

The Importance of Social Support

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Learning Objective

- ▶ Discuss the ways in which social support enhances wellness in nurse anesthetists and student nurse anesthetists

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What is social support?

- ▶ Having a network of family and friends you can turn to in times of need...

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Relationships play a critical role in how we function in our day-to-day life....

I stubbed my toe....who can help me?

I have a brain aneurysm....who can help me?

I won the lottery....who can I share this with?



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Bill Withers----Lean on me lyrics---

“You just call on me brother,
When you need a hand....”



We all need somebody to lean on....

I just might have a problem that you'll
understand....

We all need somebody to lean on.....”

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Forms of social support

- ▶ Helping friends with daily tasks when they are ill
- ▶ Offering financial assistance when needed
- ▶ Giving advice to a friend facing a difficult situation
- ▶ Providing caring, empathy and concern for loved ones or friends in need

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Social Support in action

- ▶ Emotional support: supporting a friend when they need it; providing a shoulder to cry on...really important during times of stress or loneliness
- ▶ Instrumental support: taking action to help a friend, like helping them with their medical needs, giving a ride to the grocery store, taking them to work when their car is in the shop
- ▶ Informational support: provide guidance, advice, information and mentoring....help them to make big decisions

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What is empathy?

- ▶ Emotional empathy: ability to respond to other people's emotions appropriately
- ▶ Somatic: The ability to feel what another person is experiencing
- ▶ Cognitive: The ability to understand someone's response to a situation

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Social Integration

- ▶ Actual participation in various social relationships
- ▶ Involves emotions, intimacy, and a sense of belonging to a social group
- ▶ Family
- ▶ Partnership
- ▶ Religious community
- ▶ Social activity



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Poor social support

- ▶ Poor social support has been linked to depression and loneliness
- ▶ Brain function is altered
- ▶ Conditions associated with poor social support:
 - ▶ Alcohol use
 - ▶ Cardiovascular disease
 - ▶ Depression
 - ▶ Suicide



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Coping with stress

- ▶ Sharing your burdens with a friend helps you cope with the stress of a bad situation or scary challenge
- ▶ Being surrounded by people who are caring and supportive helps us see ourselves as better able to deal with the stresses that life is bringing our way



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Health Benefits

- ▶ Social groups can support positive behaviors
 - ▶ Eating a healthy diet
 - ▶ Exercise---running or walking in a group
 - ▶ Avoid smoking
 - ▶ Drink responsibly
 - ▶ Going to the doctor
 - ▶ Seeking mental health therapy



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Motivation

- ▶ Seeing peers succeed motivates action
- ▶ Sally finishes the CPC Core Modules.....OK, I'm going to just do these annoying modules and get them out of the way!!
- ▶ Bobby gets started on an antihypertensive med and brags about his lower numbers.....OK, I'm going to my PCP tomorrow and get my diastolic BP down where it belongs.....

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So, what does this mean for us CRNAs and SRNAs?

- ▶ Check in with yourself---do you have enough social support?
- ▶ Work colleagues can be an important source of friendship and support--- anesthesia can be a lonely job
- ▶ Classmates can be important when you are in school---they share your chaos and struggles! And can even remain support after graduation
- ▶ Get away from work and school. Spend time with friends and family.

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Social Support and SRNAs

- ▶ Williams, Wall and Fish (2019) studied adult learners in an online doctoral program and drivers of academic self-regulation
- ▶ “found that friend social support moderated the negative relationship between academic stress and resilience for students in a social work academic program”



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Social Support and SRNAs cont'd

- Estrada, Zhi, Nwankwo, and Gershon (2019) studied the influence of social support on grad students
 - having an advisor, as well as friend or family support influenced persistence
 - specific types of support that faculty and advisors can provide:
 - psychosocial support
 - instrumental support
 - professional networking support

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Don't hesitate to reach out for help

- ▶ It's not a sign of weakness to ask for help....it's a sign of emotional intelligence
- ▶ Everybody needs help
- ▶ Reach out to family, friends, work colleagues, or mental health professionals
- ▶ Get the help you need to feel better, and do better, and be BETTER!

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Resources

- ▶ CANA: email info@canainc.org puts you in touch with State Peer Assistants (Anna Lai and Chuck) if you need help
- ▶ AANA: Helpline 800-654-5167 for any problem with SUD
- ▶ National Suicide Helpline 800-273-8255

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USE YOUR SOCIAL SUPPORT
NETWORK---
SUPPORT EACH OTHER

STAY HAPPY

STAY HEALTHY.....

WE TRULY ARE “ALL IN THIS
TOGETHER”....

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THANK YOU!
AND
ALL THE BEST TO YOU ALL
FROM
CANA HEALTH AND
WELLNESS COMMITTEE

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▶ References

- ▶ <https://www.verywellmind.com/social-support-for-psychological-health-4119970>
- ▶ Cherry K. How social support contributes to psychological health. VeryWell website.
- ▶ Estrada, M., Zhi, Q., Nwankwo, E., & Gershon, R. (2019). The influence of social supports on graduate student persistence in biomedical fields. *CBE—Life Sciences Education*, 18(3). <https://doi.org/10.1187/cbe.19-01-0029>