May 2, 2022

The month of May is filled with celebrations for all. From May Day basket surprises to sharing love on Mother's Day to congratulating high school and collegiate graduates to honoring those we have lost on Memorial Day, it is a month filled with happiness and joy. In addition, for our membership, we celebrate National Nurses Week from May 6-12, ending on the birthday of Florence Nightingale. This week is meant to honor our service and commitment to the nursing profession. In previous messages, I have emphasized the strength and resilience of nursing, especially with the demands of the COVID pandemic. One thing is certain: nursing requires acceptance of change. The basics of caring are core to each of us, but the ongoing challenge to our profession is the many facets of change that must be acknowledged on a regular basis. We respond to one change and move forward, waiting for the next battle. Sometimes those battles come too soon or so deep that we need to step back and re-examine our path. What is most important to us? How do we keep going?

With the support of family, friends, and fellow nurses, we manage to move forward. Family and friends are (almost) a given, but our fellow nurses are those we depend on most. They are the ones who truly understand. Support is needed for each and every nurse, regardless of role or position. To continue the success, we need to lift each other up and celebrate even the small things. How do we do that when many are stressed and dealing with depression and anxiety? Below are some small acts of kindness to consider:

1. Offering a simple thank you for assistance with a task.
2. Buying a cup of coffee to share at break.
3. Sending a handwritten note of inspiration.
4. Listening to your colleagues; hearing their concerns.
5. Nominating a colleague for an award.
6. Meeting outside of work to share a common interest.

As we move forward as nurses in 2023, above all else, be kind. We all deserve kindness.