



Professionals, pyramids, and Peter Pan



What's the common thread?

IF ONLY IT WERE THIS SIMPLE: Nurses get 8 hours of sleep every night, perfect work schedules are in place with all shifts filled by competent staff, and there's a super pill that eliminates fatigue, burnout, and unprofessional behavior. But simple it's not; health care is much more complicated.

This month's edition of *American Nurse Today* contains valuable reading for you, including articles on fighting the effects of fatigue and more about nurses' essential role in supporting professionalism with *Cup of Coffee* conversations, the first tier in the Promoting Professionalism Pyramid. And National Nurses Week celebrations throughout May are shining a spotlight on nursing, so there's no better time to do a personal gut check about how we look, act, and talk.

Leave Neverland behind

Do you feel tired? Do you know your sleep debt? Are you getting plenty of exercise? At ANA's 2017 Quality Conference, several speakers addressed fatigue, burnout, and stress, and the impact on professionalism, individual performance, and quality care outcomes. A poster session presenter discussing disruptive behavior used a great analogy when she said, "Sometimes it feels like I'm in Neverland where certain people never grow up!"

The magical world of Neverland is the enchanted island setting for the story of Peter Pan, a boy who refuses to grow up and accept the responsibility that comes with adulthood. Philosophically speaking, the idea of responsibility is innate; we're responsible for our own actions. Denying responsibility, via the so-called Peter Pan complex, is to deny the inevitable. As professionals, there's no denying our responsibility.

Top of the pyramid

I'm thinking about another pyramid, in addition to the

one featured in our professionalism series; it came to mind while discussing Neverland. It's ANA's Model of Professional Nursing Practice Regulation (shown on this page and available at www.nursingworld.org/modelofpracticeregulation), which demonstrates four levels of rules and regulations nurses follow in their practice to achieve safe, quality nursing care. The foundation of the pyramid depicts all of the responsibilities, ethics, scopes of practice, and certifications set forth by the profession. The second level defines federal and state regulations, such as nurse practice acts. The third level is called institutional policies and procedures or, as I define it, organizational regulation.



The top level, self determination, addresses the power or ability to make decisions for ourselves. It's this fourth level where I think we find our greatest opportunity for personal change. Through self-determination, nurses accept responsibility for their own license and decision-making process.

I also could argue that it's where our personal choices and behaviors are made, including appearance, rest, diet, and exercise. ANA has declared 2017 the "Year of the Healthy Nurse," and the National Nurses Week theme, "Nursing: The Balance of Mind, Body, and Spirit," invites us to celebrate nurses who lead the charge for health and wellness, starting with ourselves.

Responsibility

So what do professionals, pyramids, and Peter Pan have in common? Responsibility! The pyramids give us simple visual models to help us make clear and informed decisions in a complex world. Nurses accept responsibility at levels Peter Pan could never envision. And the world of nursing is not Neverland, but it is amazing!

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