

## Increased happiness through travel and positive thinking

Everyone wants to be happier. There is always room for improvement. Most nurses begin their traveling careers as a way to improve their happiness in one way or another. In an informal sample survey I conducted recently, 77% of the respondents report at least a 70% increase in their happiness level when they started traveling.

Nurses can change their personal lives and surroundings, but they cannot change the nature of their job. Nurses deal with the tragedy of other people's life on a daily basis. What can you as a nurse do about that?

In addition to traveling, you can also practice positive psychology. Positive psychology, developed by Dr Seligman, is based on prevention rather than treatment of depression after the fact like the traditional medical model. A few of the techniques, he teaches are that of counting your blessings every night, performing acts of intentional kindness, and using your strengths.

For example, before you go to bed at night, think about all the things that went well that day. They can be simple things like the smile on your patients face when you helped them do something. Write these good things down as well as why these things happened. This helps you develop a positive mental outlook and increased awareness to the good things that happen around you.

By taking care of yourself, you can take better care of your patients. If you combine, traveling with a positive mental outlook, no telling how happy you could be and how happy you could make your patients. It could be contagious. We are all connected and what we do does in turn affect others. One person's positive outlook has an affect on the entire world in a sense. It's difficult to measure, but it is a domino affect that we cannot see.

Blair, Barbara. (2005). Positive Psychology Coaching. Advance for Nurses. Marion Publications. King of Prussia, PA. February 7<sup>th</sup>. 15-17.