COVID-19 created an abyss and America had no clear plan of action or path to get out of its way. In the beginning, plans by our national, state and local leaders seemed to change daily, if not hourly. Early in March, my friend and colleague, Sue, shared these words with me, “I think of this pandemic like service men and women in the field, along the enemy line. The enemy is in camouflage uniform in the brush. We can’t see them but we know they are there.” Her analogy was poignant and remained etched in my memory. The pandemic created crisis after crisis - our education, healthcare and economic systems (to name a few) were stressed and strained. The financial and mental health of Mississippians, including nurses, remain top of concern.

MNA’s mission around advocacy and education continues to hold steady, especially during times of a pandemic. In response to COVID-19, MNA's efforts to disseminate credible information, assist with nursing workforce needs, provide surgical and non-surgical masks to hospitals and clinics, garner support from our greater Mississippi community and align with our mission. Likewise, the Mississippi Nurses Foundation (MNF), the philanthropic arm of MNA, has provided financial assistance to nurses and the Mississippi Association of Nurse Anesthetists Annual Legislative Reception to hold steady, especially during times of a pandemic. In response to COVID-19, MNA's efforts to disseminate credible information, assist with nursing workforce needs, provide surgical and non-surgical masks to hospitals and clinics, garner support from our greater Mississippi community and align with our mission. Likewise, the Mississippi Nurses Foundation (MNF), the philanthropic arm of MNA, has provided financial assistance to nurses and the Mississippi Association of Nurse Anesthetists (MNA) and the Nurse in Need program. I’ve highlighted only a few of the amazing efforts MNA and MNF leaders have demonstrated during devastating times like this one. I am privileged to work alongside MNA's Board of Directors and its Executive Director to advance the nursing profession in our great state of Mississippi.

This year, 2020, is the International Year of the Nurse and Midwife, that it would be one for the history books. In a recent video message to all Mississippian nurses, I stated, “If there was ever a time that I am proud to be a nurse and proud to be a member of MNA, this indeed, is the time.” This has always held true for me and it especially does now. It is also no secret that Mississippi has experienced several unbelievable, unimaginable and “beyond our control” moments during the first half of this year. In February, many Mississippi communities were saturated by torrential rain. The Pearl River reached a height of 36.8 feet, the third-highest recorded crest since the floods of 1983 and 1979. During this time, several residents evacuated homes and many businesses closed temporarily. Floodwaters affected several parts of Downtown Jackson. Based on flood projections and visible destruction already caused by floodwaters, MNA cancelled the Annual Legislative Nursing Summit out of concern for the health and safety of our attendees. This important event unites student nurses and exhibitors around the legislative process. And just three weeks prior, MNA and the Mississippi Association of Nurse Anesthetists Annual Legislative Reception had to be cancelled due to plumbing issues at the venue. Although these two “beyond our control” moments occurred only weeks apart, MNA remained focused on creating professional development opportunities for Mississippian nurses, including the Annual APRN Conference scheduled for April. Then, COVID-19 struck America!
Upcoming Meetings & Events

MNA: Meeting the CNE Needs of Mississippi’s RNs & APRNs

**EVENT** | **DATE & LOCATION**
--- | ---
Psychiatric Mental Health Nurse Practitioner (PMHNP) Certification Review Course (MS Board of Nursing, Office of Nursing Workforce Grant) | Online CE Available June 8-17, 2020
COVID-19 Issues (MS Board of Nursing, Office of Nursing Workforce Grant) | Online CE Available June 19-20, 2020
NRCME/FMCSA DOT Medical Examiner Course | Online CE Available June 19-20, 2020
2020 Annual Convention | MS Coast Coliseum & Convention Center – Biloxi, MS October 13-16, 2020
NRCME/FMCSA DOT Medical Examiner Course | Online CE Available June 19-20, 2020

**TRAVEL TOURS**

Discover Scotland | March 14-23, 2021

More events coming soon! Please check our website – www.msnurses.org/events

Install the MNA Mobile App – MS Nurses Association

**More content not visible in the image.**
2020 is definitely the Year of the Nurse!

Who would have thought that in this Year of the Nurse, COVID-19 would place the spotlight on nurses as never before. The World Health Organization designated 2020 as the “Year of the Nurse and Midwife” in honor of the 200th birth anniversary of Florence Nightingale. No one anticipated COVID-19, nor that it would so clearly reveal to the nation and the world that registered nurses and advanced practice registered nurses are the backbone of the healthcare system - a fact that we have always known. COVID-19 brought unique challenges and opportunities for nurses as well as MNA. MNA is honored to support and advocate for all nurses; this is especially true during a time of rapid change and uncertainty.

In a time of crisis, it’s critical that nurses have access to reliable, actionable information in a timely manner. To assist in this, we very quickly established a Coronavirus Updates section on our website with links to Mississippi State Department of Health, Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, U.S. Department of Justice, and Mississippi Board of Nursing, just to name of few. Through email and social media, we also notified nurses of webinars of interest, and disseminated via email important information from state and federal agencies.

We immediately reached out via phone to check on our members and to determine their needs. We were delighted to talk to so many of you and thank you for your time and willingness to share your needs and the needs of your communities with us. Many of you provided leads on PPE and volunteered to help other nurses. Likewise, we appreciate the numerous nurses who completed our Ready and Willing Survey indicating your availability to assist facilities needing additional staff. Regarding PPE, we were fortunate to locate requested items and connect nurses with suppliers.

Through our outreach efforts, it became clear that nurses were experiencing anxiety, were under excessive stress, and had concerns about the future. Whether you were providing care to COVID patients, had experienced a reduction in hours or loss of employment, or were juggling work and helping children with school assignments, one common factor was stress. To provide support for nurses’ mental health, encourage self-care, and stress management, we were delighted to join with a long-time partner, Pine Grove Behavioral Health and Addiction Services to host a webinar series titled Coping with COVID. The webinars were initially live and provided attendees the opportunity to pose questions to the presenters. Recordings of the webinars were then made available on the MNA website for access by nurses at their convenience. Partnering with the First Responders of Mississippi provided the vehicle for Coping with COVID 2.0, mini-webinars designed to provide quick and useful tips on exercise, reducing stress, promoting wellness, and navigating COVID with your family.

Discussions with Nurse Practitioner clinic owners revealed that some had recently transitioned to telehealth, while others had more extensive experience, but were all facing similar challenges from a financial aspect, clinic best practices for patient flow, and communications with patients. To facilitate the sharing of information, we hosted a series of conference calls with clinic owners from across the state the opportunity to network and discuss best practices, information, and resources.

In such a stressful time, many of you stated that support and encouragement were needed as never before. We took that to heart and were determined to put a smile on our face. MNA’s Red Ribbon Support Campaign encouraged the public as well as healthcare entities to show support for all nurses and those that work on the front lines. The campaign was embraced not only in Mississippi but also in surrounding states. Many healthcare facilities placed red bows on their entrances and around trees – just a wonderful way to say thank you. Every nurse is a hero and the faces of our heroes need to be seen. The launch of the #EveryNurseAHero Campaign Wall of Fame provided an opportunity to highlight the many faces of our registered nurses and advanced practice registered nurses from across the state. You can see all these amazing heroes on the #EveryNurseAHero Wall of Fame photos included on the following pages.

We also wanted to make sure you know how much you are appreciated not just by us, but by individuals from across the state and the nation. Some famous Mississippians welcomed the opportunity to join with MNA in paying tribute to Mississippi’s nurses. These included singers, songwriters, artists, athletes, actors, musicians, chefs, and business leaders. These videos can be viewed on the MNA Facebook page. For some of our lucky members, a special opportunity to participate in an exclusive Jimmy Buffett Zoom Meet and Greet meant enjoying great music and talking one-on-one with Jimmy Buffett and guests, Mac McAnally, Tina Gullickson, and Nadirah Shakoor. As one member stated, “I had so much fun and could not keep the smile off my face the entire time!”

MNA has stood side by side with nurses for over 108 years and is steadfastly standing by you now! We are here for you and will continue to support, advocate, and lobby for you. In our opinion, every year is the Year of the Nurse!
Families Coping with COVID-19: A Q&A Session

By Patricia Calabrese, PMHNP-BC, Pine Grove Behavioral Health & Addiction Services; Christina Williams, PhD, Pine Grove Behavioral Health & Addiction Services

COVID-19 has required groups and families to shelter together at home. This forced “Togetherness” has intensified our relationships for good and for bad.

On May 6th, 2020, Patricia Calabrese, PMHNP and Christina Williams, PhD, from Pine Grove Behavioral Health & Addiction Services, in Hattiesburg, MS, provided a question and answer session during a webinar hosted by Pine Grove and the Mississippi Nurses’ Association (MNA), to help nurses deal with these stressors. In this presentation important topics were discussed that touched on difficulties for parents, children, in-laws, shared responsibilities, and the need for alone time. Below are the questions and answers from this presentation:

1) What kind of limits do I need to place on how much and what type of news my child watches?

Remember you want your children to be informed but not overwhelmed. It’s important to be proactive in setting the foundation for what your children and teens think about the virus and the reasons behind the changes in their lives. Don’t wait until they come to you with questions, but rather, sit your children down and have a conversation that’s developmentally appropriate for their age (have separate conversations if there are large age differences). This is similar to teaching your children your family’s set of values. It gives them a filter and a foundation to compare and interpret information from outside of the family.

Also, remember to control the content and quantity of information coming into the home through news and social media outlets as much as possible. If you wouldn’t say the things newscasters are saying to your family, don’t say them to your children.

2) I have a 4 and 6 year old who are very close to their grandfather and having a hard time not being able to see him regularly. What can I do to help them with this change?

Children often times deal with difficult tasks and changes easier if you give them a role or title. It helps them to feel empowered and also makes their behaviors more meaningful if they understand that what they are doing is important for themselves and others. We have even seen this work many times in the classroom with children having behavioral or academic difficulties. These children often feel more motivated and focused to complete their work if they are assigned the role of handing out paper or, “Activity leader” for instance. We can harness this same strategy during the pandemic not only with the increased hygiene behaviors required but also in the way we show our love to certain family members with social distancing and quarantine.

Children can be told they are the “Protectors” of the ones they love in their families who are at high risk, like their grandfather. You can help them find meaning in staying away from their grandfather in that they are repaying the love shown by him for protecting and caring for them throughout the years, in a way they can do the same now. Little kids can feel empowered by seeing their “Superpower” as their decision to help keep their loved ones isolated from the “Evil germs” of the pandemic.

Also, it helps to get creative and brainstorm ways they can remain connected to their grandfather. Many families are staying connected through virtual means, writing letters, decorating the front yard of their grandparent’s home, having outdoor dance parties while staying six feet away, and even having a nightly routine of the grandparent reading the bedtime story via video conferencing each night. You can establish new routines that still allow them to remain as connected as possible while staying safe.

3) The children and teens in my house seem stressed and anxious about the restrictions from the pandemic. We are all going stir crazy. What can we, as parents, do to help?

Currently with the COVID-19 pandemic, everyone is dealing with some sense of loss on some level. So it’s crucial to recognize that our children and teens need time to grieve. Before jumping to try to fix their issues or attempting to explain what things have changed, it’s important to give them time to do what they are missing the most, what has been difficult to change, and what frustrations they have. The best thing parents can do during this process is actively listen and even share some of their own feelings and losses during this time. (at a level that doesn’t cause more panic or anxiety) After children feel heard and validated, it will be easier to engage them in the next step of finding solutions because they feel their parents fully understand their problems. Talk to them about ways your family has decided to stay safe and leave yourself open for questions about these changes. It’s also helpful to talk about ways you cope and engage in self-care to deal with the stressors of the pandemic.

Lastly, work together to brainstorm ideas for how to meet the needs they mentioned earlier as much as possible while staying safe. Of course, some ideas will go unmet; however, you will be surprised at how creative children can be when given the opportunity! We have heard of children having virtual scavenger hunts using clues sent to them through video conferencing, community outdoor dance parties, keep journals of things they are grateful for, help keep their loved ones isolated from the “Evil germs” of the pandemic.

Lastly, there are numerous wonderful resources online to help parents communicate with children and teens about COVID-19. There are also resources for children to help them understand at their developmental level. For instance, www.maginationpress.org and www.apa.org offer several resources for families on these topics. For the little ones, www.pbs.org has videos on hygiene and how to stay safe during the pandemic. A company named MindHeart has released an interactive workbook for young children called “Covibook” that can be accessed for free online. Of course, if you feel your child or teen is having persistent difficulties or you’ve noticed a change in their mood and behavior, always know you can reach out to a mental health provider for support and guidance as well, as many of them are offering telehealth appointments right now.

In recognition of Florence Nightingale’s 200th birthday, the World Health Organization has proclaimed 2020 the Year of the Nurse. Probability powered by Mercer, ANA’s authorized provider of Professional Liability Insurance, is honored to join in the celebration of nurses around the world!

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hunts and sleepovers together, having picnics while tailgating in their cars six feet apart, and alternating weeks of “Teaching” each other a new skill virtually. Get their help making a list they can refer to when needed.

4) How do I deal with the stress of homeschooling for me as a parent and also for my child?

It’s important to remember to set realistic goals for everyone. Parents should investigate what the “musts” are with regard to school work and assignments, and then work from there. Remembering to be flexible with expectations and goals for the day is important as well. It’s also a good idea to build in “real life” curriculum into the schedule to help with engagement and to avoid burn out. For instance you can incorporate arts and crafts, “talent shows,” cooking lessons and nature explorations and learning into their curriculum.

It’s also crucial for parents to know their own needs and triggers and plan time for self-care to address these. For instance, you can be somewhat relaxed on your usual electronic time allowance to allow you to have some “Alone-time” or to take a much needed nap. It’s also important to build in physical activity to the daily schedule as this will help everyone’s mood and focus. As much as possible, parents should also discuss their current needs and work expectations with their workplace and try to compromise and collaborate on any changes needed to help balance out their needs.

5) My teen wants friends over, but I’m afraid of the virus in my home.

Then speak with outsiders in your driveway or yard? Are you comfortable with outsiders in your home? Are you comfortable with outsiders in your driveway or yard? Then speak with outsiders in your home? Are you comfortable with outsiders in your driveway or yard? Then speak with outsiders in your home? Are you comfortable with outsiders in your driveway or yard? Then speak with outsiders in your home? Are you comfortable with outsiders in your driveway or yard? Then speak with outsiders in your home? Are you comfortable with outsiders in your driveway or yard? Then speak with outsiders in your home? Are you comfortable with outsiders in your driveway or yard? Then speak with outsiders in your home? Are you comfortable with outsiders in your driveway or yard? Then speak with outsiders in your home? Are you comfortable with outsiders in your driveway or yard? Then speak with outsiders in your home? Are you comfortable with outsiders in your driveway or yard? Then speak with outsiders in your home? Are you comfortable with outsiders in your driveway or yard? Then speak with outsiders in your home? Are you comfortable with outsiders in your driveway or yard? Then speak with outsiders in your home? Are you comfortable with outsiders in your home? Are you comfortable

6)  My spouse and I don’t agree on important family and household issues about coronavirus.

This is a very normal fear and concern. At the beginning, we all thought COVID-19 was going to be a short-term issue. And now we’re realizing it’s a marathon and not a sprint. Our sprint energy has been all used up in the last eight weeks. And it’s time to change our mindsets. If you feel that you’re panicking, first explore good techniques to expel anxiety and fear. For instance, have a virtual sleepover. Include popcorn, movies, dance party, or a video game party. Decorate your home. Give them some privacy in the room that you choose. If you are comfortable allowing a few of your friends (three or four) in your yard or front drive way, set up a situation where they sit six feet apart and talk. Or play Simon Says or another game that doesn’t involve physical interaction. Or another dance party! In those cases, you’ll want to stay present to enforce social distancing. In any case, be creative and let your teens have interactions with their friends on a regular basis.

7) Since we are expecting this to be a long-term crisis, I worry that I won’t have the personal energy to manage my work and family long-term. Any tips?

The coronavirus is a very serious issue. It’s not unusual in most households to have differences of opinion on important issues. Prior to coronavirus, couples would argue on other important issues like religion, finances, parenting. So, some of the important points about conflict resolution with your significant other is to first of all, always talk when calm, and conversations that include conflict shouldn’t be discussed when angry. Trying to find a resolution when people are angry is something that rarely happens when everyone is hot-headed. Discuss each other’s priorities. You may be worried about your family’s health and viral contagion. Your spouse may worry about his/her job and the family income. Each of you may be making conflicting decisions based on these priorities when in reality you both have the family’s wellbeing at heart. Try to have the conversation come to a point when real and concrete compromises can be made. Try to work with your significant other in the way you would develop a long-term plan. List your greatest worries and fears and begin to realize their importance in your life. Secondly, list your current supports, financial, personal, and family. And make sure that they’ll be available in the next 12 to 18 months. Consider new supports if needed, such as an additional babysitter, or you might need to request a different shift at work. Then map out the next 12 months and look at the holidays. Think about happy times. Think about the other needs of your family members. Plan breaks and vacations, even though those might look very different in these times of sheltering at home more often. Then when all that is said and done, put the plan aside and realize that not everything is in your control. Recognize that you have a great ability to be flexible, to handle things that are out of your control, and that you can go with the flow.

About Pine Grove Behavioral Health & Addiction Services:

Located in Hattiesburg, MS, Pine Grove’s world renowned programs treat gender-specific chemical addiction including a specialized track for co-occurring eating disorders. Additionally, Pine Grove offers an intensive outpatient substance abuse healing program for adults and a program specifically for those who are age 55 plus. Other Pine Grove specialty programs include a dedicated professional’s treatment curriculum and a comprehensive evaluation center. Pine Grove also features a program for patients with sexual addiction. Inpatient Services including an Adult Psychiatric Unit, along with a Child and Adolescent Psychiatric Unit, and Outpatient Services are other components. Pine Grove was established in 1984 and has provided nationally and internationally recognized health care for 36 years.

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Managing Stress During Times of Change

With any type of change, good or bad, many people go through the grief process as described by Elisabeth Kubler-Ross in her book On Death and Dying. Often grief does not just entail a loss from death, but any loss that could result in change. The five stages of grief include denial, anger, bargaining, depression, and acceptance. Stages may occur in any order and with varying levels of intensity. When one experiences severe problems at any stage, unmanageable stress or grief, the result could be chronic severe anxiety and depression or an exacerbation of a mental illness.

The unprecedented change experienced in recent days has been life altering. While we can compare this change to 9/11, Katrina, and even previous wars or military conflicts, it is unlike anything most people ever imagined. We and our patients are facing a level of change that is difficult to comprehend, and sometimes understand. Life as we know it has been completely disrupted. There is even uncertainty as to what will be the “new normal” this summer when this article goes to print. As nursing professionals, we already experience a great deal of stress in everyday life and can easily develop stress related burn-out resulting in anxiety and depression. This new level of change and stress currently being experienced needs to be acknowledged and addressed so that we remain healthy and able to care for others. Most nurses care for vulnerable patients at high risk for death and disease, supervise others with problems, or teach students who are struggling, therefore, we must be healthy to provide care and leadership.

Hopefully the current crisis will resolve soon, but it presents an opportunity to be prepared to conquer the uncertain challenge of change and grief that may occur at any time. Nursing in general is a career that involves intense stress, pressure and a high-level of burnout because of the demanding and challenging nature of the work. Combine this with any major change, and there is a “perfect storm” for one to become overwhelmed and develop severe depression and anxiety. We cannot control change or even the grief that may come with it, but often can learn to control how we react to it.

Constant stress and strain leads to burnout which can result in conditions such as Acute Stress Disorder, Generalized Anxiety Disorder, Panic Disorder, or Major Depression. Nurses with any of these conditions are at increased risk for worsening physical health and even suicide and should seek professional help. Practicing positive self-care behaviors and recognizing when a problem develops may prevent these more severe outcomes. At times however, even the healthiest and most resilient people succumb to stress and burnout and should not hesitate to seek professional counseling and treatment.

Healthy behaviors are known to help prevent overwhelming stress and burnout which may lead to severe life threatening symptoms and illness. It is important to try to incorporate as many positive self-care practices into daily life as possible to maintain wellness. The following are tips to navigate change, alleviate stress and hopefully prevent illness. They also are good habits to adopt as part of a healthy lifestyle to promote health.

1. Recognize the five stages of grief and know that it is ok to be angry. Evaluate where you are in the grief process related to changes you are experiencing and move toward acceptance if possible. Remember that it is ok to grieve loss due to change. Be optimistic and look for the positives. Don’t be afraid to seek help, even in the early stages, if you find that you are unable to grieve your losses and change.

2. Maintain your spiritual health. Make time to pray, meditate and focus on your purpose in life. Seek spiritual counsel if needed. Maintaining spiritual health is vital in staying physically and mentally healthy.

3. Keep a routine and schedule as much as possible. In the midst of changing schedules, “new normal,” and virtual everything, keep a schedule. If working from home, keep a consistent schedule for work, breaks, meals

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and duties. Make sure you schedule “down time” and personal time for yourself.

4. Set limits. In the midst of a crisis we are needed more than ever. It is very easy for our jobs, careers, professional duties and personal time to become blurred. We can find ourselves available 24/7. This is not healthy! We have to set limits and carve out time for ourselves and our families (see #3). Having a consistent routine will help us to set limits.

5. Maintain a healthy diet. It is so easy to gravitate to “comfort foods” which are often high in carbs, salt, and sugar. Eat these foods in moderation and include plenty fruits and vegetables in your diet. Remember to control your portions also. Try not to eat out of boredom or loneliness. Limit use of alcohol. Stay hydrated and drink plenty of water.

6. Get enough rest and sleep. Sleep and rest are essential to mental health. Maintain a routine just as if you were still on a work or school schedule (see #3).

7. Exercise every day. Exercising three times or more per week is known to increase mood and decrease depression. Exercise can include walking your dog, gardening, house cleaning, or any other activity that increases movement. Of course you should never start an intense exercise program without consulting your nurse practitioner or physician.

8. Stay connected. We are social beings and need social interaction. Make sure you maintain connections with family and friends. Be creative and do not neglect relationships. Reach out to friends who have become isolated. We need to listen to our public health officials and follow health protecting guidelines for interactions and interact when possible.

9. Go off the grid when possible. You do not have to answer every email, text or phone call when it occurs (see #4). Technology is great but when it takes away from personal space and “down time,” it’s time to disconnect. Let colleagues know what is off limits as far as your availability. Also, take a break from social media and 24/7 news. A daily update should suffice unless it is part of your job.

10. Make time for enjoyable activities. Spend time outside. Read, craft or work on puzzles you like. Participate in games with your family. Play with your pet. Work on that genealogy project. Catch up with friends and family.

11. Seek help when needed. Do not hesitate to seek medical and psychological evaluation if you are overwhelmed, stress becomes unmanageable, sleep is disturbed or if there is any thought of self-harm.

References:
#EveryNurseAHero Wall of Fame
COVID-19 and Nursing Students: A Time of Change

Krupa Desai, MS Association of Student Nurses, Director of Communications

COVID-19 has impacted nursing students in many different ways. One of the main concerns voiced by nursing students is the lack of opportunity to gain clinical experience. Clinical experience is something that is difficult to replicate online, especially while trying to achieve the same learning outcomes. It’s difficult to master and feel confident in performing more advanced skills such as inserting a nasogastric tube or starting an IV when you are only learning on-line. I feel as if clinical practice is a vital part of our education; it is what builds our confidence and helps us learn within a real-life scenario. Understanding the importance of teamwork and functioning as a part of a team are also key aspects of the clinical setting. Teamwork is also a vital part of interacting with your fellow students in the classroom. This interaction and building of a support network allowed me to become very close to my classmates and teachers. For those of us who came from smaller schools, less of social interaction has engulfed us. Not being able to express share the same struggles with classmates has been difficult. Having someone who is going through the same challenges as you are, and being able to talk through those challenges helps reduce some of the stress associated with nursing school. Without that outlet, coping with stressors is much more difficult. On behalf of nursing students, I want to applaud nursing instructors across the state for the seamless transition they made to online courses in such a short amount of time. Their hard work behind the scenes did not go unnoticed. It is apparent that they worked many hours to ensure that they provide us the best education possible. All in all, the impact of COVID-19 has allowed many nursing students to come together in a different, yet still positive way. It is amazing to see how we all came together in a different, yet still positive way. It is amazing to see how we all came together to continue to learn and grow. It is important to note that this pandemic has not been easy for anyone, but together we can persevere. Without the ability of these unwanted feelings and thoughts by allowing me to focus on the moment and not fear of the future or worries of the past. Since we all experience these types of distressing thoughts and emotions at times, I want to share a few mindfulness techniques that can be used at any time.

Mindfulness practices are evidence-based techniques shown to help reduce the emotional and physiological responses of stress and anxiety. “Mindfulness” is defined by Jon Kabat-Zinn, PhD, as “paying attention in a particular way: on purpose, in the moment and nonjudgmentally.” Kabat-Zinn founded The Center for Mindfulness and Stress Reduction Clinic in 1977, incorporating both Eastern and Western medicine by using body-mind techniques to promote optimum physical and psychological health. Mindfulness techniques can be used daily and when needed for stress reduction, and can take a few seconds or as long as time permits. It can be easy to develop a mindfulness practice independently – the only thing that is needed is the ability to take a few deep breaths and a willingness to be with oneself in the moment. Below are two introductory mindfulness activities that can help when faced with unwanted thoughts and fears or when you just need a break.

Mindfulness technique when washing hands: allow this to be a time of rest for your body and brain.

1. Acknowledge this experience as something that is necessary, and happening this very moment. Take deep breath in through your nose counting to 4, hold counting to 3, and exhale counting to 5, continue to do this during the procedure.
2. Bring your awareness to the physical sensations: the temperature of the water, the flow of water, emotional and physiological responses of stress and anxiety. “Mindfulness” is the ability to take a few deep breaths and a willingness to be with oneself in the moment. Below are two introductory mindfulness activities that can help when faced with unwanted thoughts and fears or when you just need a break.
3. Acknowledge the physical cleansing of your hands while acknowledging your emotional cleansing. Allow negative thoughts and fears to fall into the sink, mix with the water and soap and slip down the drain.
4. Thank your hands for taking care of YOU. Look at your hands and see their beauty.
5. Remember why you are a nurse and look at your hands and say “I will use these hands to take care of myself and my family and to help others. These are great hands.”

STOP Mindfulness technique for crisis situations; do this before entering a challenging situation or immediately following a stressful incident. This can be done quickly and often

1. Stop what you are doing when you feel trepidation or uncertainty, and then ask “What is the most effective and productive thing I can do next?”…and proceed.

Think of mindfulness as a protective barrier to prevent the spread of something, such as a face mask. We already know the health consequences of chronic stress so we want to prevent negative unwanted thoughts from wreaking havoc in our bodies. Put on a mindfulness mask as you would apply your face mask each day to fight the spread of stress as you do as heartily against COVID-19. If you can learn to mitigate negative thoughts and emotions, you will be able to stay calm and focused at all times. A thoughtful response to a stressful situation is always more effective than a negative reaction.

Being mindful in many situations can prevent or lessen the consequences of stress. However, anyone with complicated anxiety or panic disorder should seek the guidance of a mental health professional. Please do not be afraid or ashamed to reach out if mindfulness is not effective for you and you are struggling with overwhelming emotions. There is help, please reach out. Mental health is health.

Leigh Ziller Gillespie is a FPMHNP-BC with Family Counseling, LLC and TAME, existing in Meridian, MS.
MNA District 16

District 16 shines the light on its entire community! MNA members have been working with local churches, schools, banks, restaurants, and many other businesses to show support for nurses and front line responders and caregivers during this COVID-19 pandemic. District members have been instrumental in sewing and delivering masks and other PPE to hospitals, nursing homes, and first responder facilities. To assist school children and the homeless population, members have delivered food as well as assisted at food pantries in multiple communities within the district.

By working with members of the community, District 16 has demonstrated support for our nurses and front line care providers by the following:

- Chalking (by children and adults) words of love, support and encouragement on concrete walkways and driveways of hospitals, nursing homes and first responder facilities. Signs, banners, and placards of support have been placed throughout healthcare properties.
- Embracing MNA’s red ribbon campaign by placing red ribbons on trees, doors, mailboxes, etc.
- Delivering food and snacks (provided by churches, restaurants, vendors and local businesses) to employees at hospitals, nursing homes and first responder facilities.
- Participating in community prayer vigils. Before the shelter in place was issued, a plan was introduced to the public asking those who desire to participate to park in the parking areas surrounding the local hospitals and at twilight to turn on all car lights. District members participated in this sign of support and encouragement for the first responders and hospital employees. Following an opening prayer heard over a loudspeaker, the song “I Worship You” was played. All of the hospital staff who could come out of the hospitals were able to witness and participate in the community prayer vigil. What a sight to behold with the many cars lighting up the area and listening to the prayers and special music.
- District members participated at hospitals’ celebrations of patients’ recovery from COVID-19. Patients and staff celebrate with “Here Comes the Sun” by the Beatles being played as COVID-19 patients are discharged at one facility and another joyously announces, “Code Victory.” Staff gathers when a patient is discharged to celebrate the patient’s recovery. Many hospital staff have voiced that this is a special time for staff as well as the patient and the patient’s family.

It is heartwarming to see nurses and care providers on social media holding up signs saying “Thank You” for the things done for them by the community. These responses of gratitude reflect the spirit of nursing. Hard challenges remain in dealing with this pandemic both now and in the future, but it has been refreshing to witness the rallying of support of so many in the community and the appreciation of all healthcare workers as we work toward a common goal.

MNA District 13

District 13 is working hard to support nurses and communities. District members made sure nurses and frontline heroes knew how much they were appreciated by providing a variety of chocolates to emergency rooms. To combat the need for restocking of food pantries, District members collected and delivered food to the Mississippi Food Network to help those in need during this crisis.

In addition, DNA 13 awarded a one-time $500 scholarship to aid in the pursuit of advancing Amanda Criswell’s nursing career by continuing her nursing education, and awarded a one-time $250 grant to aid in furthering research in the field of nursing or in a community project to Jennifer Hargett.

Congratulations
Amanda Criswell
Recipient of Advancing Nursing Education Scholarship

Congratulations
Jennifer Hargett
Recipient of the Nursing Research/ Community Project Grant

Could it be COPD?

More than 16 million people in the U.S. have been diagnosed with COPD, and millions more do not realize they may have it. If you have patients who are experiencing any of the following symptoms, consider a spirometry test:

- ongoing cough
- shortness of breath
- wheezing
- chest tightness
- excess mucus production

TALK TO YOUR PATIENTS ABOUT THEIR RISK FOR COPD.

NIH National Heart, Lung, and Blood Institute

LEARN MORE
BREATHE BETTER

Free provider and patient resources can be found at nhlbi.nih.gov/breathebetter
Thanks to everyone who provided or assisted with videos we shared with our Nurse Heroes to help make this Nurses Month so special!

Videos by:
- Dexter Allen, Blues Musician, Singer, Songwriter and Guitarist
- Kaye Bender, PhD, RN, FAAN, Executive Director, Mississippi Public Health Association
- Rita Brent, Comedian
- Greg Cartmell, Artist
- Grady Champion, Grammy Award Winning Songwriter, Entertainer, and Musician
- Cat Cora, Chef and Television Personality
- Marcus Dupree, Former NFL Player, Formerly at Southern Miss
- Justin Jones-Fosu, Founder of Work Meaningful, Clinton, MS
- Travis Meadows, Country Singer and Songwriter
- Tonya Moore, PhD, MNA Board President
- Nick Mullens, NFL Quarterback, Formerly at Southern Miss
- Andy Ogletree, Golf Champion
- Bill ‘Howl-N-Madd’ Perry & Shy Perry, and Roger Stolle of Juke Joint Festival, Clarksdale, MS
- Jessie Primer, Singer Songwriter
- Robin Roberts, Television Broadcaster and Anchor of ABC’s Good Morning America
- Todd Thompson, Singer, Guitarist, and Business Development with Defining Wellness
- Jerome Trahan, Director of Marketing Meridian Arts & Entertainment IMAX
- Sela Ward, Actress, Author and Producer
- Virtual Meet & Greet with Jimmy Buffet and guests, Mac McAnally, Tina Gullickson, and Nadirah Shakoor

Organizers and Contributors:
- Savannah James Broadwater, FPMHNP-BC
- Leigh Ziller Gillespie, FPMHNP-BC
- Nan Hughes, MSN
- Cynthia Luther, PhD
- Tonya Moore, PhD
- Yuric Primer

Congratulations to Johnnie Sue Wijewardane, AANP State Representative

Johnnie Sue Wijewardane, PhD, APRN, FNP-BC, FAANP was recently elected Mississippi State Representative of the American Association of Nurse Practitioners (AANP). Dr. Wijewardane will begin her term of office on June 28. As AANP Mississippi State Representative, Dr. Wijewardane joins a distinguished list of nurse practitioner leaders who are committed to raising awareness of the exceptional care NPs provide and advocating for legislation that improves patients’ access to that care.

Dr. Johnnie Sue Wijewardane is currently a Professor of Nursing in the School of Nursing at the University of Mississippi Medical Center, Jackson, Mississippi, where she teaches NP, DNP, and PhD students, and previously served as Associate Dean for Academic Affairs. Her involvement with the Mississippi Nurses’ Association began as a student in 1993 when she served on the state MASN board, she previously served as MNA District 18 President, and currently serves as the Secretary of the MNA Board of Directors. Dr. Wijewardane presents extensively at the local, state and national levels on nursing leadership and practice topics, and is actively involved in several national nursing and healthcare organizations. She has been a member of AANP since 2010, and has been a Fellow since 2016.

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505.726.8549 | myra.francisco@ihs.gov

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The Mississippi Nurses Foundation Coffee Club was started in April 2009 with the support of Dr. Kim Hoover, with her donation for MNF daily operations. The coffee club recognizes individuals who donate between $300 - $5,000 or more to the Foundation. You can join today with a monthly donation of $25.00 to the Nurses Foundation. Please select your level of support for membership into the Mississippi Nurses Foundation Coffee Club. Bank draft and credit card monthly donations will automatically renew every 12 months unless notified by the donor.

(____) Espresso Level
$4,000 to $5,000 — Two packages of MNF signature coffee and two coffee mugs, four tickets to all upcoming events sponsored by the Foundation, Recognition on MNF’s website, newsletter, recognition at the Mississippi Nurses Association Annual Convention and a 4” X 8” engraved brick in the Mary E. Stanton Center for Nursing Garden.

(____) Cappuccino Level
$2,000 to $3,999 — Two packages of MNF signature coffee and two coffee mugs, two tickets to all upcoming events sponsored by the Foundation, Recognition on MNF’s website, newsletter and recognition at the Mississippi Nurses Association Annual Convention.

(____) Mocha Level
$500 to $999 — One package of MNF signature coffee and coffee mug, one ticket to one of MNF’s sponsored events, Recognition on MNF’s website, newsletter and recognition at the Mississippi Nurses Association Annual Convention.

(____) Coffee Level
$300 to $499 — One package of MNF signature coffee and coffee mug, a ticket to one of MNF’s sponsored events, Recognition on MNF’s website, newsletter and recognition at the Mississippi Nurses Association Annual Convention.

(____) No, I cannot join the Coffee Club but I will give a donation to support the MS Nurses Foundation.

$25 (____) $50 (____) $75 (____) $100
(____) $150 (____) $200 (____) $250

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Method of Payment
Credit Card # __________ Exp. Date ____________ 3 digit code/ back of card _________
Amount (____) MasterCard (____) Visa
(____) Bank Draft (1st or 15th) Amount per month __________
Month to start __________
(____) One time payment for yearly membership
(____) DONATE ONLINE at www.msnursesfoundation.com

Your tax deductible donation to the Coffee Club will help support the Nurses Foundation in its daily operations of carrying out its mission of raising, accepting and dispersing charitable donations to promote professional nursing and better health in Mississippi. Sponsored events exclude the Nightingale Awards Gala.

Thank you to our Schools of Nursing for allowing the Mississippi Nurses Foundation to be a part of your students’ success.

The 2020 School of Nursing Scholarship recipients are listed below:

Shyinia Drake Alcorn State University
Angela Jackson Alcorn State University
Amber Hyde Belhaven University
Vanessa Taylor Coahoma Community College
Karlee Avery Delta State University
Camryn McCraw East Central Community College
Angela Allen East Mississippi Community College

Your tax-deductible donation to the Nurse in Need Program will help support the Mississippi Nurses Foundation in providing aid and assistance to nurses in Mississippi.

DONATIONS CAN BE MADE ONLINE AT: www.msnursesfoundation.com (include “Nurse in Need” under ways to donate)
DONATIONS MAY ALSO BE MAILED TO: 31 Woodgreen Place, Madison, MS 39110

The Mississippi Nurses Foundation is proud to announce the recipients of the $1,000 MNF School of Nursing Scholarship for 2020. Each student is selected by their nursing school leadership based on academic excellence, leadership abilities and community involvement. Some schools opt to award two students at $500 each. The scholarship is funded through our Nurses Touch Lives Car Tag Program.

Megan Thompson Hinds Community College
Kadedra Luckett Holmes Community College
Logan Scott Lyle Itawamba Community College
Mallory Malone Jones County Jr. College
Parker Rigby Meridian Community College
Cameron Walters Mississippi College
Tambranecia Beckworth Mississippi Delta Community College
Shirley Ely Mississippi Gulf Coast Community College
Sydney Thompson Mississippi University for Women
Sarah LeFlore Mississippi University for Women
Jeremy Borden Northeast Mississippi Community College
Kenneth Foster Northwest Mississippi Community College
Ramey Cochran Pearl River Community College
Ashleigh Molaison Southwest Mississippi Community College
Marquia Walls UMMC School of Nursing
Jennifer Robbins William Carey University

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Mississippi Nurses Foundation announces deadline for $5,000 Car Tag Stipends

The Mississippi Nurses Foundation will award stipends, made possible by the Nurses Car Tag Program—Nurses Touch Lives. The stipends will be awarded to nursing students enrolled in an accredited Associate, Baccalaureate, Masters or Doctoral Nursing Program in Mississippi. Deadline for application is June 12, 2020.

Eileen S. and Earl C. Whittemore Fund Advanced Practice/Nurse Practitioner Scholarship

MNF and The Gulf Coast Community Foundation will present a $2,500 scholarship to a student in an accredited nurse practitioner program. The student must also be a resident of Hancock, Harrison, Jackson, Pearl River, Stone or George County. Deadline for application is July 10, 2020.

Mississippi Nurses Foundation PhD Research Grants “up to” $10,000

Applicants must be currently enrolled and in good standing in a PhD Nursing program in Mississippi; must be a resident of Mississippi; and must be a member of the Mississippi Nurses Association (MNA). Deadline for application is July 10, 2020.

For application information and forms, please visit www.msnursesfoundation.com or contact:

MS Nurses Foundation
31 Woodgreen Place
Madison, MS 39110
601-898-0850
Email: foundation@msnurses.org

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For more information call 601-898-0850.
Carl Mangum, PhD, PMHNP-BC, NHDP-BC, RN
Vice-President, Mississippi Nurses Association

I am currently on my second deployment with the National Disaster Medical System (NDMS). For the past 14 days, I’ve been in Maryland leading a nine-person Health and Medical Task Force (HMTF). Our mission is to support the Maryland National Guard, Maryland Department of Health, and Maryland Emergency Medical to assess nursing homes and assisted living facilities in Maryland for their COVID-19 preparedness. We look at each facility’s preparedness planning and make recommendations and perform activities related to infection control, personal protective equipment (PPE), and resident assessment.

As a Registered Nurse (RN) and a Nurse Practitioner (NP) I bring much experience and expertise to the mission. The personal side of COVID-19 takes on many meanings to different people. I have been around some very sick people and others that although positive have seemed just fine. I find the things that I worry about at home, I worry about here. My safety, the safety of my team, my patients, or in this case the nursing home employees and residents are of the utmost importance. I think about the safety of my family back home, that doesn’t change, no matter where you are. Unlike NDMS responses to natural disasters where only a part of the country is affected, with this response no part is unaffected. We take every precaution that the CDC recommends, but it’s still worrisome. We trust our equipment and training. We are thankful to have the opportunity to serve others and feel we are making a difference in the lives of those working and living in the facilities. As always, we look forward to returning home to our families and friends. To all of those on the frontlines everywhere, including Mississippi, stay safe, stay strong, and remember why you became a nurse.

Team Commander
Delta-1 DMAT
NDMS/EMMO/ASPR/DHHS
carl.mangum@hhs.gov

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