

Where Am I? Exactly Where You Should Be: Existential Awareness Training as a Means of Well-Being Improvement in Nurses

Abstract

Introduction: Nurses make up over half of the worldwide healthcare workforce and have a profound effect on the health and well-being of the communities they serve. Current literature highlights how existentially aware nursing interventions can improve patient outcomes. Less is known of how existential-based training programs affect nurses themselves. **Methods:** This project provided an educational training program designed to improve participants' knowledge of existential philosophy with the aim of improving subjective reporting of well-being in participants. Data collected included demographics, a pre- and post-intervention survey, and researcher notes and observations. Mixed methods were used for analysis. **Results:** Quantitative analysis produced no significant results. Qualitative analysis identified three main themes: 1. Things are Difficult, 2. We Need More..., and 3. Well-Being is Personal. Overall, challenges related to recruitment and retention persisted throughout the project and limitations to data analysis and conclusions are described. **Conclusion:** Key indicators from this project show that nurses are struggling with barriers to self-actualization of well-being. Well-being is still an important topic for future projects and should be considered as a key indicator of positive workplace culture. Given the current climate of nursing burnout, trauma, strikes, and shortages, now is the time to highlight the importance of nurse well-being. Without healthy nurses, the communities they serve will suffer.