

Use of the Decider Life Skills With Mental Health Student Nurses on Clinical Placement

Outcomes of a Pilot Study

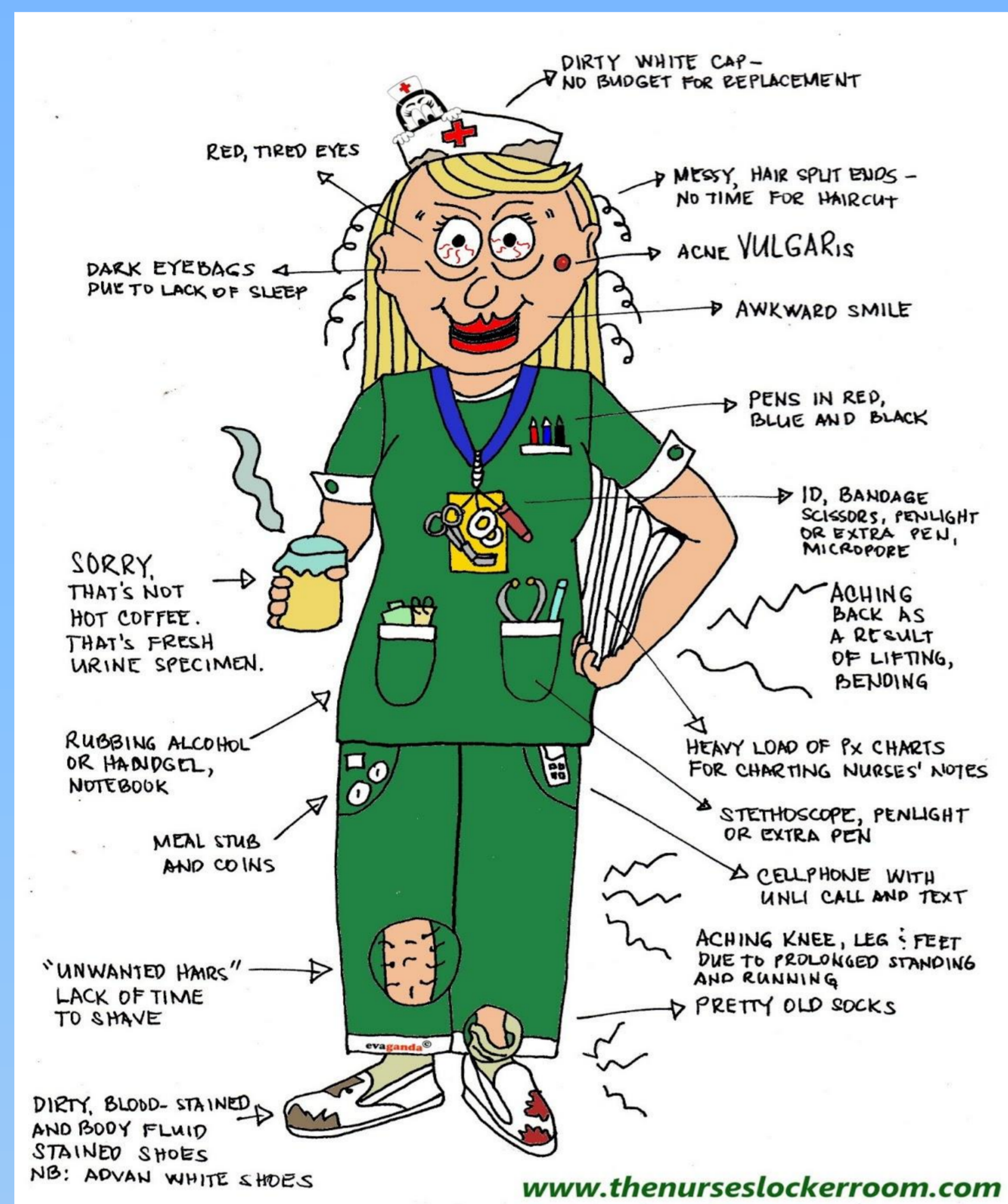
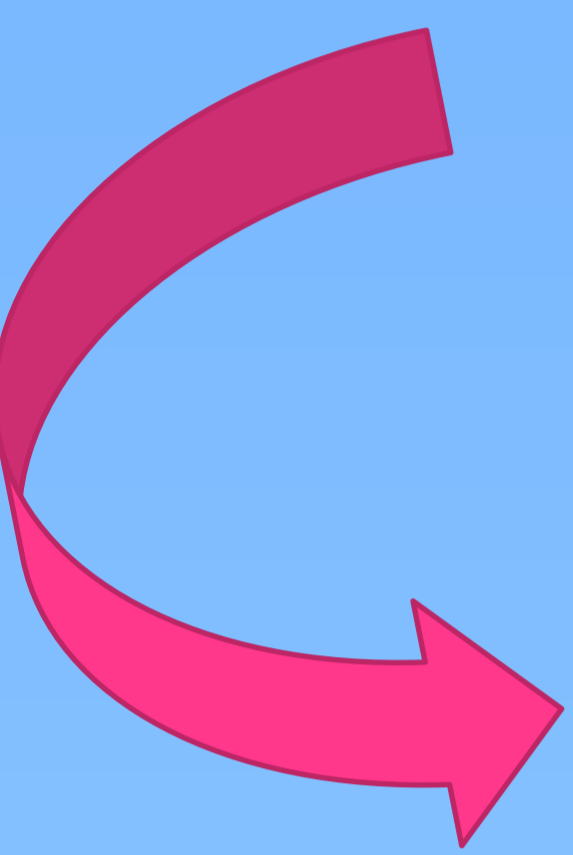
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Background

- University nursing students face higher levels of stress than those in other undergraduate programmes [1]
 - 67% of student nurses report significant levels of distress during their training [2]
 - 53% of university students have decreased emotional and behavioural skills
 - 90% of students who drop out of college do not access student support services [3]
- High Stress levels lead to increased absenteeism, high staff turnover, reduced organisational efficiency, increased occupational accident rates, reduced practice quality, increased healthcare costs and reduced job satisfaction [4]
- While student nurses have access to reflective time and student support services there is little in the line of resilience building coping skills for students to utilise on clinical placement
- Studies have shown students with higher levels of resilience have improved sense of well-being thus enhancing their academic performance. Therefore there is an increasing need for nursing curriculums to promote strategies which foster resilience in students [5]

"The 'it will pass' (skill), the stress of assignments & coping with work.. Coming to placement.. I keep thinking it will pass, you're there.. Just a few months to go.. It will pass, I found it beneficial"

"Best part of our 4 years (training)"

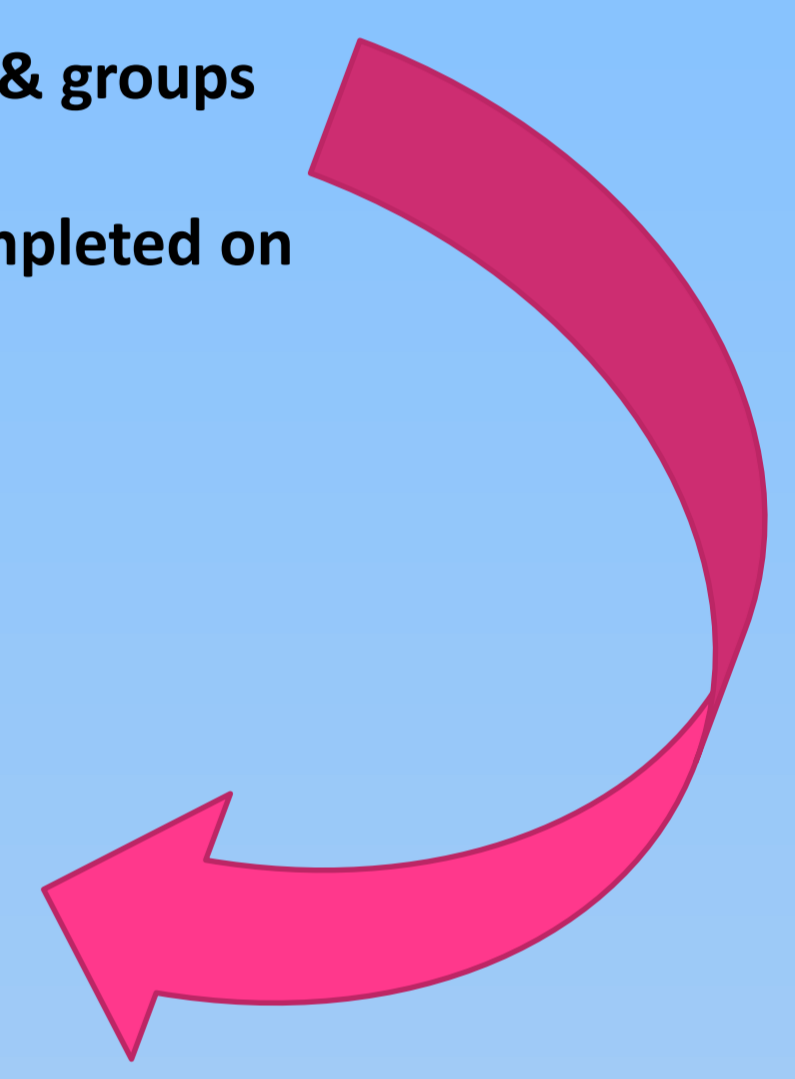


Aims of the Pilot Study

- To explore the effectiveness of a CBT orientated skills training (Decider Life Skills) [6] with mental health student nurse's experience of practice placement
- To promote resilience & thus improving sense of well-being for mental health nursing students & enable them to become more reflective, resourceful & responsible during their clinical practice placement

Methodology

- A descriptive qualitative design was utilised to explore the usefulness of the decider life skills on a cohort of final year mental health nursing students. A CBT orientated skill training 'Decider Life Skills' was delivered as part of their induction programme to their internship
- The Decider Life Skills: proactive mental health for all is a one day CBT based skills programme delivered by two RPN's. It is evidence based & effective, memorable & fun which includes role play and visual aids
- The Decider Skills were originally developed in 2010 as a CBT & DBT skills programme for individuals & groups with mental health problems
- Two semi-structured focus group interviews were conducted with a systematic text condensation completed on the transcript



"It worked perfect for my self-care & how I cope in situations"

"The simpler the better, its easy to understand, its not something that needs to be complicated"

"We could reflect on (ourselves) in situations"

"I feel like whether you're a patient or not both feel emotion, everyone feels the same things... they're kind of life skills"

Results

- Participants reported the use of colourful visual aids, role play scenarios and the interactive nature of the skills training increased their ability to learn which had an influential effect on how they used the skills
- Participants reported the skills helped them cope in stressful interpersonal situations while on placement. This ranged from communication skills such as listening and seeking clarification to more intricate 1:1 encounters
- The clinical environment had an influence on how the students used the skills; increased opportunity to teach services users in the community setting versus the need for personal use in the acute setting
- Students reported the skills allowed them to work in a collaborative & recovery orientated manner with service users; both sharing their own lived experience of using the skills
- Overall students were able to describe an increased sense of self awareness & command of their own coping skills

"I used it (the STOPP skill) recently.. I got some negative feedback that I thought was underserved.. Id usually be outspoken & I just said STOP.. take the criticism & work from there"

Future Plans

- It is envisaged that all mental health student nurses will receive the 'Decider Life Skills' training in order to improve their resilience & well-being and thereby cultivate their personal and professional development
- We are currently in the ethical approval stages of a larger study using exploratory mixed methods approach to evaluate the effectiveness of the decider life skills on mental health student nurses well-being and experience of clinical placement

References

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6. www.deciderlifeskills.org