Analyzing Self-Care Initiative of Nursing Students

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Introduction

• Self-care – constant, voluntary, and learned actions performed in order to maintain one’s wellbeing.
• Impaired by academic and clinical stress.
• Rarely an interest in the self-care of health care providers.

Method & Participants

• Face-to-Face Interviews; Format: semi-structured
• 9 participants total – 8 upper division; 1 graduate

Themes & Quotes

Powerless

“Seeing a patient who’s in a very, very bad situation knowing that they can’t get out of it and you can’t do anything about it.”

“Life and death and it’s really hard to have that bottled in did not talk about it and just be confused.”

“You actually have to catch vomit or wipe someone’s bottom and see very stressful things and it’s physically tolling and make sure that you are okay with not getting all the glory, but doing all these very, very stressful things.”

“We don’t give our families enough credit. They support me, they ask questions, they like to know what I’m going through. They may not understand, they don’t see it with their eyes, but they have the capability of feeling for you and talking with you about it.”

Fear of Failure

“You have to be okay with failure. You have to learn how to figure out how to be okay with failure in your head…”

“Having a lot of fears… emotionally nursing you’re always constantly on the verge of am I doing things right. There’s always the fear of what if I don’t make it.”

“Something has got to drop and my health is usually the thing that suffers the most.”

Health

“I am trying to learn about other people’s health, but I can’t even keep my health in line.”

Scheduling & Planning

“I’ve got so much on me and I try to keep a good detailed calendar, but I am always afraid that I am going to forget something.”

“I’m a planner. When there’s a hundred different things going on, which we have every week, I like to schedule times.”

“Being able to manage your time throughout the day or throughout the semester because that will help a lot with your stress level.”

“Want to apply your knowledge not only to your patient but to yourself, so you know how to take care of yourself in the future.”

Friends & Family

“You have to sacrifice family and friends and miss out on things that matter to you to pursue academics.”

“Get a good group of friends who you trust to keep you motivated.”

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Participant Recommendations

• “Have your priorities very, very clear. Don’t lose sight of those.”
• “Stay grounded and find ways you can cope with those stresses.”
• “Relax. Don’t just study because that can be the end of you.”
• “Make a list of things that make you happy, because whenever you are stressed, you are going to go back to those things.”

Self-Care Activities

All mentioned in the interviews:

• Hobbies: cook, swim, paint, jog, basketball
• Spiritual: pray, attend a religious ceremony
• Relaxation: pet therapy, meditation/ deep breathing app
• Communication: counseling, fostering friendships

Acknowledgements

I would like to extend my gratitude towards RCEU staff Dr. Bernhard Vogler and David Cook for guidance, UAH Office of the Provost, President and VP for Research, Dean Adams, Dr. Ann Bianchi and the College of Nursing, Dean Wilkinson and the UAH Honors College, all the research participants, and my talented sister Abby Murray for the beautiful artwork all of whom have made special contributions to make this experience possible.

References