

Travel Nursing: A prevention to burnout

Nursing is an emotionally, intellectually, and physically demanding profession. Before long...a profession you once liked can become a dreaded part of your day. Yet, you need the money. You continue to take the long hours and add more shifts. If you feel this way or are beginning to feel like burnout is inevitable, you might want to consider travel nursing.

Traveling provides variety and a chance to develop activities outside of work. Working in a new area takes you away from your every day routine. Suddenly, you have a zillion places to go and things to do. You will want to see as much of the area as you can. Your focus is no longer on work. As a matter a fact, work seems like a small part of your day and week. All this adventure seems to give you energy you didn't realize you had anymore.

Furthermore, for some reason...being away eliminates many of your every day chores. You don't have to clean that much because you are renting a place you will be leaving in a short period of time. It is amazing how much work goes into maintaining our every day life in the real world. In the travel world, you are free to explore and there is very little maintenance required.

While the job is still physically and intellectually challenging, you shouldn't have to work as much to make the kind of money you want to make. When I worked as a traveler, I often made as much in 6 months time as I would the entire year as a full time permanent nurse. Many full timers are envious of travelers for making more money. They forget that traveling is an option for them as well. It is their choice not to travel.

Finally, some nurses are not burned out by the work as much as the lack of challenge in their work. If you have been a nurse for several years, you may find yourself feeling bored. You don't want to put in another day of the same old thing. Traveling, on the other hand, is an entirely new challenge. One traveling nurse I met in Austin, Texas said she loves traveling and learning how to use all the new equipment. She feels better about her skills as a nurse and therefore better about herself.

I too found myself feeling burnt out from boredom. When I began asking around, I found many nurses felt the same way. The feeling seems to come on some time around the 7 year mark. Perhaps it is the 7 year itch. I felt like my life wasn't going anywhere and neither was my career. It didn't take me long to pack my bags, sell my house, and take an assignment to Alaska. In Alaska I had a great time and managed to get perspective on a new direction in my life.

If traveling doesn't prevent or help you with your symptoms of burnout, I don't know what will. Either way, you can have fun traveling while trying to prevent burnout and will also have many stories to tell when they admit you into the psych ward.