From Self to System:  
A “Both/And” Conversation about Improving Clinician Wellbeing

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The COVID-19 pandemic has made visible for the public what clinicians in healthcare have understood for all too long – clinician wellbeing is in crisis. Conversations on this topic have evolved over the last decade or more, often beginning with initial awareness, wellness committees, and a focus on individual-focused interventions. What has become all too apparent is that this is not enough; systems changes are also needed. To achieve this level of change, self-care is important and necessary, and can fuel the advocacy needed to affect change in teams, organizations, and systems. These systemic changes cannot spring from an empty well, so personal, team, organization and systems resilience are also needed. This interprofessional panel of UVA’s School of Nursing faculty – all authors in a new book aimed at new nurses but relevant for all who work in healthcare – discuss how self-care, mattering at work, and constructive advocacy can be leveraged to reinvent healthy work environments in healthcare.

Co-presented with the Compassionate Care Initiative, School of Nursing, UVA
Suggested resources:

For more information about Dorrie Fontaine’s new book with Tim Cunningham and Natalie May, see [https://www.sigmapmarketplace.org/self-care-for-new-and-student-nurses](https://www.sigmapmarketplace.org/self-care-for-new-and-student-nurses)

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**Dorrie Fontaine, RN, PhD, FAAN** received her bachelor of science degree in nursing from Villanova University, a master’s degree from the University of Maryland, and her PhD from The Catholic University of America. She has taught and held academic leadership positions at the University of Maryland, Georgetown University, and the University of California at San Francisco. Dorrie was a critical care and trauma nurse for over 4 decades and led the University of Virginia School of Nursing from 2008 until her 2019 sabbatical and then retirement. Founder of UVA’s signature Compassionate Care Initiative in 2009, Dorrie lectures widely on the importance of teaching resilience practices to nursing and medical students as well as clinicians and faculty to help create healthy work environments where all can flourish. She was the 2003-2004 President of the American Association of Critical-Care Nurses. In April 2021 Dr. Fontaine published a book “Self-care for new and student nurses” with coeditors, Dr. Tim Cunningham, and Dr. Natalie May. With 23 chapters on developing resilience and self-care, and essays and interviews with nurses during COVID-19, the book also includes a student workbook and an instructor guide offered free on the website from Sigma Publishing.

**Julie Haizlip, MD, MAPP, FNAP** is a graduate of the University of North Carolina (UNC) Schools of Pharmacy and Medicine. She completed a residency in Pediatrics at UNC and a Fellowship in Pediatric Critical Care at the University of Utah and joined the faculty at the UVA School of Medicine in 2003. Her work in the Pediatric Intensive Care Unit led to involvement with the UVA Center for Appreciative Practice and reignited her longstanding interest in Interprofessional Education. In 2014, after completing a Masters in Applied Positive Psychology at the University of Pennsylvania, she joined the faculty of the UVA School of Nursing and shifted the focus of her work to the investigation of how applications of positive psychology and interprofessional collaborative practice can create culture change in academic health care and education. Her current research is on Mattering in Health Care Providers for which she has received grant funding from the University of Virginia 3 Cavaliers program and the Kern Institute for the Transformation of Medical Education.

**Ashley R. Hurst, J.D., M.Div., MA** holds degrees from the University of Florida (BA, JD), Yale Divinity School (MDiv) and University of Virginia (MA). She practiced law for 13 years, primarily focusing on employment discrimination litigation. While working on her MDiv, she began teaching
bioethics courses at Yale College and the University of Connecticut, and continued teaching bioethics and business ethics courses during her graduate work at UVA. She also joined the UVA Health Ethics Consultation Service and Moral Distress Consultation Service. After completing a fellowship in clinical ethics through UVA School of Medicine, she became an assistant professor at UVA School of Nursing where she teaches clinical and healthcare ethics courses to undergraduate and graduate students. She remains an active ethics and moral distress consultant at UVA Health and is a member of the UVA Health Ethics Committee.

Lili Powell, PhD, MA graduated with a BA from the University of Virginia with degrees in Psychology and Rhetoric and Communication Studies. She went on for an MA in Rhetoric and Communication Studies at UVA, and then to Northwestern University for a PhD in Communication Studies, with a concentration in Performance Studies. Since 1994 she has been on the faculty at the Darden School of Business at UVA where she holds the Julie Sands Logan Associate Professor chair. In 2017, she began a joint appointment with the UVA School of Nursing, where she currently serves as the Kluge-Schakat Professor and Director of the Compassionate Care Initiative. She teaches Leading with Presence in Healthcare, an interprofessional graduate course for current and future healthcare leaders who want to be more effective, mindful, and compassionate. The course has attracted learners from Nursing, Medicine, Darden, Curry and Law. Her most recent writing includes “Recapturing Leadership’s Lost Moment” with colleague Jeremy Hunter for Leader to Leader and “Showing Up with Grit and Grace” for Fontaine et al’s Self-care for New and Student Nurses.

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Learning Objectives

1. Understand the current debate between self-care and systems change as meaningful and effective starting points for improving clinician wellbeing and resilience.

2. Consider the interdependence between self and system to relocate action not on either end of the debate but on the linkages in the middle ground: self-care fuels the stamina to work toward difficult systems change; self-advocacy is a form of self-care; resilience is relational and requires the cooperation and support of others; change focused on your immediate sphere of influence is a place to gain skills for broader systems change.