

BACKGROUND

Nursing staff are at a significant risk for workplace stress, which can strain personal resilience and lead to increased burnout. Recent studies show that a significant number of newly licensed RNs are considering leaving their jobs. Since stress is an inherent part of healthcare, direct support and interventions aimed at building staff resilience are essential tools for leaders and peers within the workplace.

DESCRIPTION

“3 Good Things” is an evidence-based positive psychology intervention developed by Dr. Martin Seligman which shows that intentional positive reflection can increase happiness and decrease depressive symptoms. While individuals are hard-wired to remember negative events, practicing positive reflection leads to an increased ability to notice and recall positive events. As illustrated in the photograph below, a negative focus sees only the cracks in the pavement but intentional positive focus reveals the flower.



The “Air Your Clean Laundry” exercise creatively adapted “3 Good Things” to promote positive reflection in the health care work environment. The goal of the project was to measure the potential impact of intentional positive reflection on individual and team resilience.

METHODS

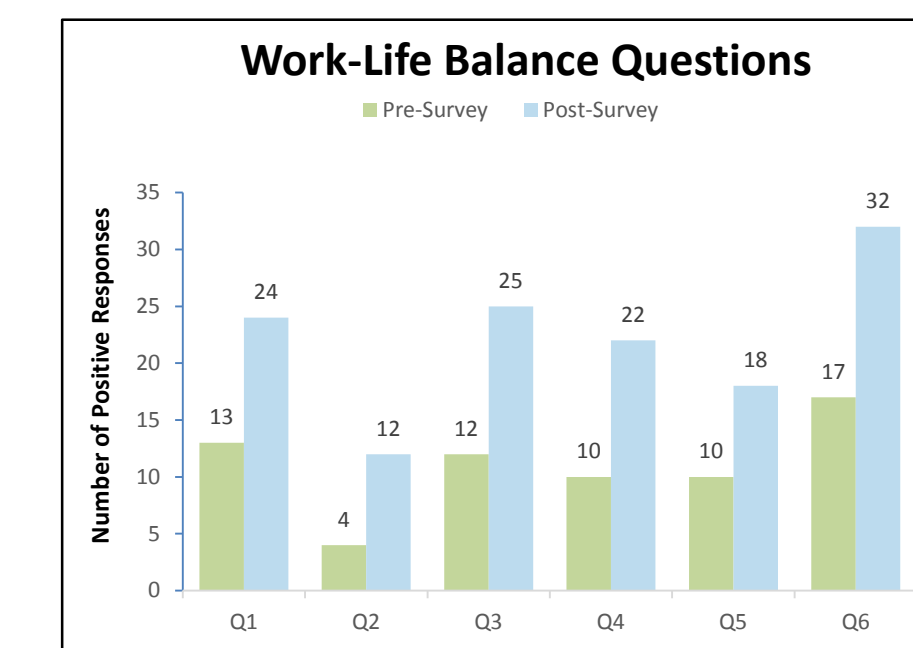
During a two week period, nursing staff were asked to share positive reflections about each shift on a single “article of clothing,” which were displayed on a highly visible “clothesline” bulletin board in the break room, allowing all staff members to reflect on and appreciate one another’s reflections.

Using the emotional exhaustion subscale of the Maslach Burnout Inventory and the Work-Life Climate Scale, unit nursing staff were surveyed pre-intervention to determine baseline data regarding work-life balance behaviors and overall resilience. At the end of the two weeks, a post-intervention survey was then conducted to measure the impact of the intervention.

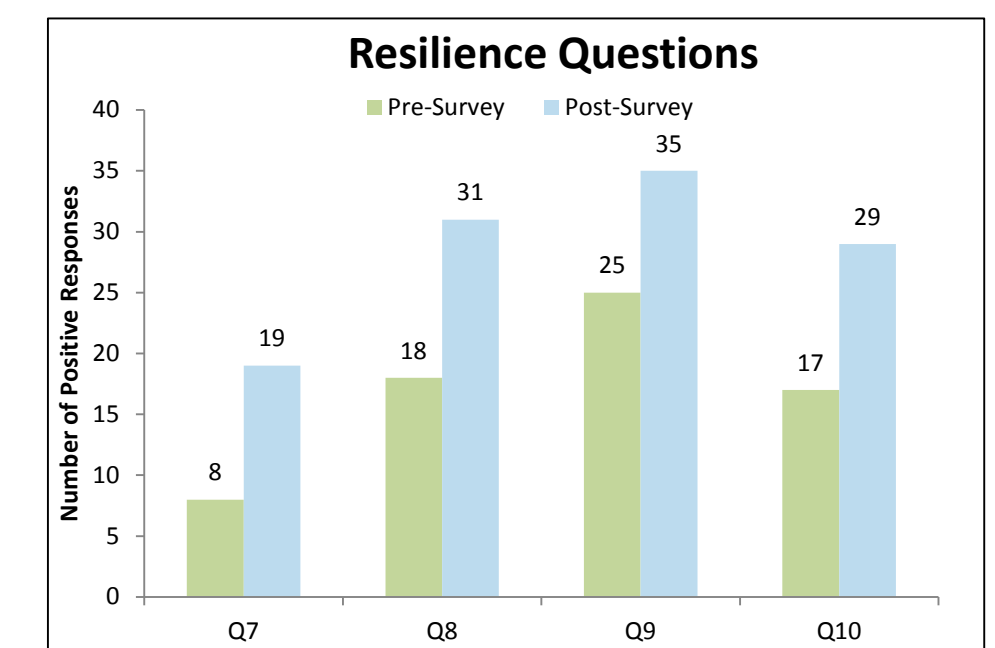


OUTCOMES

Pre- and post-intervention survey data included responses from greater than 65% of unit staff. Based on the number of positive responses, results showed an improvement in all work-life balance behaviors (Graph 1) and all measures of resilience (Graph 2). The overall average of staff resilience measures increased from 49% to 71%.



Graph 1



Graph 2

Question Number	Survey Question
Q1	This week I have skipped a meal
Q2	This week I have eaten a poorly balanced meal
Q3	This week I have changed personal/ family plans because of work
Q4	This week I have slept less than five hours in a night
Q5	This week I have arrived home late from work
Q6	This week I have worked through a shift without any breaks
Q7	I feel fatigued when I get up in the morning and have to face another day on the job
Q8	I feel burned out from my work
Q9	I frustrated by my job
Q10	I feel I am working too hard on my job

EVALUATION & CONTINUED EFFORTS

The “Air Your Clean Laundry” exercise was a simple, low-cost, and high-impact intervention, which inspired the creation of a permanent “Gra-ffi-titude” board where staff continue to reflect on the “good things” for which they are grateful. The “Gra-ffi-titude” board has been utilized daily by unit staff and interdisciplinary colleagues for nearly two years. Subsequent AHRQ Patient Safety Culture Survey results showed that these simple resilience-building activities supported improvements in all measures of staff resilience.

In order to continue to support these outcomes and creatively apply additional positive interventions, a new staff-led committee called “007 – Licensed to C.A.R.E” (Community, Acknowledgment, Resilience, Empowerment) was established on the unit and has since continued to engage staff in resilience-building activities.

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