

**Topic: Benefits of mindful self-compassion (MSC) for frontline nurses****Question:**

In the nursing profession, how do nurses who practice mindful self-compassion, as opposed to those who do not engage in personal self-care, impact the physical, emotional, and spiritual rehabilitation of the patients?

**Summary:**

The nursing profession is one of the most challenging careers which is often unnoticed because people have the propensity to look at them as mere health care workers who have to prioritize the safe delivery of care of the patients, and as long as they are able to fulfill their duties, they should be alright. Oftentimes, people do not see the tremendous amount of enervation they suffer and the consequences this brings for the quality of care they are able to deliver. In the article [Effects of Mindfulness-Based Interventions on Self-Compassion in Health Care Professionals: a Meta-analysis](#), Wasson and company provides that, more often than not, nurses are the most vulnerable in the health care team since they are more exposed to human suffering and death, and interact with challenging patients, families, and co-workers on a regular basis along with executing their duties efficiently, accurately, and ethically under these conditions (Wasson et al, 2020). In fact, the article by Wasson and company also discussed that repetitive exposure to these types of afflictions is equated to a person suffering from "Post - Traumatic Stress Disorder" which results to 'compassion fatigue'. According to the article [Mindfulness, Compassion, and Self-Compassion Among Health Care Professionals: What's New? A Systematic Review](#), compassion fatigue first emerged with the work of Charles Figley who discussed it as 'secondary traumatic stress' and as "the formal caregiver's reduced capacity or interest in being emphatic or 'bearing the suffering of clients' and is 'the natural consequent behaviors and emotions resulting from knowing about a traumatizing event experienced or suffered by a person'" (Conversano et al, 2020). We all know that there are direct correlations between the health condition of the nurses and the quality of care they can offer. If nurses cannot engage in the optimal level they should be performing while attending to the needs of their patients, this could jeopardize their ability to establish strong relationships with them which is also a critical component to positive therapeutic outcomes (Wasson et al, 2020). Stress accumulated from daily routine struggles has contributed to the adverse health conditions of the nurses which in the end, has greatly affected their patient treatment engagement. In the article [Caring for the caregivers: Evaluation of the effect of an eight-week pilot mindful self-compassion \(MSC\) training program on nurses' compassion fatigue and resilience](#), stress and burnout are discussed as the two critical aspects of compassion fatigue that substantially affect the caregivers' psychological problems (Delaney, 2018). Research studies show that interventions which ameliorate mindful self-compassion in nurses can help prevent stress, burnout, and compassion fatigue and help produce better patient care outcomes, as self-compassion allows them to maintain their emotional sensitivity to patients, alleviate their personal empathetic distress which then facilitates compassionate care in return (Wasson et al, 2020). Wasson and company also discussed in their article how Kristin Neff, who developed the Self-compassion Scale (SCS), identified self-compassion into three interconnected components:

**Topic: Benefits of mindful self-compassion (MSC) for frontline nurses**

mindfulness, self-kindness, and common humanity. According to them, “mindfulness skills are particularly important because they promote an enhanced present-moment awareness and a willingness to experience emotions with openness, curiosity, and acceptance. Self-kindness refers to letting go of judgment criticism and employing kindness toward the self. Finally, common humanity is the concept that other human beings experience difficulties in life which can be help prevent self-pity, isolation, and feelings of shame.” Thus, looking at these propositions, we can infer that to better understand how nurses can fully surrender themselves to the art of compassionate caring, we must realize how they value themselves through self-awareness, personal self-care, and mindful self-compassion.

**Conclusion:**

Therefore, research studies have shown that mindfulness self-compassion is a tool that can be engaged in by our nurses to enhance their self-realization, judgment, and psychosocial skills which can create a big impact on the patients’ physical, emotional, and spiritual therapy compared to those who do not engage in personal self-care. Research studies have provided that there are ways to assess your personal stress, depression, and responsiveness to afflictions brought about by daily efforts through the Self-Compassion Scale (SCS) created by Neff, but somehow is not readily available to everyone due to time and place constraints. An example of which is the Covenant Health not having this kind of resource. I asked one of the nurses in my unit and she mentioned that there is no Self-Compassion Scale (SCS) immediately accessible to the nurses but Covenant Health has online resources to call to if any of the nurses start experiencing depression, burnout, or fatigue. Research studies have discussed that “mindfulness-based interventions share core components that include fostering awareness, increasing moment experiences, cultivating response flexibility, and improving affect tolerance. These skills are thought to help individuals become more aware of autonomic thinking and acting, interrupt rumination about past experiences and worries about future events, promote “considered action,” and learn to allow emotional experiences to rise and fall without behaviorally responding, while simultaneously engaging in more adaptive behaviors (Wasson et al, 2020). Thus, these studies about mindfulness self-compassion underline how the mental health, quality of life, and job performance of the nurses will foster better patient outcome and that is through being a nurse with “compassion”.

**Works Cited:****Primary Article**

Wasson, R.S., Barratt, C. & O’Brien, W.H. (2020, March). *Effects of Mindfulness-Based Interventions on Self-compassion in Health Care Professionals: a Meta-analysis*. *Mindfulness* **11**, 1914–1934 (2020). Retrieved February 4, 2023 from <https://doi.org/10.1007/s12671-020-01342-5>

**Secondary Article:**

Conversano C., Ciacchini R., Orru G., Di Giuseppe M., Gemignani A. and Poli A. (202, July). *Mindfulness, Compassion, and Self-Compassion Among Health Care Professionals: What's New? A Systematic Review*. *Front. Psychol.* 11:1683. Doi: 10.3389/fpsyg.2020.01683. Retrieved February 4, 2023 from <https://www.frontiersin.org/articles/10.3389/fpsyg.2020.01683/full>

**Tertiary Article:**

Delaney M. (2018, November). *Caring for the caregivers: Evaluation of the effect of an eight-week pilot mindful self-compassion (MSC) training program on nurses compassion fatigue and resilience*. *Plos Collection. Social Psychiatry*. Retrieved February 4, 2023 from <https://doi.org/10.1371/journal.pone.0207261>