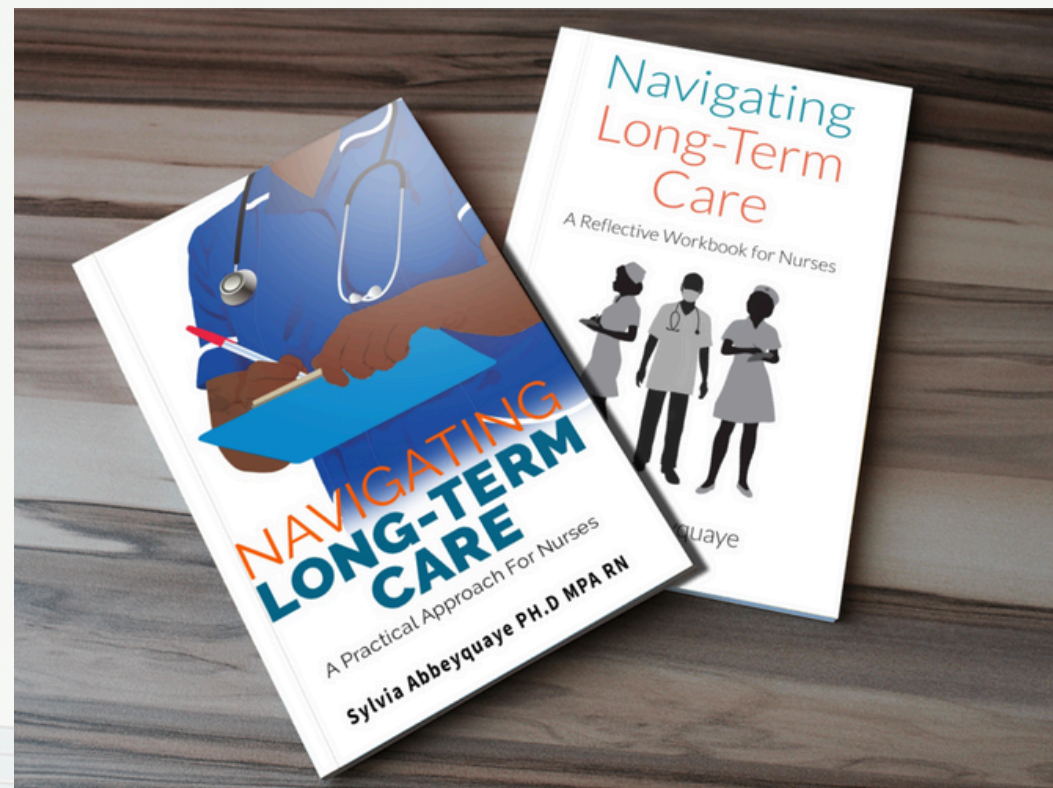
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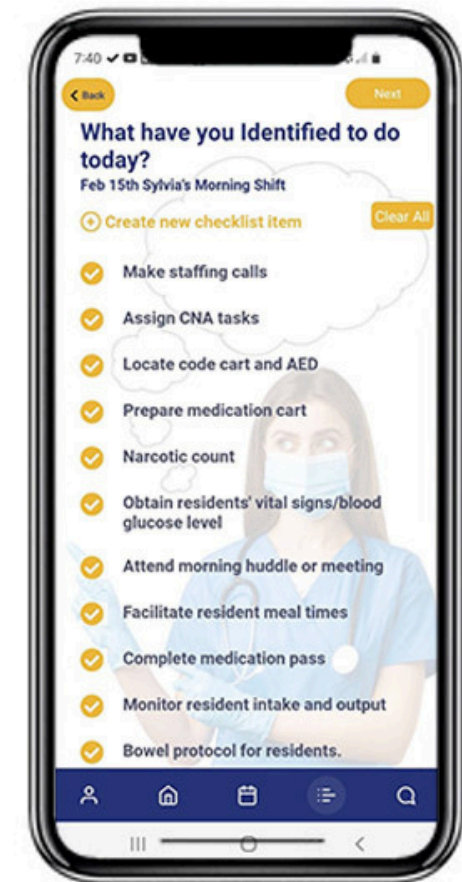
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