

PERSONAL AND PROFESSIONAL CHARACTERISTICS

GOALS

Personal: One of my personal goals is to lose 50 pounds. I have committed to a diet and exercise regiment to safely and steadily lose weight. I am averaging about two pounds a week. I understand that I did not put on this excess weight abruptly and it will not come off and stay off overnight either.

Professional: One goal is to become a charge nurse at Heritage Estates. My timeframe for that is within two years. I expect to achieve my BSN in that time and hope to immediately be training for that position once I have passed my NCLEX exam.

Educational: My immediate educational goal is to earn my BSN RN license. I am currently working on accomplishing that within two years. I then intend to continue on with my education to specialize in Geriatrics and Psychiatrics, obtaining my Nurse Practitioners license. I currently do not have a specific timeframe for this. I will revisit this part of my goal after attaining my BSN.

TALENTS, APTITUDES, AND GIFTS

My strengths lie in personal interactions. I have a calm demeanor and think things through before reacting. I am a good listener and have the ability to not only sympathize with someone, but empathize as well. I can communicate effectively and I understand the necessity to meet people at their level.

All of these traits will continue to help me in my nursing career, especially in my current chosen path of working with Alzheimer patients. These qualities help to create a trusting relationship with my clients and allow me to more effectively provide the needed and desired care.

COPING WITH CHANGE

Change, whether for better or worse, can create stress. With this in mind, I try to think situations through and not worry about things I cannot control.

An example of such a situation occurred this past semester. Our Health Assessment instructor was in an unfortunate accident that resulted in her inability to continue with our class. She was a class favorite and we had grown accustomed to her teaching style and expectations.

Due to the incident, another instructor took over and many began to have great anxiety. I was saddened by the occurrence, but I understood that we must continue and adjust accordingly. I thought through the situation and came to the conclusion that our instructors would not only be fair in accommodating any necessary changes, but would also assist us in any way possible. I paid my respects and well wishes to my previous instructor and focused on accomplishing what was necessary for successful completion of Health Assessment. I was then able to confidently complete the course.

WHY MY INTEREST IN NURSING

I believe my first desires began when I accompanied my ex-wife on a visit to see her grandfather who was in a nursing home. Unfortunately, the care was substandard. It made quite an impression on me. I have worked in numerous capacities, yet I would often find myself thinking about the nursing field and specifically, that situation and how I would do it differently.

I find great satisfaction in helping others, the classified ads always had nursing positions available no matter what part of the country I was in, and the more exposure I had to the nursing field, the more I realized that it will only continue to grow. For the first time, I am pursuing a heart's desire, not just a way to put food on the table.

MY NEXT FIVE YEARS

I see myself working as an RN in a management capacity and continuing with my education to attain my Nurse Practitioner's license. I hope to be a positive role model that is having a positive influence, not only on the floor, but with my management team as well.

MANAGING STRESS

The example I will share is a current situation with my oldest daughter. She is the mother of two small children and in an unstable relationship with the father of the youngest.

Recently she found herself in a challenging financial situation and was less than honest with me about it. It created a great strain on our relationship. My response has been to try keeping all channels of communication with her open. I realize that I cannot make her decisions for her, but advise when she desires my advice.

I try and alleviate some of the stress through exercise and I practice some meditation techniques to keep a clear head. I also focus on my grandchildren. Communication, thinking the situation through, and focusing on things I can control are all things that help to maintain our currently fragile relationship.

PROBLEM-SOLVING

A dilemma I occasionally come across is completing necessary workloads when someone calls in. As a medication aide at work, I am often looked to for assistance when this occurs.

The first thing I do is evaluate the situation. While the charge nurse attempts to replace the person, the remaining team determines what part of the workload needs to be covered and until when? We examine what the most logical division of workload should occur with resources available. It often means re-adjusting our normal routine to accommodate the needs of our residents.

I find that by having everyone involved in the decision-making, it is much more efficient and effective in getting cooperation and ultimately completing our desired tasks.

LEARNING TECHNIQUES

I have always been a visual, hands-on learner. A good example is my Pathophysiology class. It was a distant-learning course with much of our communications done on-line.

Listening to a lecture is not my strength, so I would take notes during class, then at a later time I would rewrite the notes more professionally. After this I would watch the video recordings of that class again and highlight on my notes as I listened, watched, and retained more of the information being provided. This has proven to be a successful method for me to better understand the information.