

Making a healthy transformation!

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Back in June I was a guest of the ANF Victorian Branch at its Delegates Conference. This is an annual opportunity the NMHP is given to meet hundreds of our industry colleagues. We enjoy the chance to share important health messages with this group and to start conversations about their health challenges.

It was there I came across 'Penny', a nurse who attended our inaugural Wellness Conference in September 2010. Penny presented as someone who was enjoying good health. She was probably in her mid 50s. She looked fit, healthy and confident. She was well dressed and groomed, took pride in her appearance and approached our table without hesitation. Penny revealed that she wasn't always this healthy!

After the introductions she went on to tell me about the journey she has been on since our conference almost 2 years earlier.

Penny reported back then she was 'lost...sick and tired...lacking motivation'. She saw our conference program and registered in the hope of overcoming these debilitating feelings that I know so many of our colleagues experience throughout their career.

At the time Penny was a full-time ANUM on a busy ward. She'd been there 13 years, experienced significant change and 'endured' her fair share of vicarious trauma. She'd lost her zest for life and was going through the motions. Her relationships outside of work had suffered. She told me 'I was miserable to be around'.

Penny felt compelled to share her story since September 2010. She wanted to tell me about her remarkable health transformation which she links to the messages she gathered at our conference.

She made a commitment on that day to turn her life around. She identified an attitudinal change was vital. She assessed her life and created her own personal health plan. This started with her mental approach and taking life on with a positive attitude. This included looking at her challenges as opportunities, not barriers.

Penny kept things simple. Her emotional stocks were depleted and she needed to resurrect something from within. She decided to be kinder to herself. This included nurturing her soul and reconnecting with pursuits which once gave her joy and happiness. She assessed her relationships, decided which were important and invested in the ones which she placed greatest value.

Finally, she committed to transforming her physical self. She overhauled her diet, commenced an exercise program that suited her lifestyle and consciously adjusted her sleep patterns resulting in improved energy levels.

Penny also realised that she needed to reduce her work hours to something manageable. She negotiated a part-time position.

Penny was adamant that 'I had always been one of those people who'd find a reason not to make change'. She was also very clear in saying 'if I can make these lifesaving changes, anyone can'.

Could you make your life a healthier and happier one?

For more information on the NMHP go to www.nmhp.org.au. For advice and guidance on matters related to nurse and midwife health call the office on (03) 9415 7551.