

# Coping with Worry and Stress - Wellness Tips



Welcome to your daily dose of wellness!

Today's Message: **Healthcare Week** - Insights from our Frontline Team Members Series



Happy Healthcare Week to all! To celebrate this week in our “Daily Tips,” we will hear from five of our front-line heroes from around our health system who continue to work tirelessly to Care Bravely for our patients, families, community, and team members. Those who kindly agreed to participate were all asked the same five questions, and with the last questions each will share a TIP with you for being resilient during this challenging time.



Heather Wayland-Foelster  
ICU Nurse Manager  
Northwest Hospital  
A/K/A Super Hero



## 1) Over the past 8-10 weeks, what has been the hardest part of your job?

*“The hardest part of this job is seeing your fellow coworkers struggle with grief and loss. The nursing staff facilitates FaceTime video calls with patients and their families during this difficult time, as families say good-bye to their loved ones at the end of life. Nurses are there for their patients when families can’t be. They hold their hands, and make sure no one dies alone. Also, at the start of this pandemic, we had a paradigm shift which goes against the very core nature of a nurse, and that is to save the patient at all costs. We now had to shift gears, pause and think first about ourselves, before saving the patient. Meaning protecting ourselves with the proper PPE and following the donning and doffing procedures before jumping into an emergency to ensure our safety so we can continue to stay safe and healthy to care for our patients as this invisible predator infests and wreaks havoc on the human race. This has truly taken a toll on the moral resiliency of all the staff.”*

## 2) During this time what has been the most rewarding part of your job?

*“The most rewarding part of the job is seeing the impact of patients’ families and how grateful they are to know we are there for their mother, father, brother, sister, daughter, son, grandmother, or grandfather. Most families understand the situation we are in and are appreciative of all the efforts our staff put in to keep our patients safe. It also warms my heart to see the outpouring of support from the community. Many neighbors, friends and families of staff, and local businesses have donated everything from food donations, to baked goods, treats, and flowers. It is most rewarding to see patients recovering from being on a ventilator on multiple pressors, prone then to transfer out of the ICU. We play overhead, “Here comes the Sun” by the Beatles when this happens. Also, it is seeing the number of patients that*



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are discharged, and that celebration of life, as we line up in the lobby and clap for joy as the patient is assisted in a wheelchair outside to their anxiously awaiting loved ones to take them home! To see the tears of joy and appreciation on a patient's face when they experience this, is priceless.”

### 3) What's the most innovative problem solving or change that you have seen or experienced over these past two months?

*“The most innovative or problem solving or change that I have witnessed is the opening of our COVID Unit on 4D. This happened at a lightning pace with the support of Leadership, and all of Northwest came together as a team and helped with this project. This effected every department from Registration, HR, Supply Chain, Pharmacy, Security, IT, EVS, Social Work/Care Management, Respiratory, Radiology, Biomed, Facilities, PT/OT, Nursing and Providers, Dietary and Finance. Facilities and Biomed came together with such fluidity and seamlessness to make the impossible possible. Supply Chain outfitted the new wing with all the supplies and new processes were put in place to help keep stocked with the help of our Nursing staff. Windows were put in all the rooms, hepafilters were placed, monitors, and suction equipment placed. Equipment for this Unit came from throughout the Lifebridge System to ensure that we had everything we needed to care for an ICU patient.”*

### 4) What's the most inspiring thing you seen or experienced?

*“I am so humbled every day to witness the staff overcome their own fears and struggles they may have of their own, related to Covid-19, and rise up to and conquer this and continue to care in the most skilled, compassionate way as they always have! They are true heroes in every sense of the word. They have overcome their own fears in order to continue the important work of caring for our most vulnerable patient population.*

*Examples of this are the ICU Step Down Nurses, and Redeployed Nurses. We have not had a significant number of Step Down level of acuity since this pandemic started and surged. We were accustomed to a daily ICU census of about 9 and a census of 7 for Step Down patients. Of course, this varies, but now, in the new normal, we are averaging anywhere from 20-24 ICU patients with multiple vents, sedation, pressors, proning etc. Our ICU Step Down Nurses jumped in with both feet and took on this challenge as they now had to become ICU Nurses. They responded with resiliency and a can-do attitude. They are no longer Step Down Nurses but are “Step Up” Nurses as they have been trained and are managing these patients with support from the ICU staff and Education team. We also have help from redeployed staff from the OR, IR, and PACU. They have also stepped up and have become a huge support for the Nurses and Techs caring for our ICU patients. They have stepped out of their comfort zone and have overcome their fear and taken on the challenge. Because of these teams of awesome individuals, we have been able to come together and support each other and face each challenge every shift.”*

*There are so many examples of this everywhere. For example, the staff working on our Covid Units, 3A/B, and 4D, have come together and creatively helped organize and make the Units the best they can be when having to live in PPE and wear a N95 Mask all day and night. We are grateful for our Infectious Disease team who have guided best practices to help quell our fears when working on an all negative pressure Unit.”*



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## 5) What tip/advice would you give to others right now? (What has helped you persevere during this challenging time?)

*“This is challenging, and we all go through ebbs and flows of emotions. My advice is to allow yourself to be vulnerable, and accept the help, support and recognition of others when you are in that dark place. We all take turns feeling this way and in turn, can be the one to help uplift someone else. This helps remind us we are not alone, but in this together.”*

*“The other tip is to keep your sense of humor! Don’t forget to laugh. Because of our profession, it is important to be able to laugh and be present in those moments of joy. I appreciate the quote from Brene’ Brown – ‘Joy is vulnerable, that’s why we’re afraid to let ourselves feel it.’ Don’t squander joyful moments by waiting for the other shoe to drop. Lean in and practice gratitude.”*

*“Also, a nice glass of wine or an adult beverage of choice helps...In moderation of course!*

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