

American Nurses Research Symposium 10/2025 Atlanta GA

Nurse Intervention That Builds on Strengths to Facilitate Wellbeing

Problem/Research Question: Healthcare organizations seek innovative solutions to promote personal and professional wellbeing in the wake of the COVID-19 pandemic. Does the implementation of a strengths-based resilience intervention improve nurse outcomes in coping with stress, resilience, emotional self-awareness, and belonging?

Objectives: Wellbeing and building resilience for healthcare clinicians are urgent priorities. However, most programs rely on a deficit model focusing on individual-level change. *Changing Minds, Changing Lives* is a strengths-focused intervention based on the Social Ecological Model, recognizing the pervasive impact of the environment on the individual. This nurse-created, nurse-led program emphasizes Appreciative Inquiry, rather than a deficit model that focuses on problems. We aimed to assess the effectiveness of this program in a real-world healthcare setting.

Methodology/Strategy: This ten-week intervention followed a consistent weekly format: check-in with a positive practice and personal strength, guided relaxation, research content, freewriting based on a prompt connected to the research, story sharing with supportive feedback, and closing group reflections. Changes were measured using a survey with four previously published components: Connor-Davidson Resilience Scale (CD-RISC), Perceived Stress Scale (PSS), Emotional Self-Awareness Scale (ESAS), and the Perceived Cohesion Scale (PCS). Pre- and post-intervention survey responses were compared using the Symmetry Test for paired data (an extension of the McNemar test), with p-values < 0.05 considered statistically significant. Additionally, participant-written stories were analyzed using content analysis of 200 de-identified narratives.

Results/Lessons Learned: Of 65 eligible participants, 37 completed both pre- and post-surveys. Statistically significant improvements ($p < 0.05$) were observed in all survey areas: 9 out of 9 questions on coping with stress and challenges, 3 out of 3 questions on using strengths and reframing negative thinking, 16 out of 33 items on emotional awareness (ESAS), 4 out of 10 items on resilience (CD-RISC), 5 out of 10 items on managing stress (PSS), and 1 out of 7 items on belonging (PCS). Three main themes emerged from the content analysis: 1) shifting from negative thinking to empathy and empowerment, 2) written stories fostering community and connection, and 3) self-care and relational care bolstering personal strengths.

Implications for Nursing Research: Evidence-based, strengths-focused well-being initiatives using a social ecological design are theoretically consistent with the core nursing principle: the importance of the individual-environment interaction to health. The

program, previously implemented in academic settings, was successfully piloted with frontline nurses and nurse educators, and expanded to inpatient and outpatient teams, which demonstrated statistically significant improvements in all survey areas. Continued program expansion, evaluation, and research are planned to ensure long-term sustainability.