

CPR for Healthcare Professionals

Resuscitating yourself -- and your career

by Grant Watkins, Author and Motivational Speaker

Every healthcare professional knows what CPR is -- cardiopulmonary resuscitation. Chances are you've taken classes in it. You may have even used the technique to save someone's life. But now it's time to learn about another kind of CPR, one you can use to help revive yourself and your career. How do you know if you need this healthcare professional CPR?

Do you feel burned out at the end of the day -- or earlier? Do you wonder whether you have the stamina to keep going? Do you question your choice of a career in healthcare? If you answered yes to any of these questions, you may need a different kind of CPR: **C**onnect, **P**roject and **R**eflect.

By concentrating on these behaviors, you can create the energy to get moving and become your own renewable resource. Plus, you can maintain a positive attitude, so you'll be able to respond appropriately to the daily decisions you're called on to make for yourself, your clients and your family.

Here's a beginner's guide to healthcare professional CPR:

Connect

The energy you need to make things happen for yourself and those around you comes from the way you communicate with them -- and yourself. Thankfully, most of us have many people in our circle of support -- family, friends, coworkers and others. And the stronger the trust we have in these people, the stronger the bonds we share. Consequently, making -- and sustaining -- connections is critical for everyone, and especially for healthcare providers.

But before you can make a strong connection on the outside, you need to make a connection on the inside. And that starts with self-care.

To become a happier, healthier you, you have to connect with:

Nutrition -- In your busy life caring for your clients and others, you can easily forget about eating the right foods. Avoid the fast-food rut and prepare some healthy snacks you can carry with you when you're on the go.

Sleep -- Adequate rest is essential for "recharging your batteries." To get the right amount of uninterrupted sleep, start the night right by avoiding caffeine before bed and stick to a set bedtime routine, at least as much as you can.

Exercise -- Physical activity improves your mood by releasing endorphins, those feel-good hormones. Take time out three times a week -- or more, if possible -- for a brisk walk, some aerobic exercise or yoga to energize yourself from the inside out.

Project

Remember the last movie you went to? The images on the screen made you feel happy, nostalgic, energized or sad. How did those images come to be on the screen? They came from a projector at the back of the theater.

In a way, your mind is your "projector." What you reflect on most is the movie your mind sends out -- through your actions and words -- for everyone to see and react to. Consequently, you can use your own "screen" to empower people and help them get healthy, if you know how.

To demonstrate a positive sense of self-worth and allow the presence of your love to heal others, project with:

A smile -- Your smile tells the world what's in your heart, that you feel good about yourself and others, and it can inspire others to feel good about themselves, too.

Eye contact -- Your eyes are the windows to your soul, and when you make eye contact with others, you invite them to see the real you. By doing this, you show people they can trust you, and trust is the cornerstone for building relationships with others.

Enthusiasm -- Your enthusiasm creates positive energy that can help heal your clients and yourself. Plus, an enthusiastic attitude can attract positive people like you into your life.

Listening -- Listening is healing. When your clients are ill or in pain, the very act of listening to them can promote the healing process. Listening without judgment is practicing unconditional love.

Reflect

Since what you think about -- or reflect upon -- most is what you project to others, take charge of your thoughts instead of letting them control you. Make a conscious effort to think positively about yourself and others.

To start this process, reflect with:

Self-compassion -- Self-compassion is taking some of the same love you give to others and giving it to yourself. It's a great antidote to self-pity.

Truth -- Check your thoughts for accuracy. You can easily create a lot of "drama" by making assumptions, judgments or interpretations based on fears or past hurts. Keep your eye on the essential goodness and truth in every situation.

Forgiveness -- Forgiveness transforms negative thoughts into positive thoughts. Is there someone or something you need to forgive? Start with forgiving yourself.

Visualization -- Visualize yourself as strong and capable of handling anything that comes your way. Your thoughts can become reality if you repeat them often enough and truly believe in them.

If you saw someone collapse on the street, you'd be one of the first to offer assistance, including CPR if necessary. So why not do the same for yourself before you "collapse"? Try a little healthcare professional CPR. It'll resuscitate your life -- and your career.

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