



STAT newsletter

The Official Newsletter of
Nursing Students' Association
of New York State

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January 2022 Issue

FROM THE EDITOR:

Dear STAT Readers,

Congratulations on completing another year of coursework! This year has provided us with many challenges that no one could have predicted but once again, we have prevailed. I hope this issue brings you inspiration in your journey to becoming a nurse and encourage you to join nursing leadership organizations, such as NSANYS, rooted in teamwork and perseverance.

As we embark on the New Year, it is important to explore the topic of self care. Our contributors write about exercise, test anxiety, post graduation stress, and different career paths. We also discuss new habits to help you kick off the new semester. In addition, we explore different nursing domains such as volunteering and palliative care nursing. This Issue of STAT newsletter also offers helpful information that will improve your future nursing practice, such as tips for maximizing productivity and the importance of asking questions in school and in the clinical setting.

Lastly, we are excited to announce our 70th Annual Convention, The Heart of Healthcare!

Enjoy this issue, stay healthy and have wonderful Spring semester.



Sincerely,

Rebecca Mei, BSN

STAT Editor
stat.nsanys@gmail.com

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Saturday, February 5th, 2021
**THE NSANYS 70TH ANNUAL
CONVENTION REGISTRATION
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NEW SEMESTER, NEW HABITS

by Brianna Augustin, Molloy College



So it's the start of the new semester and many of us have to buy textbooks, school supplies, and consider semester preparation. Semester preparation can honestly make or break your success for the upcoming semester. First thing's first: it's important to take a step back and to reflect on the previous semester. We've all heard the saying that you learn from your mistakes. In order to do that, we have to take a moment and see what things we did that bettered our understanding and what things we did that had the opposite effect. When it comes to the habits that worked, continue to implement those in your routine. On the other hand, if the habits you looked back on didn't work, try to identify the reasons they did not help you succeed. From there, you can think about what you can do to avoid making those mistakes again.

With this in mind, it's also important to start making goals for yourself to remind you to keep moving forward. When it comes to setting goals for the new semester, we want to set goals that are geared towards our academics. This may be in regards to time management, grades, or study habits. Here are some examples of academic goals for the new semester:

- Begin studying for an exam two weeks prior to the exam date
- Do not procrastinate and stay on top of assignments
- Complete assigned papers at least three days prior to the due date
- Get a minimum of 3.7 GPA

Of course, no matter how busy we get, we still need to live a balanced life. That needs to be taken into account when making goals. This means analyzing other aspects of our lives such as health, self-care, and relationships. Moreover, establishing realistic goals for yourself can help pave the path to success for the new semester.

NEW SEMESTER, NEW HABITS CONTINUED

Now it's time to consider creating an organized system for yourself to ensure you are keeping track of all the tasks you have assigned. The first thing you'll need is a planner: this can be physical or digital. I find it helpful to use a digital planner and to color coordinate my assignments according to course. I even set up alerts to remind myself of the important dates. The second part of creating an organized system would be to gather all your syllabi and to record the dates of exams and assignments in your planner. This way you can plan ahead and prioritize the tasks that are at the top of your list.

Are you setting up a study schedule for yourself? This was actually a mistake I made last semester that resulted in cramming for some of my exams. By making a study schedule, this will ensure you do not fall behind on exams and result in last-minute reviewing. When making a study schedule, it's important to consider a few factors before allocating specific times and dates to school work. This may include class time/date, work, birthdays, clubs, or important events. You want to include these dates into your study calendar so that you don't ignore other aspects of your life.

Lastly, an important habit that probably sounds like a broken record to nursing students is time management! This will help you create a strong foundation to achieve not only academic success, but also personal success. This way, you will have allocated time to your school work and time to decompress and engage in activities that provide you with comfort.



Build good
habits

REDIRECTION OF YOUR CAREER PATH

by **Jordyn Preslar, NSANYS President**

This past semester I was excited to finally enter my pediatrics and obstetrics clinical rotation! Ever since the beginning of nursing school, everyone, including myself, have always anticipated this rotation. After three semesters of working with the geriatrics population, I entered the pediatrics floor expecting it to feel like a breath of fresh air. I walked into my seven year old patient's room to take his vitals. I did my best with this patient's case, but to my surprise, however, I did not feel the passion that I thought I would feel. To me, working with the pediatric population felt more frustrating than working with adults. This brought on feelings of guilt and disappointment, as my other classmates seemed to be thriving and fell in love with pediatrics. It was a bit disappointing to not experience the rush of excitement, when I was previously convinced that I was meant for pediatric nursing (and often shared with friends and family about my aspirations of pursuing this patient population). I thought to myself, "Okay, maybe pediatrics is not meant for you. Everyone talks about how great labor and delivery is, so maybe that is more your strong suit!" My classmate and I spent a day in the operating room, and had the opportunity to observe a cesarean delivery and a vaginal birth. While the experience was magical and a beautiful moment, my body could not handle the operating room. As they progressed through the cesarean delivery, I stood at the foot of the bed to get the best view, and was even able to aid some nurses. Despite how strong I tried to be, my body began to feel queasy and nervous from how invasive the procedure was. I have never felt lightheaded during patient care this far, however my vision and hearing began to fade out. By this point, most of my sight had gone out, and I knew that I had to find my way out of the operating room before I fell to the floor. I concentrated on the fuzzy image I saw of a door, and recovered at the scrubbing station. Once I felt better, the truth had set in. I had missed the birth of a child while my classmate stood strong. The familiar feeling of disappointment, failure, and loss of direction resurfaced. Again, the expectations I built for myself were not met.

All experienced nurses and older nursing students talk about "the feeling" that you get when you know within yourself what specialty you want to go into. After reflecting on this last semester, I realized how impractical it is to expect every clinical rotation to amount to my expectations. The experiences I had in pediatrics and obstetrics were so eye-opening, because it taught me to enter the clinical setting with an open mind about where my career will lead me. Not knowing what direction you want to go in is completely fine and acceptable. Even moreso, a shift in perspective is necessary to realize that the unexpected things make your nursing journey fun and exciting! This is only a redirection of your path, as there are countless other doors to walk through and explore. I hope that this is an encouragement to remain curious and open to redirection in your educational journey!

SO, YOU'VE GRADUATED NURSING SCHOOL. NOW WHAT?



Adriana Pereira, NSANYS Breakthrough to Nursing Director

Graduation is such a highly anticipated day for nursing students. While in nursing school, it is so hard to figure out what will happen after you graduate. Everyone is trying to pass their exams, go to clinicals, submit their discussion posts and papers, and honestly survive nursing school. So here are a few tips to help guide you after you graduate nursing school.

The first step is to apply for licensure with your state's Board of Nursing and register for the NCLEX exam with Pearson VUE. To be eligible to take the NCLEX after you graduate from nursing school, you must apply for licensure/registration with your state's Board of Nursing as well as register to take the NCLEX exam with Pearson VUE. The next step would be to make a study plan. Most of your time following graduation will be spent studying for the NCLEX. Each person is different when it comes to how they study, so everyone's study plan is going to look differently. Some people will only need to study 1-2 hours a day, while others may need to study 4-5 hours a day. I believe it's a good idea to pick a topic to focus on for each day. In one day, you can tackle a day focusing on endocrine disorders while the next day you can focus on pharmacology drugs. Picking a focus for the day will help to keep you from feeling overwhelmed. Also, I have gotten advice from fellow nurses to get UWorld and to do 75 questions a day. They have told me that it really helped them study and get ready for the NCLEX. Other helpful resources I have heard to also look at are Mark Klimeck review courses, Kaplan resources and Saunders books.

SO YOU'VE GRADUATED NURSING SCHOOL. NOW WHAT? CONTINUED

While studying for the NCLEX, start looking and applying for jobs. I know a few nurses who have went on interviews and have personally accepted a position before even taking their NCLEX. This is something to look into because if you accept a position beforehand, once you pass your NCLEX you can notify your job and start working sooner rather than later. It's important to prepare for job interviews so that you can impress future employers and stand out to them. Writing a strong cover letter focusing on the position you applied for is also important as it shows future employers how committed you are to their organization. Make sure to bring several copies of your resume, cover letter, and references to each interview. Another major way to impress employers is by looking professional. By dressing appropriately for the interview, you will not only make a great first impression, but also feel confident in yourself as well. Be prepared for the questions that the interviewers will ask you and have several detailed stories ready that you can use to answer their questions. I feel as though practicing with a friend before the interview is beneficial as it will help you feel more comfortable talking about yourself under pressure. I have also been told to also have some questions ready to ask the interviewer as it shows your interest in them and the position you applied for.

“you are *Stronger*
than you **SEEM**,
Braver than you **BELIEVE**,
and *Smarter*
than you **THINK** you are”

- *A.A. Milne*

Overall, please don't forget to celebrate! Graduating from nursing school is such a huge accomplishment! Find some time for yourself after you graduate and be sure to give yourself breaks from studying. Do something fun that you have always wanted to do and hang out with the people who matter the most in your life. You deserve to enjoy some freedom after nursing school and before starting your career as registered professional nurse. I sincerely hope you pass the NCLEX on your first try and get the dream job you have always wanted. “You are stronger than you seem, braver than you believe, and smarter than you think you are. -A.A. Milne”

NURSING SCHOOL IS COOL

by **Marcella Dimino, NSANYS Secretary**

What made you want to go into nursing? Whatever your reasons are, whether it be because you want to help people as a professional in the healthcare field, someone inspired you, or you enjoy thinking on your toes in a clinical setting, write them down. Now comes the hard part: don't lose sight of them.

During the school year, it can be hard to see the forest through the trees. Our sight becomes clouded by chapters we have to read, classes we have to attend, and exams we have to study for, amongst other stressors. When this begins to happen, it helps to take a step back. Look at where you are now and how much you have already achieved.

Last year during my fundamental's semester, I found it really tough sitting through class and lab over Zoom. Often, I would find myself thinking, what am I doing here? Is this really for me? I found clarity once I made the choice to step out from behind the tree and enjoy the beautiful view of the forest around me. Each exam, each class, each assignment is bringing you closer to becoming a nurse. It's all about perspective! So yes, nursing school is cool, arguably just as cool as being a nurse. This is the time when you are learning what you need to bring you to your end-goal resulting in such a rewarding career. Remember, you can do it.



ASK QUESTIONS

by **Thomas Fellows, Stony Brook University**

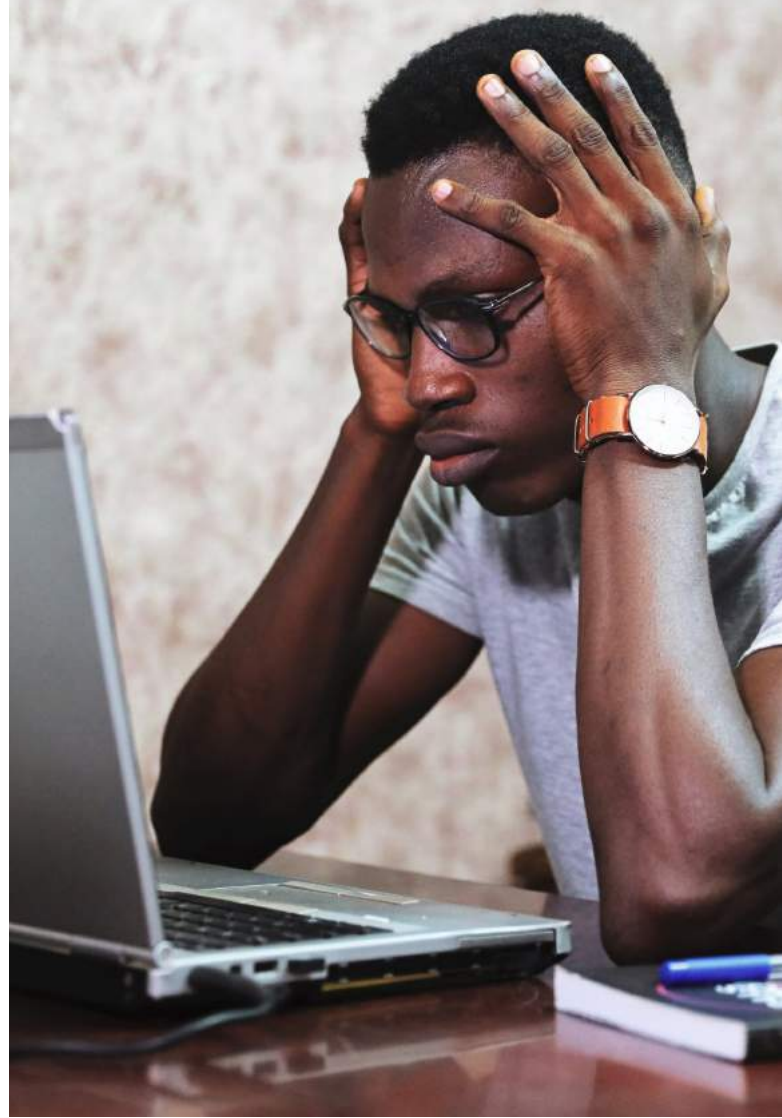
The importance of asking questions is something that cannot be emphasized enough when going through nursing school. We've always been told since our early days of education, "No question is a dumb question." That holds true in nursing school and throughout life. Nursing school is already a daunting process and many students go into it completely overwhelmed and scared, especially in a clinical setting.

This past summer, I was granted the opportunity to be a nurse extern at Northwell's Long Island Jewish Hospital and the experience was nothing short of spectacular. The most valuable experience I learned was that no question was a dumb question. I went into externship with the mindset that I would attempt to learn as much as I possibly could. This experience was a gift of knowledge and experience and I was not going to let this opportunity pass me by without making the most of it.

Asking questions is so crucial, not only to our education as nursing students, but it is also just as important to our patients' safety. There were plenty of instances where I stopped and asked a question and that response

to the question allowed me to provide improved care for the patient or expedite the patient's care. I also asked questions that sometimes a nurse didn't know and he/she would ask a colleague or a physician in order to get the answer, further providing a learning experience for all of us.

Everyone in the healthcare field has the main goal of helping people, not only patients, but each other. I asked questions to the Nursing Assistants, Nurses, Doctors, PA's, and NP's. I wanted to learn as much as I could as quickly as I could. Most staff was very receptive to my questions and willing to share their knowledge on the topic with me. Asking questions not only shows that you're interested in what you're learning, but it also shows that you care and you are invested in learning more and improving your knowledge and skill set. The knowledge I obtained by observing, participating and asking questions for eight straight weeks over the summer, afforded me the opportunity to take this knowledge back to my school and into the classroom. There were many opportunities this previous semester where the experience and knowledge I obtained from my externship, helped answer other students' questions. My advice for every nursing student is don't hesitate to ask questions. Asking questions is the best way of obtaining new knowledge and that will always make you a better nurse.



IMPACT OF VOLUNTEERING

by Shalet Paul, NSANYS Communications Director



As Oscar Wilde once said, “The smallest act of kindness is worth more than the grandest intention.” Volunteering is an opportunity in life to contribute one’s time to helping others and making a difference in society, and thus a better place to live for all. Throughout my years of school, I have been fortunate enough to see hands-on experiences, and how sharing what I’ve learned in my life with others makes a direct positive influence on their lives. People’s lives are changed every day by their actions and experiences.

Last December, I decided to be a part of the Nassau University Medical Center. In my time as a volunteer at the hospital, I was able to meet patients and staff members from all over the world and learn about their life experiences. Listening to all of their stories has made me truly appreciate everything which I have. Me and my best friend, Pri got a chance to experience the maternity unit. From 8 am to 12 pm, we lend a helping hand to the staff and mothers by giving out food and helping the PCA’s fit the beds for new patients, helping RN’s with paperwork, and also assisting the mothers in need. By participating in the maternity unit, I learned how to make the world a safer place for mothers and their newborns. It also helped me experience the behind-the-scenes of a very crucial profession. A doctor and medical staff are still on hand. But the rooms create a nurturing environment, with warm, soothing colors and features that try to simulate a home-like atmosphere that can be very comforting for new moms. Rooming-in — when the baby stays with the mother most of the time instead of in the infant nursery — also is more common.

At the beginning of this volunteer experience, I walked in hopeful that I would gain some knowledge about the different careers that the medical field possesses, but I got so much more than that. I learned that volunteering is about making an impact in the lives of other members who share my community. This volunteering opportunity inspired me to continue my studies on becoming a Registered Nurse. In this position, not only do I get to care for patients, but I am presented with the opportunity to change their lives. I will be able to see firsthand the diversity of cultures from around the world. I have a lot to learn, but once I become more educated, I will also increase my ability to share what I’ve learned.

Donating my time to a community is something I will always pursue because sometimes people just need support and it’s what life is all about. To me, volunteering served as a purpose to become part of a bigger mission and to discover the pleasure of learning and working with others. The same can be said about social work and how it serves as a bigger mission to help the community and society as a whole. I want to be a part of that bigger mission to help those in a tough situation make their way into a better and safer one.

TESTING EMOTIONS

by Lauren Lodico, Molloy College

I think sometimes we forget empathy and sympathy are not being to being traits like a smile or having a nose. I've been the brunt of many non-sympathetic people my entire life. And this might come as a surprise or dumfounding to most (especially future patients), but nursing school does not teach these qualities.

To my mistake, I thought that it would be and when I found out that not everyone in my profession shared the same set of emotional skills, I was a bit shocked. This is the career of empathy and dedication to someone else, so much so that you give parts of yourself in the betterment of others. With that kind of humble humanity, you would think nursing schools would have interviews like every other medical school to determine if you are a proper fit for the degree.

And because nurses are not yet recognized for their entire job scope, you can get into a nursing school being a C+ student and having a 3.0 GPA. What sets me apart from Jimmy, who sat in the back of my AP Bio class and cheated his way through glycolysis, saying he was going to nursing school because they made more money than a PE teacher? Empathy! But how is the person looking at my resume of extracurricular activities like Varsity Bowling and the school play supposed to know that I was made for this career path?

The answer is nothing. Because the only thing that tests it at the end of the day, is waiting four years later and having Jimmy realize on his own, that he made the biggest mistake of his life. And when he's drowning in debt from nursing school, he's not going to be able to change careers. Because Jimmy was right about one thing; nurses do make more money than PE teachers.



PALLIATIVE CARE NURSING

by **Aryanna Adalin,**
NSANYS Co-Regional Director



Palliative care is medical care that is specialized for individuals afflicted with a serious illness. Its main focal point is improvement in the quality-of-life of patients with illnesses such as cancer, heart disease and dementia. Providing both practical and emotional support, the palliative care team is a diverse group of professionals whose goal is to emphasize comfort care. While hospice care is meant for end-of-life, palliative care is given with the goal of curing the illness despite its severity. Enhancing a patient's current care to treat symptoms with the intention of curing it distinguishes it from hospice care.

The concurrent model of palliative care is especially prevalent in countries with lower incomes in which curative treatment is not accessible to all. It is an extremely helpful resource to the older adult population experiencing general discomfort and disability. Being a multidisciplinary team, the palliative care team is specialized based on the patient's individual needs.

Nurses play an extremely large role in providing palliative care. The sheer amount of time they spend at the patient's bedside and with the family allows for the optimization of quality-of-life through holistic nursing care. Holistic practice aims to lift the physical and emotional burdens of the seriously ill patient. This compassionate treatment that encompasses physical, spiritual, emotional and

PALLIATIVE CARE NURSING CONTINUED

psychosocial needs of a patient promotes the effectiveness of palliative care. A registered nurse is responsible for many interventions, which vary between the emotional and physical domains. The nursing plan of care includes assessment, education and the administration of medication and treatment. Palliative care nursing involves the art of caring and communication as well as the specialized skills of complex symptom management, social situations, and communication about grief and death.

Nurses are the largest component of the healthcare system in the United States. As a vital resource for patients, it is essential that the holistic considerations of palliative care are utilized when interacting with an individual facing serious illness. As a pillar of support by the patient's bedside, nurses have the ability to treat symptoms, communicate, educate and advise patients and their families. This crucial role of nurses in palliative care helps alleviate the specialized needs of the individual through holistic care.



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HOW TO MAXIMIZE PRODUCTIVITY

by Brianna Augustin, Molloy College

Let's be honest! Being a nursing student is never easy. We all get overwhelmed from time to time with the loads of work we receive on a daily basis. Unhealthy studying habits can lead to a chaotic and unproductive schedule. With that being said, making sure you maximize your productivity on a day-to-day basis is very important.

TIPS:

- **PLANNER:** IT'S NEVER A BAD IDEA TO GO BACK TO OUR GOOD OLD PAPER PLANNERS, BUT I GUESS NOWADAYS, EVERYONE IS GOING DIGITAL. RIGHT? EITHER WAY, HAVING SOMEWHERE TO WRITE DOWN THE TASK YOU WOULD LIKE TO ACCOMPLISH FOR THAT SPECIFIC DAY IS THE FIRST STEP TO BEING PRODUCTIVE. IN YOUR PLANNER MAKE SURE TO INCLUDE YOUR DUE DATES SO THAT WAY YOU CAN PRIORITIZE EACH ASSIGNMENT.
- **CLASS PREPARATION:** PRIOR TO EACH CLASS, IT IS IMPORTANT THAT YOU REVIEW THE REQUIRED MATERIAL AND COMPLETE ALL HOMEWORK ASSIGNMENTS. THIS WAY, YOU WILL GO THROUGH THE LECTURE HAVING AN IDEA ABOUT THE TOPIC. IN ADDITION, MAKE SURE YOU BRING ALL REQUIRED MATERIAL TO EFFICIENTLY TAKE NOTES THROUGHOUT THE LECTURE. SOME SUPPLIES YOU MAY NEED INCLUDE HIGHLIGHTERS, HEADPHONES, PENS, FULLY CHARGED DEVICES, AND SO MUCH MORE!
- **TIME MANAGEMENT:** AN EFFECTIVE WAY TO MANAGE YOUR TIME IS BY PLANNING AHEAD AND CREATING A TO-DO LIST. WHILE CREATING YOUR TO-DO LIST YOU SHOULD KEEP IN MIND YOUR SYLLABUS FOR THE SEMESTER. THIS WILL HELP TO GIVE YOU A SENSE OF ALL YOUR ASSIGNMENTS AND WHEN THEY ARE DUE AHEAD OF TIME.
- **ORGANIZATION:** THE WAY YOU USE RESOURCES WILL DETERMINE HOW SUCCESSFUL YOU ARE AT RETAINING THE INFORMATION YOU RECENTLY LEARNED. WHETHER YOU ARE WRITING ON A DEVICE OR ON PAPER, YOUR NOTES SHOULD BE ORGANIZED IN A WAY THAT IS EASY FOR YOU TO UNDERSTAND! YOU MIGHT WANT TO ORGANIZE YOUR NOTES USING THE BELOW METHODS. THE LIST GOES ON AND ON! MANY PEOPLE HAVE DISORGANIZED NOTES WHICH MAKES IT DIFFICULT TO READ OVER WHEN PREPARING FOR AN EXAM. CREATING ORGANIZED, CLEAR, AND CONCISE NOTES WILL SAVE YOU TIME WHEN STUDYING.
 - A HEADER
 - DATES
 - SUBTITLES
 - COLOR COORDINATION
 - STICKY NOTES
 - ABBREVIATIONS

In addition to the tips listed above, you also need to ensure you are prepared internally. Many of us don't prioritize the most important meal of the day. **BREAKFAST!** You should ensure you are fueling your body with the proper nutrients to keep you energized for the long day. Proper nutrition goes hand in hand with the amount of sleep you get. A minimum of 8 hours of sleep guarantees you an energized and successful day. By incorporating all or some of these tips, this will help maximize your productivity as a nursing student.

CONQUERING TEST ANXIETY



by Shayne Garrity, Molloy College

Nursing school exams can be difficult. At some point or another, everyone has stressed over a big test coming up. While these tests can be intimidating and stressful, there are steps you can take to reduce the load and do your best. In this article, we will discuss a few things that can help you do the best you can on your exams.

One way students can help to reduce their anxiety is to find an anxiety reducing technique that works for them. A lot of people find success with techniques such as deep breathing, exercising, walking outside and talking out their feelings! It is all about finding out what works best for you individually.

One of the biggest contributors to test anxiety is trying to cram in the material right before a test. This is definitely one of the biggest mistakes we can make as nursing students. There is a lot of material involved in nursing school, it is of our best interest to make sure we get this material down over time. In order to do so, you can try and start studying as soon as you can for an exam. It does not have to be a lot each day, maybe just 10 or 15 minutes. As you do this though, the material will become more familiar to you each time.

Leading up to a big test, something I hear a lot from other students is that they feel as though they don't know anything. Oftentimes, this is not true. All throughout nursing school, you have built up a foundation of knowledge. This foundation of knowledge can serve as a starting point for answering a majority of questions. Use this knowledge to rationalize each possible answer and select the best option you can. It is important to realize that you have made it thus far in your studies and so you must be doing something right!

WALKING FOR HEALTH

by Susan Donohue, Molloy College



When you hear the word “exercise”, what comes to mind? Is it a buff body builder lifting weights, or a seasoned runner doing laps around the track? Is it a yoga practitioner doing a headstand, or a Pilates instructor holding a plank position? While these examples all identify different types of exercise, they leave out the most accessible and popular form of exercise: walking. Walking is a powerful form of exercise that requires minimal equipment and athletic ability. Walking can benefit the physical, mental and social health of nursing students and their future patients.

Physical Health

As walking is a form of exercise, it has clear benefits for physical health. For those that live a sedentary life and potentially need to lose weight for medical reasons, the incorporation of a daily walk can contribute to healthy and gradual weight loss and weight management. For those who need to gain weight for health reasons after overexercising, replacing a high-intensity workout with a 30-minute walk can allow for the maintenance of a healthier weight. Beyond weight management, walking can improve cardiovascular strength and bone health. This is a low-intensity form of exercise that still strengthens the body. Many people with heart disease and other conditions are not medically cleared to do intense forms of exercise, and walking is a great option for low intensity exercise.

Social Health

Nursing students can become stuck in a routine and studying, sleeping, and repeating the cycle day after day. A great option for these students is to go for a walk with friends and classmates. This is a plan with multiple benefits, as it brings about the physical rewards of exercising, as well as the social rewards of spending time with friends, and mental benefits of taking a break from studying. By socializing and walking with friends, students can feel a sense of relief from their studies and support from their friends and classmates. New York State has several parks and trails that offer breathtaking views for walkers. Next time that you are making plans with friends or taking a study break, consider going for a walk and exploring a new trail.

Mental Health

Walking can be a great way to clear your mind and organize personal thoughts that can feel jumbled and stressful when sitting at a desk. While it is critical to have a strong study routine and dedication to school, it is equally as important to have a healthy mind. Walking is not the cure to mental health issues, but it can alleviate daily stress and provide a healthy distraction from various struggles and hardships faced in nursing school. A daily nature walk can maintain balance in life between a student's school life and personal life.

Walking is a valuable form of exercise that can benefit all aspects of health for nursing students, and the general population. To become a walker, all you need is a pair of sneakers and appropriate weather gear. The next time that you are making plans with friends or looking for a relaxing activity, try going for a walk!

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- Topics: must be related to nursing or nursing education
- Length: minimum 300 words

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