

Creating Resilience in Nursing Across New Mexico Through Compassion Renewal

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Why is Compassion Renewal Needed? (Situation):

Using the SBAR methodology, we will explore ways to renew your compassion.

Nurses need ways to bolster their energy, strength, and commitment to their patients, teams, and, most importantly, themselves. There are many factors influencing the drain on nurses: the weight of moral injury, grief over patient losses, the intensity of the workload, and the loss of team members. The negative forces of global turmoil are overwhelming at times. Healthcare is undergoing tremendous change. This change is driven by artificial intelligence (AI), staffing shifts, changes in the operations within the healthcare system, and rising workplace violence, among many other key change factors. Focusing on a few steps to revive your nursing purpose can make a positive impact, not only on your practice but also on your personal well-being. In this article, we aim to offer the pillars to

ground you, lay a foundation for your ongoing personal strength, and offer ways to sustain a caring approach in your workplace.

What is Caring? (Background):

Caring was defined by Sister Simone Roach as Compassion, Competence, Confidence, Conscience, Commitment, and Comportment– the Six Cs. (Osaka et al., 2024). Dr. Jean Watson defines caring as “the moral ideal of nursing whereby the end is protection, enhancement, and preservation of human dignity” (Watson, 1988, pg. 29).

Tamara Sayegh (2018) created a program called CPR for the Soul, writing that it was “an invitation to pause, breathe, and rebalance in our fast-paced, task-oriented environment” (p. 33). This program’s goal was to replace moral distress and compassion fatigue with moral fulfillment and compassion satisfaction.

Compassion renewal is an active, con-

scious process that restores a caregiver’s emotional and psychological capacity to continue the nursing journey. We have selected Dr. Jean Watson’s Caritas® Processes to provide a framework and foundation for the development of your ongoing compassion renewal. The Ten Caritas Processes are: embrace, inspire, trust, nurture, forgive, deepen, balance, co-create, minister, and open. These processes provide the foundation and strength needed as nurses traverse the sometimes-rough terrain of healthcare.

Where We Are at Today (Assessment):

Nursing remains impacted by many of the same barriers that existed decades ago, and the cloak of frustration challenges the visualization of a caring, supportive environment of belonging (Watson, 1988). Nurses have focused on relationships with clients yet have not consistently treasured or prioritized relationships with our colleagues and teams. Watson Human Caring Science is a process that grows within us through humility, gratitude, and love. Through understanding and practicing the ten Caritas Processes, we develop and “become” the individual who treasures and loves.

Self-care is both a beginning and an outcome. Compassion Renewal is a positive construct that better facilitates and directs our path, starting with ourselves. It is an honor to be called to serve and care about others. It is an honor and yet a requirement to prioritize ourselves first. Small thoughts and steps to pro-

tect our bodies and psyches provide the sustenance to “become” the part of each team that lovingly supports and cares for the other members. One cannot provide dignity and caring for others until one achieves it for oneself.

Call to Action (Recommendation):

We each need an action plan.

Dr. Jean Watson has developed eleven assumptions to Human Care Values in Nursing. One assumption underscores Nursing’s ability to care for self and others as paramount to the survival of civilization (Blasdel, 2017). Nurses who cease to demonstrate their caring can alter the fabric of Nursing which may pose grave challenges in the world beyond. Committing to caring on behalf of ourselves and our profession is a process of “sacred activism” (Horton-Deutsch et al., 2025, p.8).

Considerations: What sustains each of us? Delineating our needs is necessary for solutions. Compassion Renewal is a positive quest to meet those needs, with the potential to have a positive ripple effect on others.

Three Step Strategy:

1. **Work on Personal and Professional Boundaries.** They often conflict. One’s low tolerance for stress may interfere with another colleague’s need for venting. Dr. Watson’s Caritas Process #5 provides for “holding space” for others and allowing both the positive and negative sharing of feelings. This becomes “forgiveness” (Horton-Deutsch et al., 2025). Self-reflection on one’s individual needs can help deflect stress by setting reasonable, but caring boundaries.
2. **Master Conflict Resolution through clarity of goal setting for each conflict.** Is each party in conflict able to share their individual goal(s)? Do short-term goals provide an opening for longer-term goals? Can separate goals become a universal client-oriented goal? A collaborative goal-setting

process can help resolve the conflict. Utilizing Watson’s Caritas processes, trust, nurture, and forgiveness provide a foundation for resolving conflict.

3. **Enhance Worker Engagement.** Nurses can work individually or together to participate in either organizational or outside evidence-based wellness programs. One such program, the Workforce Engagement for Compassionate Advocacy, Resilience, and Empowerment (WE CARE), was developed for nurse leaders, staff registered nurses (RNs), and patient care technicians (PCTs). It was designed to support health care workers and mitigate stress. As a prospective study, it ran for six months with positive benefits realized in several areas (Patrician et al., 2024). Nurses derive more control and purpose by focusing on caring and wellness.

Compassion Renewal begins with each one of us; we must help generate our own solutions. Rachel Naomi Remen states it well in her book *Kitchen Table Wisdom*, “The expectation that we can be immersed in suffering and loss daily and not be touched by it is as unrealistic as expecting to be able to walk through water without getting wet” (Remen, 1996, p. 52). The first step is accepting that you need compassion renewal. This is a call to action for nurses across New Mexico: care for yourself first so you can care for others. ■

References online:
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