

Self-Care Strategies for Professional Development

Transcendental Meditation Reduces Compassion Fatigue and Improves Resilience for Nurses

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Research suggests self-care for nurses is important for professional development

[Peer-Reviewed Publication](#)

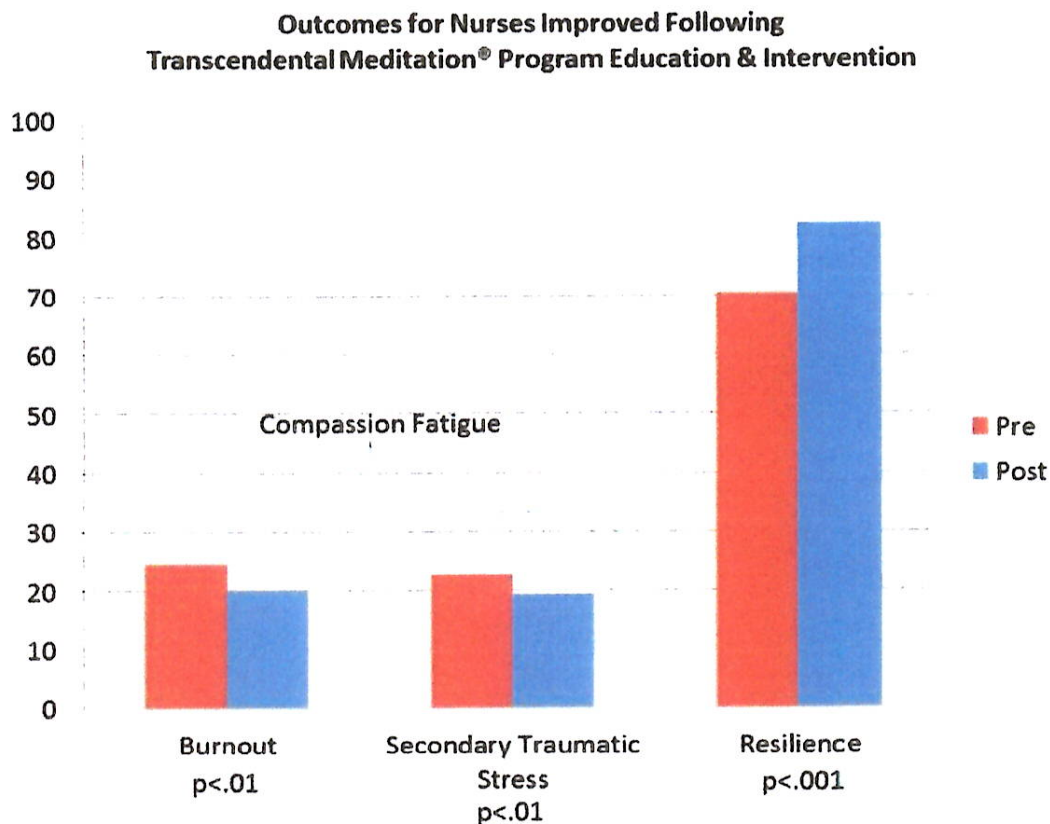


IMAGE: RESULTS SHOWED STATISTICALLY SIGNIFICANT IMPROVEMENTS IN RESILIENCE AND ALL THREE SUBSCALES OF THE COMPASSION FATIGUE QUESTIONNAIRE AFTER 4 MONTHS OF

TRANSCENDENTAL MEDITATION PRACTICE. IN ADDITION, RESILIENCE SHOWED A LARGE STATISTICALLY SIGNIFICANT INVERSE RELATIONSHIP WITH BURNOUT AND A MODERATE DIRECT RELATIONSHIP WITH COMPASSION SATISFACTION.

The Transcendental Meditation® technique helped to reduce "compassion fatigue" and burnout in a group of 27 nurses while also improving resilience according to a study published today in *Journal for Nurses in Professional Development*.

Standardized assessments showed a significant improvement after four months of practice.

"For years I watched nurses struggle to care for their patients and themselves," said lead author Jennifer Bonamer, PhD, RN-BC, Nursing Professional Development Specialist at Sarasota Memorial Health Care System, Sarasota, FL. "Working with people who are suffering trauma eventually takes a toll and produces what's come to be called 'compassion fatigue.'"

Study included mostly Registered Nurses

Dr. Bonamer searched the literature for self-care methods that could help nurses cope with burnout and hypothesized that Transcendental Meditation would help relieve compassion fatigue in nurses and improve their ability to bounce back from the challenges of work.

Most of the 27 nurses in the study were Registered Nurses working directly with patients. They had been working as nurses 15.7 mean years, and in their current practice area for an average of 6.5 years.

Standardized assessments quantify benefits

The researchers used the Professional Quality of Life Scale, which includes a 30-item survey that measures compassion satisfaction and compassion fatigue on a 5-point scale. After four months of practicing Transcendental Meditation, the nurses experienced a 9.2% increase in compassion satisfaction and 18% reduction in burnout.

Resilience was measured via the Connor-Davidson Resilience Scale, a 25-item survey with statements that reflect resilient perspectives. It also uses a 5-point scale. Again, after four months of Transcendental Meditation, the nurses experienced a 16.9% increase in resilience.

"These surveys are widely used with demonstrated validity and reliability," Dr. Bonamer said. "They demonstrated quantitatively what the nurses reported: they felt better and enjoyed their work more."

Increasing importance of self-care techniques in nursing

There is an increasing trend toward appreciating the necessity of helping nurses in their careers by taking active steps to use self-care techniques to build resilience.

"We need to invest in our nursing staff and ensure that they have rewarding careers while also providing the best possible care for their patients," Dr. Bonamer said. "The Transcendental Meditation technique is one step that we could take. A [variety of studies](#) have shown its effectiveness in reducing stress and promoting health and well-being."

The nurses learned Transcendental Meditation from two certified teachers over a four-day period. They then practiced it for 20 minutes twice a day, though their demanding schedules sometimes made it challenging to fit it in. The technique is typically practiced once in the morning and then again in the late afternoon. In this video, [Nourishing the Caregiver from Within](#), (<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=C-5xnVIbDlc>) nurses describe the benefits they are receiving from their TM Program.

Previous qualitative study also found a benefit

The present study is the second of two that have used the Transcendental Meditation technique as a modality to improve the well-being of nurses. A study published in 2018 in *International Journal for Human Caring* reported the experience of RNs in graduate school who practiced Transcendental Meditation for four months. The qualitative study entailed the students keeping a journal and then the researchers used Giorgi's descriptive phenomenological method to examine their journals.

The results showed that graduate students were more present and balanced, and experienced enhanced job performance. They also enjoyed greater feelings of bliss, peace, and integrity.

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About the Transcendental Meditation Technique

Transcendental Meditation is a simple, natural technique practiced 20 minutes twice each day while sitting comfortably with the eyes closed. It is easily learned, and is not a religion, philosophy, or lifestyle. It doesn't involve concentration, control of the mind, contemplation, or monitoring of thoughts or breathing. The practice allows the active thinking mind to settle down to a state of inner calm. For more information visit <http://www.tm-women.org/nurses>.