SelfCaRxe for HealthCare®

How
SelfCare *for* HealthCare®
Advances IHI's Framework for Improving Joy in Work

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LeAnn Thieman
Nurse, Author, Hall of Fame Speaker

Like you, nurse recruitment and retention expert LeAnn Thieman understands the challenges facing healthcare leaders today.

How do you increase staff engagement and retention?

How do you decrease sick days?

How do you recruit outstanding long-term healthcare givers?

How do you help them care for themselves... and your patients?

How do you boost satisfaction scores for staff and patients?

Norton Women's and Children's Hospital

13% increase
in retention of first year RNs at 6-month mark
Charlotte Ipsan, CNO

Texas Health Presbyterian

34.14% decrease
in those who agreed that they were thinking of leaving their position in the next year
Dr. Cole Edmonson, CNO

UPMC Pinnacle Health System

48.52% increase
in "Leadership cares about my wellness and life balance."
Susan Comp, Sr. VP & CNO

MaineGeneral Hospital

15% increase
overall nurse engagement
Sherri Woodward, CNO

Salem VAMC

16% decrease
in sick days at 12-month mark
*Shannon Cohen,
Health Promotion Program Mgr*

Mercy Cedar Rapids

53% increase
in those who feel supported by management and leadership
Mary Brobst, CNO

LeAnn Thieman

Hall of Fame Speaker, Nurse, New York Times Best Selling Author

of 14 *Chicken Soup for the Soul* books including her newest, *Chicken Soup for the Soul, Inspiration for Nurses* has already reached over a million minds, hearts and souls of healthcare givers. Now her mission is to reach at least one million more via *SelfCare for HealthCare™, Your Guide to Physical, Mental and Spiritual Health*. This transformational program is a movement/philosophy that creates behavior changes, resulting in positive culture impact, increased employee engagement, morale, retention, patient satisfaction scores, outcomes and reimbursements.

With over three decades of in-the-trenches nursing experience and 20 years helping hospitals and organizations recruit and retain caregivers, LeAnn has a unique, dynamic, yet simple approach.

Unlike other programs, LeAnn's are based on the proven principle that *caring for the caregiver* is the answer. One who is strong of mind, body and spirit will give better patient care, resulting in better patient outcomes, and increased patient satisfaction scores and reimbursements.

*For ease of use, the **SelfCare for Healthcare program** is available to employees on a Mobile App and, the American Nurses Credentialing Center (ANCC) has approved **26 contact hours** for nurses who complete the year-long program.*
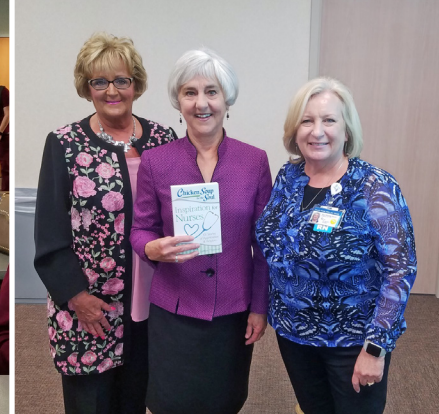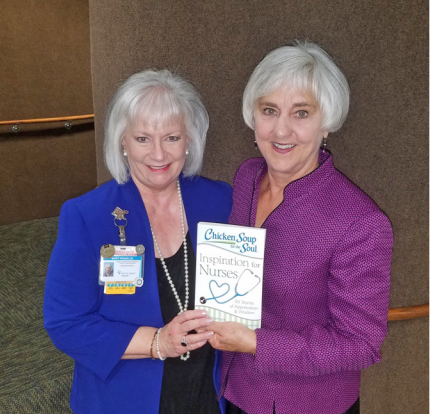
LeAnn's expertise has been featured around the globe on BBC, NPR, PBS, FOX News, *Newsweek Magazine's Voices of the Century* issue, and countless radio and TV programs.

LeAnn's mission in life is caring for the caregiver.

Executive Summary

Burnout, retention, low morale, poor engagement, and lack of resiliency are problems plaguing most healthcare organizations today. Employee wellbeing is crucial for ensuring both employee and patient satisfaction, increased safety, and organizational performance. SelfCare for HealthCare® provides a systemic change to restoring joy in the workplace and produces a cultural shift to improve the physical and fiscal health of organizations. This systemic change has been shown to raise clinician engagement and satisfaction results by 20-40% while reducing turnover, a major symptom of burnout and lack of joy in the workplace.

Introduction

Working in healthcare is a calling, to minister to people during the most difficult trying times of their lives. This privilege of caring, nurturing and healing someone's body, mind and spirit, should fill caregivers with great happiness. Why then, does our profession struggle so to find joy in the workplace? If any work ought to bring smiles to our faces and joy to our hearts, it is this honorable service.

To understand and solve this dilemma, The Institute for Healthcare Improvement published a whitepaper, *IHI Framework for Improving Joy in Work*. The document serves as a guide for healthcare organizations to better understand the barriers to joy at work and offers strategies and steps to address these issues and bring joy back to our compassionate practice.

This whitepaper, *How SelfCare for HealthCare Supports IHI Framework for Improving Joy in Work*, is intended to demonstrate how the year-long transformational SelfCare for HealthCare program directly aligns with, supports, and offers specific steps to meet IHI's recommendations to bring joy to the workplace.

With constant changes and challenges and increasing demands on time, resources, and energy, healthcare professionals are experiencing burnout at alarming rates. Fifty percent of physicians report symptoms of burnout. **(1)** Yet the Accreditation Council for Graduate Medical Education (ACGME), which oversees the training of U.S. residents and fellows, has not included self-care or specific related areas in its outline of competencies for trainees in all specialties, with the exception of education on sleep management. **(2)** According to a 2017 survey by Kronos, Inc., 85 percent of nurses reported feeling fatigued by their work, and 63 percent said that they are currently experiencing burnout from their jobs. Burnout affects all aspects of the pursuit of better health, for the clinicians and the patients. It leads to lower levels of staff engagement which correlates with lower patient and staff satisfaction, lower productivity, and increased risk of workplace accidents. These all significantly affect the financial strength of the organization. The impact on patient care is even more concerning. Lower levels of staff engagement are linked to lower quality patient care, including safety. Burnout limits providers empathy, a crucial component of care. **(3)**

Healthcare givers cannot give what we do not have inside. We cannot bring holistic care to those we are privileged to serve if we are depleted physically, mentally or spiritually. To improve joy in work, healthcare givers must first improve the health of their bodies, minds and spirits.

To inform the work of this whitepaper, SelfCare for HealthCare staff collected data from 20 hospitals over a period of five years and self-assessment surveys from program participants prior to engaging in the program, at six months, and at the year-end program conclusion. Research includes data from hospitals that invested in a first, second, and third years of SelfCare for HealthCare.

The IHI white paper states that the focus first must be on joy at work, as opposed to focusing only on burnout or low levels of staff engagement. It states: *It's tempting to analyze a problem by only paying attention to deficits or gaps. But to get to the solution, it is essential to identify and understand and leverage all the assets that can be brought to bear, and joy is one of healthcare's greatest assets. …The compassion and dedication of healthcare staff are key assets that, if nurtured and not impeded, can lead to joy as well as to effective and empathetic care.*

20% increase
in engagement after
6 months of program,
sustained at year-end.
Maine General

Respondents who strongly
agreed and agreed they are
satisfied with their job

20.5% increase
Mercy Medical Center

10.14% increase
New York Presbyterian Hospital

Respondents who
agreed they experience
burnout at work

13.28% increase
Missouri Baptist

Respondents who strongly
agreed and agreed that
leadership cares about their
wellness and life balance

48.5% increase
UPMC Pinnacle Health System

78.8% increase
Mercy Medical Center

13% increase
Missouri Baptist Medical Center

The Case for Improving Joy at Work

IHI Framework for Improving Joy in Work

Perhaps the best case for improving joy is that it incorporates the most essential aspects of positive daily work life. The focus on joy is a step toward creating safe, humane places for people to find meaning and purpose in their work. There is also a strong business case for improving joy at work... the business case draws on outcomes of the work environment, including engagement, satisfaction, patient experience, burnout, and turnover rates. Engagement is an imprecise but often-used proxy measure for joy. An engaged workforce is one that holds a positive attitude for the organization and its values and is foundational to creating high-performing organizations.

Greater employee satisfaction is directly correlated to safer more efficient patient care. **(4)** Evidence leaves no doubt that practices to create a joyful, engaged workforce are associated with fewer medical errors and better patient experiences **(5)**, less waste; higher employee productivity **(6)**; and reduced turnover, leading to better financial performance. **(7)**

SelfCare for HealthCare Strategy

Employee engagement is a key component of the SelfCare for HealthCare program. Each department creates a SelfCare for HealthCare bulletin board and is assigned a SelfCare for HealthCare Champion. Monthly tip sheets provide selfcare activities for staff members to engage in together, strengthening teamwork and unit cohesiveness to nurture a safe productivity environment. Quarterly virtual meetings with SelfCare for HealthCare staff connect Champions to provide support and idea sharing.

Leaders are encouraged to watch the 7-10 minute monthly video with team members, further increasing engagement.
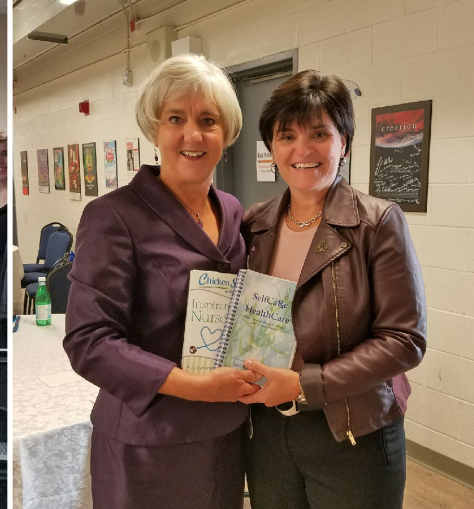
Leadership's Role in Creating Joy at Work

IHI Framework for Improving Joy in Work

Creating joy and engagement in the workplace is a key role of effective leaders. IHI's High-Impact Leadership Framework describes leaders' actions that make them effective, from being an authentic presence in the frontline to staying focused on mission and what matters and identifies attention to joy in work as a major component of the leadership role. **(8)** These leadership actions also give meaning to work, promote camaraderie, and are essential to improving joy. Similarly, everything we know about improving safety in healthcare relies on ensuring a fair and just culture, effective teams, and daily improvement, those things that also contribute to joy and work. **(9)** Safety, effective leadership, and a joyful workforce are inextricably linked.

SelfCare for HealthCare Strategy

Strategic Engagement with Leaders: Leadership engagement and support is critical to the mission and success of any program. LeAnn meets with key leaders virtually prior to the launch, then again on-site to assess the organization's specific challenges and goals, and tailors the program to meet specific needs. Together, a customized plan is developed for the execution and implementation of SelfCare for HealthCare. Quarterly contact with leaders addresses ongoing or changing needs and assures success.

Commit to a system approach to making joy in work a shared responsibility at all levels of the organization.

IHI Framework for Improving Joy in Work

Making a joyful workplace is the job of leaders. Nevertheless, everyone from the senior executive leaders to clinical and administrative staff has a role to play. From creating an effective system, to building teams, to bolstering one's own resilience and supporting a positive culture, each person contributes. According to most sites engaged in the prototype testing, it is critical for leaders at all levels to dedicate time attention skill development and necessary resources to improving joy at work.

Improving Joy at work is directly linked to skills of leaders at all levels. Organizations cannot just delegate responsibility for joy in work to the Human Resources department; it's everyone's job.

Certain barriers to joy need to be addressed before others and it's critical to recognize some basic psychological preconditions for joy at work. With Maslow's hierarchy of needs in mind, we identified that the five fundamental human needs must be met to improve joy at work. **(10)** These 5 needs play a central role in the IHI Framework for Improving Joy at Work: physical and psychological safety, meaning and purpose, choice and autonomy, camaraderie and teamwork, and fairness and equity.

IHI Framework for Improving Joy at Work shows nine core components that contribute to a happy, healthy, productive workforce.

Of the nine components, prototype organizations frequently cited camaraderie and teamwork as the most critical to their progress in the initial stages of their work.... four of the nine components for improving joy in work, physical and psychological safety, meaning and purpose, choice and autonomy, camaraderie and teamwork, are fundamental human needs that require the greatest attention, perhaps the first.

Respondents who strongly agreed and agreed that they feel supported by management & leadership

24.1% increase
UPMC Pinnacle Health System

44.8% increase
Mercy Medical Center

15.87% increase
Wilmington VA Medical Center

Respondents who strongly agreed and agreed they are making a difference in the lives of others

21% increase
Mercy Medical Center

18.45% increase
Northside Hospitals

12.9% increase
Missouri Baptist Medical Center

1 • Physical and Psychological Safety

IHI Framework for Improving Joy in Work

Physical safety: People feel free from physical harm during daily work. Psychological safety: People feel secure and capable of changing; there are respectful interactions among all… IHI Framework suggests being accessible and approachable.

SelfCare for HealthCare Strategy

Because leaders participate in the program alongside their staff, a trust is formed. Leaders are provided Talking Points for each chapter to discuss with staff, reinforcing that month's selfcare strategy. Together, they participate in the Champion activities, watch the monthly videos, and actively engage.

2 • Meaning and Purpose

IHI Framework for Improving Joy in Work

Do people find meaning in their work? Do they feel connected to a purpose larger than themselves in service to the community? Do they feel that the work they do makes a difference? Daily work is connected to what calls individuals to the healthcare profession. There's a line of sight from daily work to the mission and the goals of the organization.

SelfCare for HealthCare Strategy

The first month's chapter in SelfCare for HealthCare asks each staff member to share their story of why they entered the healthcare profession. Each organization's Mission and Vision statements are incorporated into the live presentations given during the launch and addressed in the Introduction letter leadership writes for inclusion in the SelfCare for HealthCare book. The final chapter in the year-long program is titled **Making a Difference**, when colleagues engage in community service activities.

3 • Choice and Autonomy

IHI Framework for Improving Joy in Work

The environment supports choice and flexibility in daily lives and work. Do people feel like they have some choice in how they execute their daily responsibilities? Do they have a voice in the way things are done in daily work? Are they a part of decisions on processes, changes, and improvements that affect them?... Participative management and share governance are two long-standing approaches that offer choice.

SelfCare for HealthCare Strategy

Participants in the SelfCare for HealthCare program are empowered to make healthy lifestyle choices, which directly impact their work.

Often, the SelfCare for HealthCare department Champions are members of the Shared Governance or similar decision-making bodies. This participation further increases their voices in the healthy-change process.

4 • Recognition and Rewards

IHI Framework for Improving Joy in Work

Some of the most meaningful rewards are rarely monetary. **(11) (12)** Organizations that are more successful in their efforts to improve joy in work begin to move away from traditional approaches that often have limited effectiveness… It is the recognition, camaraderie, and celebration of team accomplishes that are validating, not the party itself.

SelfCare for HealthCare Strategy

Many of the SelfCare for HealthCare Champion activities suggest fun, stress-reducing, teambuilding activities such as potluck meals, bowling, group walks, etc.

Camaraderie is built when, in the Positive Thinking chapter, colleagues post on the SelfCare for HealthCare bulletin board their favorite positive affirmation. They share similarly during the chapter on Spirituality, and in most of the unit Champion activities.

When practicing gratitude, colleagues write notes of thanksgiving to coworkers, recognizing one another for good work and cooperation.

5 • Participative Management

IHI Framework for Improving Joy in Work

Joy in work entails leaders creating space to listen, understand, and involve colleagues in providing input in decisions as an essential step in co-creation and participative management. Decision making involves clear communication and consensus building.

SelfCare for HealthCare Strategy

Often, the SelfCare for HealthCare department Champions are members of the Shared Governance or similar decision-making bodies. This participation further increases their voices in the healthy-change process.

Making Good Decisions is a chapter in the SelfCare for HealthCare program, equipping participants with tools to make healthy positive decisions, personally and professionally.

SelfCare for HealthCare Proven Results

Respondents who strongly agreed or agreed they have the support of work colleagues

10.6% increase
Mercy Medical Center

8.83% increase
Baylor Scott White Hospital

Respondents who strongly agreed or agreed their department works together to support and retain staff

15% increase
UPMC Pinnacle Health System

18% increase
Baylor Scott White Hospital

29.82% increase
Mercy Medical Center

6 • Camaraderie and Teamwork

IHI Framework for Improving Joy in Work

Social cohesion is generated through productive teams, shared understanding, and trusting relationships. Do people feel like they have mutual support and companionship? Do they feel they are part of the team working together towards something meaningful? Do they have a friend or someone who cares about them at work who they regularly ask for advice? Do they trust the organization's leadership? Do leaders regularly practice transparent communication? Do team members regularly express appreciation for each other's work?

SelfCare for HealthCare Strategy

Team members are encouraged to watch the 3-7 minute monthly videos together at huddles and team meetings.

Participation in the monthly Champion activities increases camaraderie.

Leaders engaging in the program with their teams deepens trust and shows they care.

Each SelfCare for HealthCare participant chooses an Accountability Partner with whom they discuss one question at the end of each chapter. They share their monthly participation and progress and "sign off" on a checklist each month proving their compliance.

7 • Daily Improvement

IHI Framework for Improving Joy in Work

The organization uses improvement science to identify, test, and implement improvements to the systems and processes. Teams and the wider organization undertake proactive learning from defects and successes. Improvements in the process is a part of daily practice.

SelfCare for HealthCare Strategy

Participants in the SelfCare for HealthCare program complete surveys prior to beginning the program, at 6 months, and again at the conclusion of the 12 months. Questions measure their self-assessment of their selfcare. Questions also measure resiliency, engagement, workplace attitudes, burnout, etc. The results provide opportunities for improvement, personally and professionally.

Respondents who strongly agreed or agreed they are personally engaged in their own wellness

27.69% increase
UPMC Pinnacle Health System

21.17% increase
Northside Hospitals

18.13% increase
Baylor Scott White Hospital

Respondents who strongly agreed or agreed they are satisfied with their work-life balance

20.14% increase
Mercy Medical Center

Respondents who strongly agreed or agreed they are managing their stress well

10.4% increase
Mercy Medical Center

Respondents who strongly agreed or agreed they are better balancing their lives physically with exercise, diet and sleep

52.24% increase
UPMC Pinnacle Health System

53.69% increase
Mercy Medical Center

85.92% increase
Wilmington VA Medical Center

8 • Wellness and Resilience

IHI Framework for Improving Joy in Work

The organization demonstrates that it values health and wellness of all employees. This goes beyond workplace safety to cultivating personal resilience (i.e. the ability to bounce back quickly from setbacks) and stress management; utilizing practices to amplify feelings of gratitude; understanding and appreciation for work-life balance and the whole person and their family; and providing mental health (depression and anxiety) support. Taking care of oneself is part of a bigger system approach to Joy in the Workplace, not a standalone solution.

SelfCare for HealthCare Strategy

The first chapters of this program begin with participants identifying physical, mental and spiritual symptoms of stress, then the 12-month program ensues, giving them tools to increase personal resiliency and coping mechanisms. Work-life balance is the core of this program.

Personal study guides, monthly videos, Monday Morning Motivation emails, podcasts, and Champion activities all teach and reinforce lessons on:

SelfCare for HealthCare Outline Year One

1 Managing the stress of "war zones" in your everyday life

2 Balancing your life physically

3 Balancing your life mentally with breathing and relaxation

4 Balancing your life mentally with laughter

5 Balancing your life mentally with positive thinking & visualization

6 Balancing your life mentally with forgiveness

7 Balancing your life spiritually (including gratitude)

8 Asking for what you need to put your life in better balance

9 Living your priorities

10 Managing time wisely

11 Making good decisions

12 Sticking to life assignments: making a difference

Respondents who strongly agreed or agreed are better balancing their lives mentally with breathing, positive thinking, laughter and forgiveness

28.26% increase
UPMC Pinnacle Health System

48.72% increase
Mercy Medical Center

15.8% increase
New York Presbyterian Hospital

Respondents who strongly agreed or agreed they are better balancing their lives spiritually and creating inner peace

31.25% increase
UPMC Pinnacle Health System

18.6% increase
Northside Hospitals

45.1% increase
Mercy Medical Center

Respondents who strongly agreed or agreed they are living their priorities

24.61% increase
UPMC Pinnacle Health System

22.04% increase
Northside Hospitals

25.67% increase
Mercy Medical Center

The compassion and dedication of healthcare staff are key assets that, if nurtured and not impeded, can lead to joy as well as to effective and empathetic care.

9 ● Real-Time Measurement

Measurement systems enable regular feedback about system performance to facilitate improvement. Daily, weekly, or monthly feedback is the norm to ensure effective data for ongoing improvement.

SelfCare for HealthCare Strategy

SelfCare Assessment and Engagement Surveys are sent to all participants prior to the launch, at 6 months, and at year's end to measure success and results.

These difficult days, nurses need to hear LeAnn's words of encouragement, faith, inspiration, wisdom.

Cleveland Clinic

Responsibility by Role

IHI Framework for Improving Joy in Work

There is a strong relationship between the qualities of leadership at all levels and engagement and performance. When researchers studied nursing staff experience, the variable contributing the most to retention was the management style. **(13)** … Leaders have an important role in modeling the expected behaviors and creating a culture that supports improving joy at work.

Senior leaders are accountable for developing a culture that encourages and fosters trust and joy in work. They ensure that improving joy in work is a responsibility at all levels of the organization, beginning with healthy, effective teams and systems.

Managers and core leaders have the primary responsibility of utilizing participative management; developing camaraderie and teamwork; leading and encouraging daily improvements, including real-time measurement; and promoting wellness and resiliency through attention to daily practice. Core leaders have the pivotal role of improving joy in everyday work at the point of service… As impediments are addressed, staff engagement improves and burnout recedes. Participative management result in greater individual and team productivity, while process improvement increases efficiency. **(14)**

Individuals, everyone, play an important role in nurturing joy in the workplace by committing to do their best, having respectful interactions, identifying opportunities to improve, being part of the solution, speaking up, and cultivating their own wellness and resilience. Each team member has a responsibility to be a good colleague, and additionally to role-modeling the core values of transparency, civility, and respect.

SelfCare for HealthCare Strategy

LeAnn meets with leaders virtually prior to the launch, then again on-site to assess the organization's specific challenges and goals. She stresses that the success of the program is inherent on manager and leadership engagement to develop a culture of trust and caring. They must role model selfcare to their staff.

38.93% decrease
*of respondents who **Strongly Agreed** or **Agreed** they are thinking of leaving their position in the next year*

Measuring Joy at Work

IHI Framework for Improving Joy in Work

Measuring joy in work calls for system level and local level measures. Two or three system-level measures (such as satisfaction, engagement, burnout, turnover, retention, employee well-being, workplace injuries, or absenteeism) that can be reviewed at least annually to identify areas for improvement and to track progress over time.

The most practical approach is to leverage existing measurement data (e.g. satisfaction, engagement, burnout, turnover, retention, and absenteeism) … It is important for joy in work to be a key organizational metric, on the same level as other organizational priorities and measures. This sends an important message to staff about the culture and values of the organization. Measuring joy in work can also help secure an organizational sense of "we are in this together for our mission" when such measurement is used to demonstrate the link between joy in work and the patient experience, and to its impact on cost such as staff turnover, recruitment, and retention.

Conclusion

Improving joy in work is crucial for creating environments where people find meaning and purpose while improving patient experience, outcomes, and safety, as well as organizational effectiveness and productivity. The leadership and management practices designed to improve joy in work are some of the most important an organization can undertake, since the focus on joy in work impacts many goals embedded within the Triple Aim, and now the Quadruple Aim. To reduce burnout, increase resiliency, and bring back joy in practice, organizations must first meet human social and psychological needs.

What organizations prioritize and measure affects morale and work environments

If reducing burnout and increasing resiliency and wellness are the focus, then leaders are more likely to develop and embody these supportive behaviors. If financial outcomes and productivity are the primary focuses, behaviors and attitudes may be incongruent with the altruistic values and mission of the organization. Both dimensions are important for organizational health and optimal patient care. SelfCare for HealthCare gives leaders tools to engage staff in an authentic way. Because it focuses on the healthcare giver, it proves to staff that financial goals or increased productivity are not the motivation. Their wellbeing is. The two are not mutually exclusive.

SelfCare for HealthCare has proven to save hospitals hundreds of thousands of dollars

Studies have shown a correlation between job dissatisfaction and plans for leaving a job. Because employee turnover is a factor associated with joy at work, an explicit financial case can be made as well.

A common challenge for leaders and caregivers is improving resiliency

SelfCare for HealthCare provides tools to improve resilience, which is vital for optimal performance. Although enhancing personal resilience is primarily the responsibility of the individual, organizations can promote it by providing access to this wellness program and encouraging staff to participate. A healthcare giver cannot give what they don't have inside. They cannot deliver holistic, compassionate care when they are depleted physically, mentally, and spiritually. Persons healthy in body, mind, and spirit will naturally bring joy to the workplace. When enhanced by leadership, these traits, habits, and attitudes flourish.

Creating joy and engagement in the workplace is a key role of effective leadership

SelfCare for HealthCare will increase joy in work and create an environment where caregivers are compassionately and behaviorally engaged in the care of patients and the mission of the organization. SelfCare for HealthCare nourishes the physical and fiscal health of organizations.

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