A book of prayers and reflections for nurses.

REFLECTIONS
on the hands of a nurse

By Mark Darby, RN
Comments We’ve Received About Reflections on the Hands of a Nurse

“I know that this book will be very useful for us overworked stressed out nurses. It’s always good to be able to have a resource to put us back on track.”

Marlene Roman RN MSN CMSRN
Past President
Academy of Medical Surgical Nurses

“Whether this book is bought by a nurse to ignite their own passion for their chosen work or bought for a nurse by a friend, it is sure to uplift, encourage and inspire.”

Gwen Matthews RN
VP Clinical Services
Glendale Adventist Medical Center

“Through prayers, stories, and reflections, Mark has truly captured how awesome it is to be a nurse!”

Sharon Hayek MS, RN
Hastings Neb

“This book helped me see the spiritual side of such an intense profession. The book helped me refocus my conviction to nursing.”

Richard Boisselle, RN
Staff Development Specialist
Maine Medical Center
“Once again, Mark Darby has taken everyday nursing issues and put them in a format that is healing for nurses. He causes nurses to reflect on who they are, what they do and to be proud of the profession.”

Lisa Ulrich-Walters RN
VP Nursing
Faith Regional Medical Center

“In a health system characterized by a nursing shortage, mandatory overtime for nurses, and increased patient/nurse ratios, this book provides a breath of fresh air.”

Beth Furlong, RN, PhD, JD
Associate Professor
School of Nursing
Creighton University

“Mark Darby’s Reflections truly provides inspiration for renewal and hope in our daily lives and practice through spirituality.”

Charlotte J. Burt, RN
School Nurse Consultant
Des Moines Iowa

“A wonderful source of inspiration and renewal for all nurses.”

Leota Rolls, RN MSN
Vice President
Mary Lanning Memorial Hospital
Introduction

This project started several years ago when I was frustrated at work. Rather than my normal griping and complaining, I said a quick prayer. It seemed as if Somebody was listening because the shift went better than I expected. Since then, I have spent some time exploring the spirituality of Nursing. It seems that nurses, many subconsciously, use their spirituality to survive and thrive in today’s world of healthcare. This book is the result of conversations I have had with nurses about their beliefs, their prayers, and their hopes for Nursing.

Section 1 is a collection of prayers concerning common situations in a nurse’s career. Section 2 is about the power of “story” and how to discover your own story. Section 3 contains a variety of reflections that were written about Nursing and several Nursing specialties.

Each of these sections is independent of the other. This book does not have to be read in any particular order. Some have told me that they have read one prayer a day and used the questions before each as a part of their daily prayer. Others have used Section 2 during all day programs and retreats.

All these ways are valid, so long as they satisfy you, the reader.

Mark Darby, RN
Omaha, NE
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Prayer for an Obnoxious Co-Worker

“Life was going along fine until she started in griping and complaining. Nothing was right. I was hoping that she would just shut up and go away. But, she stayed right where she was, continuing to gripe.”

From a 3-11 Medical Surgical Nurse

Did you ever experience a time when another co-worker was truly acting obnoxious? It may have seemed as if you were breathing fresh air that suddenly became polluted by output from an old industrial plant. How did you cope in this situation?

Being sensitive to someone else’s emotional state can help us be good nurses. However, when dealing with an obnoxious co-worker, we must limit our sensitivity. Handling this person objectively allows you to decide how to react to his (her) negative emotions.
Questions for Reflection

1. Describe a time when you worked with an obnoxious co-worker.
   ___________________________________________________________________
   ___________________________________________________________________
   ___________________________________________________________________
   ___________________________________________________________________
   ___________________________________________________________________

2. How did you handle this situation?
   ___________________________________________________________________
   ___________________________________________________________________
   ___________________________________________________________________
   ___________________________________________________________________
   ___________________________________________________________________

3. What would you like to do in the future?
   ___________________________________________________________________
   ___________________________________________________________________
   ___________________________________________________________________
   ___________________________________________________________________
   ___________________________________________________________________
Questions for Reflection

1. Describe a time when you worked with an obnoxious co-worker.

2. How did you handle this situation?

3. What would you like to do in the future?
Prayer for
When I Am Obnoxious

Every once in awhile, you wake up thinking that you deserve a day to gripe and complain. It just seems that things have not been going your way lately so you deserve to be in a bad mood. At first, it feels good. You can finally tell those other drivers exactly what you’re thinking. You can put on a “Don’t mess with me, Buddy” look. Sometimes those days seem to be the very thing you need.

But, there is a downside to griping and complaining. Griping rarely helps us feel better in the long run. When we complain, we can end up hurting someone else and having to apologize the next day. In addition, sometimes we gripe and complain to avoid making necessary changes in our lives. It is easier to complain than to change.


Questions for Reflection

1. Describe a day when you were crabby.
   ____________________________________________
   ____________________________________________
   ____________________________________________
   ____________________________________________
   ____________________________________________

2. What happened to contribute to these feelings?
   ____________________________________________
   ____________________________________________
   ____________________________________________
   ____________________________________________
   ____________________________________________

3. After you moaned and groaned awhile, did things improve?
   ____________________________________________
   ____________________________________________
   ____________________________________________
   ____________________________________________
   ____________________________________________

Chapter 1 – Prayers
Prayer for When I Am Obnoxious

I thought I deserved just one day. I wanted to get it out of my system. Then I realized I couldn’t get it out. It wouldn’t leave. The more I griped, the worse I felt.

I pray that this will stop. I don’t want to feel like this anymore. I want to feel more like me.

I pray that You will help me find a better, more effective way to make the changes I need.

I also pray for all those people who were the victims of my griping. I pray that they will be healed, and that they will forgive me.
A Reflection on Medical Surgical Nursing

Medical Surgical nurses do almost any type of Nursing. The Med-Surg floor has become a place where almost any type of patient, with any level of acuity, can be found. This presents great challenges to nurses who work in this area. When I began to work on this reflection, the one characteristic of these nurses that seemed to stand out was the pride they felt for their jobs.

I received invaluable assistance in this reflection from Marlene Roman, RN, MSN, who is past president of the Academy of Medical Surgical Nurses. AMSN has a program called “Nurses Nurturing Nurses.” This is the only specialty that has had two reflections written for them.

If you would like to find out more about the Academy of Medical Surgical Nurses, you may contact them at:

AMSN National Office
East Holly Avenue, PO Box 56
Pitman, NJ 08071-0056
856-256-2323 or
www.medsurgenurse.org
I never have a typical day...

It is not unusual for me to go to one room and do wound care... and then a room with telemetry... then go to the next for a detox patient... followed by an out-of-control diabetic.

...But you know, I hardly ever drop anything, that is because I am good at what I do.

Sometimes it seems that the better I get, the more I am taken for granted.

I am expected to fill a depth of paperwork and still give good care.

Someday this will all change. I know I may have to give up something to enable these changes.

But one thing I will not give up... I will not give up being a good nurse.
A Reflection on Medical Surgical Nursing

I never have a typical day...
It is not unusual for me to go to one room
   and do wound care...
   and then a room with telemetry...
   then go to the next for a detox patient...
   followed by an out-of-control diabetic.

Sometimes I feel like a juggler trying to
   keep it all in the air while I ride a unicycle.

...But you know, I hardly ever drop anything,
that is because I am good at what I do.

Sometimes it seems that the better I get,
   the more I am taken for granted.
I am expected to fill a depth of paperwork and
   still give good care.

Someday this will all change. I know I may have
to give up something to enable these changes.

But one thing I will not give up...
I will not give up being a good nurse.
Chapter 3 – Reflections

A REFLECTION ON NURTURING

TWO QUESTIONS: WHAT IS NURTURING?

It is using your wisdom gained from experience to help another reach maturity,
It is listening to someone’s deepest pain with respect,
It is teaching someone an easier way to do a necessary task.
Many people nurture – parents, artisans, but so do nurses.
Nurses nurture patients and families, and nurses nurture nurses.

SECONDLY, WHY DO NURSES NURTURE?

The surface answer is, “Because I care.”
There is a deeper, truer answer:
You become wiser when you share your wisdom,
When you listen to someone else’s pain, yours is lessened,
And when you teach, you learn more than you ever knew.
Nurses nurture others, because it makes them better nurses.
A Reflection on Nurturing

Two Questions...
What is Nurturing?

It is using your wisdom gained from experience to help another reach maturity,
It is listening to someone’s deepest pain with respect,
It is teaching someone an easier way to do a necessary task.

Many people nurture – parents, and artisans, but so do nurses.
Nurses nurture patients and families and nurses nurture nurses.

Secondly, Why do Nurses Nurture?

The surface answer is, “Because I care.”
There is a deeper, truer answer:
You become wiser when you share your wisdom,
When you listen to someone else’s pain, yours is lessened,
And when you teach, you learn more than you ever knew.

In short, nurses nurture others, because it makes them better nurses.