National Nurses Week

May 7, 2014 By Shawn Decker

Every day is Day, every week is a Week, and every month is a Month of one type of recognition or another. It's not a bad thing- there are lots of causes that need more attention than they can get. Especially in this great age of great distractions.

I miss a lot of it. But when I noticed that we were halfway through National Nurses Week, I felt the call to pull out the ol' laptop and punch out a blog post of love and gratitude for my lifelong friend and ally: the nurse.

As a kid with a bleeding disorder, I found myself visiting the hospital a lot more than the rest of my friends. It could be a scary place. Initially, I hated having my blood drawn. That was until I noticed a pattern: Nurse Gail never missed a vein. And I enjoyed talking to her. Having a needle in my arm went from, well, having a needle in my arm to having a friend by my side. I'd always request Gail, and since she worked *a lot,* she was usually there for a quick catch-up session over vials of plasma.

In the bigger picture with regards to the HIV epidemic, it was often nurses who cared for the first generation of people who succumbed to the onslaught of HIV. When friends and family were too scared to show up, it was the nurse who provided comfort, which surely meant a lot when doctors were providing no answers or solutions to what was happening back then. The strength of the nurse was and will always be a simple, if elusive and rare, trait: tireless compassion.

It's not an easy job to turn a hospital into a home away from home, but somehow nurses pull it off. I know I'm forever grateful for all of the nurses who have shown me kindness and care when I needed it most.

Positively Yours,
Shawn

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