Self-Care Contract in Action: Promoting Self-Care for RN-BSN Students

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Background
- Self care is an important aspect of professionalism.
- Having a Work-Life balance is critical to sustaining a caring capacity as a professional nurse.
- Without self-care one may lapse into compassion fatigue.
- Baccalaureate Essential VIII Professionalism and Professional Values speaks directly to the importance of self-care (AACN 2008).

Purpose
The purpose of this project is for RN-BSN students to reflectively engage in self-care.

Self-care may guide the health care provider to better aid their patients to engage in health promotion activities.

Methods
- Begins in the first semester
- Self-care contract is integrated into module on Professionalism
- Each student is asked to reflectively commit to an activity directed self-care contract
- Each student is held accountable to their RN-BSN colleague team for engaging in the contract activity
- The activity(ies) continue throughout the program

Outcomes

Student comments
- Important to find a work-school - personal life balance.
- Increased sense of well-being.
- Activities included walking, meditating, diet changes, rest/sleep changes, play, family time, alone time.

Discussion
- Self-care is an important part of professionalism.
- Self-care contract may be a simple or complex activity.
- Does not require a large time commitment – it may be as little as a few minutes per day.

References