

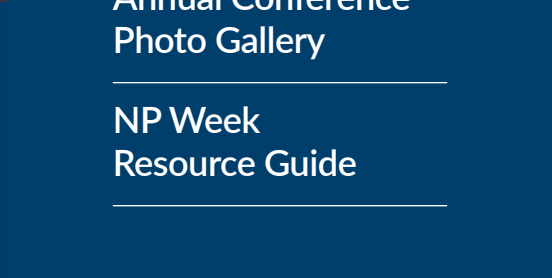
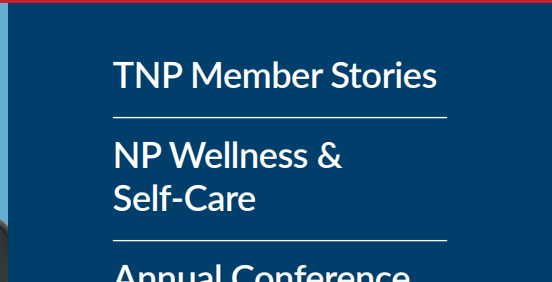
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Texas Nurse Practitioners Magazine

Fall 2025



NP WEEK & NP WELLNESS ISSUE



TNP Member Stories

NP Wellness &
Self-Care

Annual Conference
Photo Gallery

NP Week
Resource Guide

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NP Week is
coming soon!

We celebrate NPs year-round.



Have a Scope of
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“When resistance grows, it’s a sign we’re gaining ground. Progress always meets opposition before it becomes change.”

As we embark on a new chapter for Texas Nurse Practitioners, I am deeply honored to serve as your President. Together, we stand at a pivotal moment in our profession — one that calls for unity, purpose, confidence, innovation, and the collective strength of our NP voice.

Our recent legislative session reminded us that advocacy is not a spectator sport. While our voice was certainly heard, the momentum against Full Practice Authority grew stronger. Challenges remain with Schedule II Prescriptive Rights and nursing education funding. The path ahead demands collaboration and an unwavering commitment to who we are — Nurse Practitioners dedicated to excellence and accessible healthcare for all Texans.

Membership is our power. With a strong and engaged membership, we’ve accomplished a great deal — but there are still thousands of Texas’s 47,000 nurse practitioners we’ve yet to reach. Imagine the unstoppable impact if every NP joined this movement. Together, we could elevate our legislative influence, expand educational funding, and secure a permanent seat at every healthcare policy table.

I encourage every member to invite a colleague to join, participate, and lead. Get involved — serve on a committee, attend the Spring and Annual Conferences and Health Policy Summit, become a University and or Legislative Ambassador, and help mentor the next generation of NP leaders.

IF I CAN, YOU CAN, Together WE CAN!

Restricted NP practice anywhere is restricted access to care everywhere.

#StrongerTogether #TexasNPsLead

Tracy Hicks

Owner/CEO

C-Trilogy Comprehensive Clinical Care/C-Trilogy Outreach

Carrying the Legacy: A New NP's Journey

Candace Rose Montoya, APRN, FNP-C



Keep learning, even after you leave the classroom. Write everything down, review your notes, and stay curious—because the real learning begins in practice.”

As we celebrate National Nurse Practitioner Week, we honor the seasoned providers shaping healthcare’s future — and the students and new graduates who will carry it forward. Among them is Candace Rose Montoya, APRN, FNP-C, a recent graduate whose journey into the NP profession is grounded in personal resilience, a passion for service, and a clear vision for the future of nursing.

A Legacy of Service and Compassion

Candace’s path to becoming a nurse practitioner was inspired by her late father, a devoted police officer who served his community with integrity and compassion.

“He served with an unwavering commitment to helping others,” she shares. “When he passed away, it was incredibly difficult, but it strengthened my determination to keep going. Becoming a nurse practitioner allows me to honor his memory—only this time, through healthcare.”

Guided by the values her parents instilled—empathy, hard work, and service—Candace chose a profession where she could carry on that legacy and make a meaningful difference in people’s lives.

Learning Through Experience and Mentorship

Before pursuing advanced practice, Candace started her healthcare journey as a paramedic. Those early experiences created a strong foundation for her nursing career. Working alongside nurses and doctors in the field sparked her passion to learn more and serve in greater ways.

“Some of my most inspiring days were spent collaborating with others on the front lines. Later, as a nurse, I grew through mentorship—watching experienced professionals, learning from their clinical judgment, and applying those lessons to my practice.”

As a novice nurse practitioner, Candace continues to draw on those early lessons. She credits her growth to academic study and the people who have supported and challenged her along the way.

Advice for New Graduates: Never Stop Learning

For those preparing to transition from student to provider, Candace offers practical and encouraging advice:

“Keep learning, even after you leave the classroom. Write everything down, review your notes, and stay curious—because the real learning begins in practice.”

She also reminds fellow graduates to be patient and trust their preparation during the job search.

"It may take time to find your first position, but don't lose confidence. You've earned your place in this profession. You can do this."

Advocating for Change: Full Practice Authority

Beyond her clinical role, Candace is passionate about advancing the nurse practitioner profession—particularly by advocating for full practice authority in Texas.

"Allowing nurse practitioners to practice to the full extent of their education and training would significantly expand access to care, especially in underserved communities," she explains. "I want to be part of the movement that helps make that happen."

Her vision reflects the growing voice of NPs across the state stepping into leadership and policy roles to improve patient care and strengthen the healthcare system.

Building Community: The Value of TNP

Candace's commitment to professional growth led her to join TNP, where she found more than just resources—she found a supportive community.

"I became a TNP member because I wanted to connect with professionals with the same passion for patient care

and advocacy. It's about building genuine relationships and continuing to grow."

From continuing education to networking and legislative advocacy, TNP has become a vital part of her professional journey.

Looking Ahead

Candace embodies the heart, skill, and determination that characterize the next generation of nurse practitioners. Her journey is rooted in service, perseverance, and purpose—qualities that will continue to shape her career and influence the patients she cares for.

As we celebrate NP Week, her story reminds us that the future of healthcare is in good hands. To all NP students and recent graduates: Your journey is just beginning—but your potential to lead, heal, and inspire is already making a difference.



Over 47,000 NPs across Texas are providing high-quality, patient-centered care to Texans.



"As a new graduate, TNP's education has helped me remember the things I've learned. It's a great refresher!"

Heather Bartlett, DNP, FNP-BC
Grapevine, TX
TNP Member Since 2019



Rooted in Purpose: Cheryl Sandoval's Journey Toward Becoming a Nurse Practitioner

Cheryl Sandoval, FNP Student, Capella University



For Cheryl Sandoval, the path to becoming a nurse practitioner isn't just a professional goal—it's a deeply personal calling. As an FNP student at Capella University, Cheryl is part of a growing community of aspiring nurse practitioners stepping forward with purpose, courage, and a vision for a better healthcare future.

From the beginning, Cheryl has been motivated by a purpose that goes far beyond just career goals. Her wish to care for others, to make a real difference, and to bring healing not only to patients but also to herself has influenced every part of her journey.

"Helping others gives me a sense of purpose and healing in my soul," she shares—a quiet but powerful sentiment that captures why so many choose to answer the call to advanced practice nursing.

A Moment That Changed Everything

While there have been many milestones along the way, one stands out vividly in Cheryl's memory: the moment she received her acceptance letter to Capella University. It wasn't just an email or a notification—it was a turning point.

The letter symbolized more than academic entry; it marked the beginning of a transformative journey. For Cheryl, that moment carried the weight of years of hard work, emotional investment, and a deep belief in her calling. It was the kind of moment that reminds us all why we persist—through late nights, long clinical hours, and self-doubt.

"The whole journey has been an emotional experience," she says, reflecting with gratitude. "And I am grateful for it."

Growing Into the Role

As she continues her education and clinical preparation, Cheryl is mindful of the challenges that await—but she meets them with grounded wisdom. Her advice to other students preparing to enter practice is simple, yet essential:

"Be patient with yourself. Plan early. Have a backup plan."

These words speak to the unpredictable nature of healthcare and the realities of transitioning from student to provider. But they also reflect Cheryl's own resilience and determination to succeed, even when the path isn't easy.



*Be patient with yourself.
Plan early.
Have a backup plan."*



Texas can alleviate its primary care provider shortage by 32% by removing regulatory barriers to nurse practitioners.

Looking Ahead: A Voice for Change

Like many of her peers, Cheryl views the nurse practitioner role not just as a clinical position but as a platform for advocacy and system-level improvement. One of the changes she is most passionate about is expanding independent practice authority for experienced NPs in Texas— a step she believes would enhance access to care and support professional autonomy.

“I would love to see Texas offer experienced nurse practitioners independent practice,” she says. And she’s not alone—many NPs across the state are working toward this same goal, advocating for a more inclusive and effective healthcare system.

Finding Community Through TNP

Part of Cheryl’s growth as a student nurse practitioner has come from surrounding herself with others who share her passion. That’s what led her to become a member of TNP.

“I wanted the opportunity to talk, learn, and share with nurse practitioners in my community,” she says. Through TNP, Cheryl has found a place to grow professionally, stay informed, and connect with fellow NPs who are just as committed to making a difference.

A Journey Fueled by Purpose

As we celebrate NP Week and honor the contributions of nurse practitioners across all stages of their careers, Cheryl Sandoval’s story reminds us of the heart behind the profession. Her journey is just beginning, but her impact has already started—with every class, every clinical, and every patient encounter ahead.

In a world that urgently needs compassionate, well-prepared providers, students like Cheryl answer the call—one purposeful step at a time.



“I’ve learned so much at my first TNP conference—it’s opened my eyes to the power of advocacy and involvement.”

Toyin Okeowo, APRN, FNP-C
Round Rock, TX
TNP Member Since 2015



Reflections from NPs on the Frontlines

Jennifer Purdy, APRN, NP-C



Since becoming a Nurse Practitioner in 2017, Jennifer Purdy, APRN, NP-C, has been a steady and compassionate presence on the front lines of healthcare. Jennifer's commitment to patient-centered care remains unwavering, whether in high-pressure environments like the emergency room or serving rural and underserved populations.

"In those high-pressure moments—like in the ER—I try to imagine that each patient is a family member or friend," she explains. "Every patient deserves my time and energy."

For Jennifer, reminders of why she chose this path are a daily occurrence. "Every day I have a patient encounter that reminds me of why I became an NP," she shares.

"When I see that a patient truly understands a diagnosis and what they need to do to improve their health, my heart is happy."

Despite the emotional demands of her job, Jennifer has found ways to stay grounded. "I walk my two German Shepherds to the beach every night," she says, a simple yet meaningful way to recharge after giving so much of herself during the day.

Jennifer offers this advice for those considering a career as a Nurse Practitioner in emergency, psychiatric, or rural care: "Know that you are going to be facing a challenging patient population with typically low health literacy. Patience is key. Continued education is required—but the end results are very rewarding."

Her insights reflect the strength, empathy, and resilience that define Nurse Practitioners across the country—true front-line heroes in every sense.



When I see that a patient truly understands a diagnosis and what they need to do to improve their health, my heart is happy."



9 in 10 voters want to make it easier for patients to get care from NPs and help alleviate the provider shortage.

Reflections from NPs on the Frontlines

Maria Luisa Faner, DNP, APRN, FNP-C, CWS



Since becoming a Nurse Practitioner in 1997, Dr. Maria Luisa Faner has dedicated her career to improving the lives of her patients—especially older adults. Specializing in geriatric care and wound management, Dr. Faner consistently brings clinical expertise, compassion, and quick decision-making to every patient interaction.

In her clinic, surprises can happen even during routine visits. “There can be many unexpected challenges,” she says. “Like randomly finding an infected black toe during a routine foot check of a diabetic patient.” When that occurs, she doesn’t hesitate—immediately contacting the Critical Limb Ischemia (CLI) team, coordinating care with specialists, and making sure the patient and family are kept informed and reassured every step of the way.

For Dr. Faner, patient-centered care goes beyond just treatment—it’s about being present, proactive, and personalized. “I follow up after the CLI appointment, implement the recommendations, and make sure the patient is on board with the plan,” she explains. It’s that thorough, human-centered approach that sets her apart.

One powerful moment in her career occurred when a patient expressed deep gratitude: “They told me I saved their life by healing a chronic ulcer that had severely impacted their mobility, emotional health, and quality of life.” Encounters like this continue to affirm her calling as an NP.

Despite the demanding nature of her work, Dr. Faner knows how to recharge. “I read non-fiction books and talk to my adult children once a week,” she shares—finding balance through connection and reflection.

She offers thoughtful advice to those considering a career as an NP in emergency, psychiatric, or rural settings: “Be prepared to face a wide range of situations. Treat every patient as unique, and always approach care with a patient-centered mindset.”

With nearly three decades of experience, Dr. Faner is a shining example of what it means to lead with heart, skill, and unwavering dedication on the front lines of healthcare.



Be prepared to face a wide range of situations. Treat every patient as unique, and always approach care with a patient-centered mindset.”

Nurse practitioners increased by 43% in rural areas and are now 1 in 4 rural healthcare providers.



NP-Owned Practices: Breaking Barriers

Monica McKitterick, APRN, FNP – Impact Family Wellness | NP Since 2008



When Monica McKitterick, APRN, FNP, first envisioned her own practice, her goal was modest: a small clinic with 500 patients, no staff, and a job she could love. Fast forward six years, and Impact Family Wellness has grown into a thriving network of three locations, serving over 2,100 patients and employing eight full-time nurse practitioners.

But growth hasn't come without challenges. "The issues behind collaborative practice in Texas are a large hurdle for nurse practitioners," McKitterick explains. "I also get a lot of pushback from physicians who don't believe I should be able to run my own clinic." Despite regulatory obstacles and skepticism, she has forged ahead, proving that NP-led practices can thrive.

Her approach to care is deeply rooted in the values of direct primary care (DPC). "We treat patients like they should be treated—not how insurance companies dictate," she says. "We truly treat our patients as if they are family."

For NPs considering launching their own practice, McKitterick offers both inspiration and realism: "If you are the right person, do it. It's hard and not for everyone." To help others follow in her footsteps, she's written a book and created an online course aimed at guiding NPs through the process of opening DPC clinics.

Looking ahead, McKitterick hopes to fill her existing locations to capacity—and to inspire a wave of NP-owned practices across Texas. "My goal is to help more NPs open clinics so we can serve patients the way they deserve to be treated."



We treat patients like they should be treated—not how insurance companies dictate. We truly treat our patients as if they are family."



Psych Mental Health NPs now account for 1 out of 3 mental health visits in the U.S. for Medicare patients.

NP-Owned Practices: Breaking Barriers

Tamecka Knight, DNP, CPNP, APRN – Premier Pediatrics of Houston | NP Since 2003



*You have
to be the
first in and
the last out.
The practice
rides on your
back.”*

Tamecka Knight, DNP, CPNP, APRN, didn't just dream of opening her own clinic—she knew it was her calling. From the start, she envisioned a pediatric practice that would bring high-quality care to underserved families in Houston, and she never wavered from that goal. She persisted despite closed doors, lack of mentorship, and systemic hurdles. On July 12, 2023, Knight opened *Premier Pediatrics of Houston*—the first Black NP-owned pediatric clinic in the city.

Her practice now serves over 6,000 patients in North Houston, offering more than just medicine. “All children deserve the best healthcare possible regardless of their family's available resources,” she says. And at Premier Pediatrics, they get exactly that. Patients are welcomed into a modern, dignified clinic—not one that resembles a “free clinic or prison clinic,” as Knight puts it. They receive comprehensive care that reflects both medical excellence and community compassion.

Overcoming Barriers, One Step at a Time

Launching and growing a practice came with its share of regulatory and operational challenges. Staffing shortages have been a major obstacle—something Knight attributes to broader systemic issues—but she's never let it disrupt patient care. “Patient care will always supersede staffing issues. As long as I show up, the clinic will go on,” she says.

Knight also highlights the ongoing fight for full practice authority in Texas. Although independent practice remains just out of reach, she remains undeterred. “Even if I never get to see that pot of gold at the end of the rainbow, I still have the rainbow—and that's a blessing.”

Healthcare Beyond the Exam Room

Owning her own clinic has also transformed Knight's philosophy on care delivery. For her, treating pediatric patients means supporting their entire family. Her practice features a community closet, stocked with essentials like clothes, shoes, car seats, and diapers—available to any family in need, no questions asked. She also organizes annual community events to connect families with vital services and health screenings they might not otherwise access.

“Being in pediatrics and owning my own practice made it very clear that your patient is the ENTIRE family and all their needs as well,” Knight says.

Words of Wisdom for Future NP Practice Owners

Knight doesn't sugarcoat the reality of practice ownership. “There is no glitz and glamour. There is REAL LIFE HARD WORK,” she says. Her advice to aspiring NP owners is clear: get experience first. “Too many NPs come out of school thinking they can open a clinic after a year or two—or that all they need is a building and furniture. You're setting yourself up for failure.”

Instead, she recommends learning the ropes, finding mentors, and understanding that leadership comes with full accountability.

“You have to be the first in and the last out. The practice rides on your back.”

Looking Ahead: Growth with Purpose

Knight's long-term vision is rooted in service. She plans to continue expanding her clinic's reach, one family at a time, while advocating for disadvantaged youth through mentorship and community leadership. “My goal is to bridge the gap between the community and the resources available for the community,” she says. And with Premier Pediatrics of Houston as a shining example, she's well on her way.

NP-Owned Practices: Breaking Barriers



**Laura Cervantes,
DNP, APRN, FNP,
Founder, Liberty
Family Care
& Wellness
NP Since 2016**



Do it. If it's something you're passionate about, you'll either satisfy the urge or wish you had started sooner. Either way, it's worth it."

From her early days as a hemodialysis RN, Dr. Laura Cervantes knew she wanted to change the course of care for patients with chronic illnesses. After becoming a nurse practitioner in 2016, her focus shifted from treating complications to preventing them entirely.

"I transitioned from dialysis to prevention with one goal in mind—help people avoid the dialysis chair."

That vision became the foundation of **Liberty Family Care & Wellness**, where Dr. Cervantes now leads a practice centered on diabetes remission, metabolic health, and long-term wellness. Her mission: empower patients with care that prevents disease rather than just managing it.

Pushing Through the Barriers

While her approach to care is progressive, the systems surrounding NP-owned practices often are not. Insurance regulations remain a constant challenge.

"Some insurers won't allow NPs to be in-network without an MD physically on-site," she explains. "And ratings from payors are often lower—not because of care quality, but because I'm an NP operating independently."

Programs that aim to reward quality care, such as Baylor Scott & White's performance network, are available—but come with financial and logistical burdens, including costly fees for supervising physicians who may never see a single patient.

Despite these hurdles, Dr. Cervantes continues to advocate for patient-centered care without compromise.

Owning Her Practice, Honoring Her Values

Practice ownership hasn't changed the way Dr. Cervantes cares for patients—it has *protected* it.

"I get to practice in alignment with a patient-centered model without being pressured by volume, quotas, or corporate metrics."

That freedom allows her to spend more time with each patient, focus on prevention, and tailor treatments to individual needs—not insurance constraints.

Advice to Future NP Practice Owners

For NPs considering opening their own practice, Dr. Cervantes offers a simple yet powerful message:

"Do it. If it's something you're passionate about, you'll either satisfy the urge or wish you had started sooner. Either way, it's worth it."

She encourages aspiring practice owners to embrace the journey—challenges and all—as a step toward autonomy and impact.

Looking Ahead: Growth with Purpose

Dr. Cervantes isn't looking to grow big—she's looking to grow *better*. Her long-term goal is to build a full, stable patient panel where she can provide consistent, high-quality care for years to come.

"I want to offer care and services that truly matter to my community—and be there when they need them most."

In a healthcare system often driven by volume, Dr. Laura Cervantes is building something different: a sustainable, prevention-focused practice where every patient matters and every visit counts.



Rejuvenate: A TNP Wellness Weekend

Escape to the heart of Texas Hill Country for a weekend designed exclusively for nurse practitioners to rest, recharge, and reconnect. Hosted by the Texas Nurse Practitioners Wellness Committee, this retreat offers a supportive space to nurture both your professional and personal well-being.

Set on 500 acres in Hunt, Texas, the Presbyterian Mo-Ranch Assembly is the perfect backdrop for your renewal, offering hiking trails and stunning Hill Country views. Leave refreshed, inspired, and ready to bring your best self back to your patients and community.

Date: Friday, February 20 - Sunday, February 22, 2026

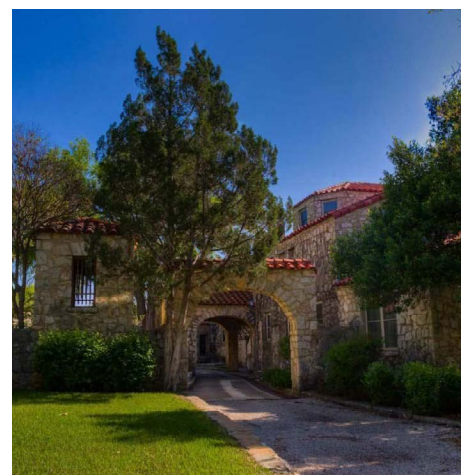
Check-in Time: 4:00 PM, Friday

Check-out Time: 11:00 AM, Sunday

Location: Mo-Ranch, 2229 FM 1340, Hunt, TX 78024

Register now using the QR code.

Questions? Contact bella@texasnp.org



Brought to you by the NP Wellness Committee of Texas Nurse Practitioners

Promoting NP Well-Being



**By Susan Calloway, PhD, APRN, FNP-BC, PMHNP-BC, FAANP
TNP Board of Directors**

Have you ever felt, after giving of yourself to your patients, that the “life has been sucked out of you?” If so, you are in good company with thousands of nurse practitioners nationwide who feel completely drained of energy after particularly challenging days working with patients. Studies have shown that burnout can lead to physical and psychological disorders, along with affecting career satisfaction (ok – can you cite the studies, I immediately asked myself, which ones?). As nurses, we are particularly prone to burnout due to our focus on patient well-being at the exclusion of our own mental and physical health.

The Institute of Health Care Improvement (IHI) identified clinician well-being as the fourth aim in improving patient outcomes. Our physical and mental health has an impact not only on our patients but on our families and friends. What can be done to improve well-being? The IHI has identified that health care providers need meaning and purpose, autonomy and control, and physical and psychological safety in the workplace to experience joy. However, nurse practitioners can experience burnout due to personal factors even when these areas have been met. The good news is that even small changes can restore your sense of purpose and control. Here are three skills to incorporate in your daily life.

Skill #1: Boundary Setting

As nurses, we entered the profession to help others, so our focus centers on our patients and families to the exclusion of recognizing our needs. Much like *The Giving Tree* by Shel Silverstein, which gives and gives and gives until there is nothing left, we can also be guilty of this. When you get home from work, do you start checking the electronic health record for messages, reviewing labs, giving feedback, and authorizing prescription refills?

What the Giving Tree and nurse practitioners need for survival is boundary setting. Your time is not unlimited, and without setting boundaries, your life can be like a canoe in a hurricane, moving at the whim of the wind. Setting boundaries starts with taking the time to sit down and reflect on your values. What do you value most, and are you dedicating time to these values? When asked to take on a new commitment, do you automatically say “Yes” and regret it later? Or do you take time to consider the commitment, see if this aligns with your values, and then respond? Do you avoid confrontation rather than addressing boundary issues?

If communicating difficult topics, such as establishing boundaries, is not your strong suit, here are a few suggestions:

1. Consider what you will say before addressing the issue.
2. Identify your value(s)/need(s). Does the request align with your values? If not, decline.
3. Hear the issues expressed by the other person.
4. Focus on areas of agreement first, ie. “We both want what is best for our patients...”
5. Develop a plan together.

Even with clear boundaries, our thoughts can undermine well-being—especially when we replay negative encounters long after they’ve ended. Reflect on a situation where you failed to establish boundaries and identify how you could have handled this in alignment with your values. In this situation, did you replay and brood over this encounter for more than five minutes? If so, you were adding another personal factor that impacts your well-being: rumination.

Skill #2: Rumination

The second personal factor that impacts joy in the workplace is rumination. Have you had an encounter with a patient or other health care professional that did not go well and you play the scenario over and over in your mind on your way home from work and during the evening without a solution? This constant barrage of negativity is toxic.

Follow these key points to actively address rumination:

- Identify if there is a solution to this situation and make a plan. Having a plan allows you to release rumination.
- If there is no way to correct the situation, use thought stopping, such as “This is not helpful,” to change your mental focus.
- Plan to take action. It is possible to take action and take one small step.
- Question your perception of the situation- ask a trusted friend for feedback.
- Identify your triggers and the situations that cause rumination & develop a plan to avoid or manage triggers.

Consider a recent event that caused you to ruminate. What is one recurring thought that you could reframe or release? By practicing methods to avoid rumination, you will free up your mind and be able to be “in the moment” with patients, family, and friends.

Skill #3: Avoiding Negative Emotional Experiences

By the nature of our work, we are exposed to traumatic situations, which can lead to compassion fatigue and burnout. It is most prevalent in professions where there is frequent exposure to traumatic situations. By avoiding acknowledging and working through these traumatic situations, we become at risk for secondary traumatic stress. High levels of secondary traumatic stress were seen in the COVID-19 pandemic and the recent loss of life in the floods in the hill country.

Experiential engagement can be employed to process these emotions cognitively. Experiential engagement involves three steps:

1. Naming the emotion you are feeling
2. Allowing yourself to feel it without judgment
3. Using SOS to return to balance:
 - Slow down- step back and clear your mind
 - Orient- focus on one thought that helps you remember who you are and what you value
 - Self-check – On a scale of 1-10, what is my stress level, and what is my personal control [RT1]

As nurse practitioners, we cannot pour from an empty cup. By setting boundaries, redirecting unhelpful thoughts, and processing difficult emotions, we can reclaim joy in our work while sustaining the compassion that drew us to this profession.



The NP profession is expanding to meet the challenge of the nation’s healthcare shortfall, with more than 431,000 NPs currently licensed in the U.S. and approximately 40,000 graduating each year.

Putting Self-Respect into our Self-Care Toolkit!



By Chris Divin, PhD, RN, FNP-BC

Clinical Assistant Professor at UT Austin School of Nursing

Nurse Practitioners value the compassionate and respectful relationships formed with patients; however, with all the multiple tasks associated with patient care, there is often little energy left for self-care. Furthermore, “nurses don’t always recognize that the duty to care for others and the duty to attend to one’s own well-being are equal ethical obligations”.¹ Additionally, the fifth provision of the American Nurses Association’s Code of Ethics mandates that nurses extend the same reverence and moral respect that they give to their patients to themselves.²

The concept of respect is fundamental to the art and science of nursing and prevalent not only in nursing theories but across disciplines.³ In the early 1970s Weidenbach, a nursing scholar associated respect with inherent worth.⁴ According to the *Cambridge Dictionary*, self-respect is “a feeling of respect for yourself that shows that you value yourself”.⁵ If respect honors inherent value and dignity, as nurses tap into their own inherent self-worth, it may increase commitment to self-care and greater self-compassion. Additionally, self-respect is instrumental in setting healthy boundaries and staying true to them. In fact, Lakshmin suggests that it is not self-care but the ability to establish healthy boundaries, free from shame or guilt, that is conducive to well-being and staying true to one’s values.⁶

Reports of nurse practitioner burnout provide compelling evidence that more work is needed to foster well-being and there is an urgency to explore sustainability and well-being in our profession, now more than ever. A national Medscape survey of NPs in 2024 found that 70% of the NPs surveyed were either burned out or burned out and depressed and the leading factor in burnout was bureaucratic tasks.⁷ The second leading cause of burnout was not feeling respected by employers and administrators. A similar survey, conducted by the TNP Wellness Committee in 2024 to assess well-being in Texas NPs found the same results. Not feeling respected by employers and administrators was the second leading contributing factor as well. Burnout often results when life is incongruent with one of the following: workload, values, control, fairness, or reward.⁸ The Tri-Respect Framework, an overarching framework of *respect* envisioned by a Central Texas Family Medicine physician, Dr. Steven Crow, promotes respect for *self*, *others*, and *place*. This framework could be instrumental in promoting well-being on both individual and systemic levels.

Two focus groups of nursing faculty in Central Texas were recently introduced to the Tri-Respect Framework and agreed that this could be a valuable tool not only foundational for self-care but for advocacy for self and others, in establishing healthy boundaries, and to help lessen burnout and moral injury. In fact, some agreed that it might be one of the “missing links” in our self-care curriculum. **The groups defined self-respect as:**

- Honoring and valuing yourself, being authentic, recognizing your self-worth, being true to yourself, self-love, self-compassion, and acceptance of self, including your past self
- Acting according to your values
- Valuing and prioritizing your whole being
- Resilience in adversity
- Giving yourself grace

When asked how to build self-respect, the groups’ responses resonated with experts in well-being:⁹

- Avoid being so hard on yourself...Give yourself grace!
- Advocate for yourself!
- Reflect on this question: “Is the life I’m living consistent with my values?”
- Take time to reflect and reframe... “I’m not weak...I need help!”
- Do the things that bring you joy!
- Practice self-care!⁹
- Establish healthy boundaries

So...Put self-respect in your self-care toolkit! Hold friends and community close to help you to remember who you are, remember your inherent worth and remember that you are worthy of love, respect, and joy.⁹ You are invaluable beyond reckoning and our profession needs you!

See references on page 18.



Resilience Toolkit for Nurse Practitioners

Why It Matters

Burnout affects health, well-being, and career satisfaction. Clinician well-being is the fourth aim in improving patient care. Caring for yourself is essential for caring for others.

1. Boundary Setting

- Reflect: What do I value most? Am I dedicating time to it?
- Before saying 'yes,' pause: Does this align with my values?
- Prepare your words before addressing tough issues.
- Acknowledge shared goals: "We both want what's best for our patients..."
- Create a plan together.

2. Rumination Control

- Ask: Can I solve this? → Make a plan.
- If not solvable → Thought-stop: 'This is not helpful.'
- Take one small action step.
- Seek perspective from a trusted colleague/friend.
- Identify triggers and create strategies to manage them.

3. Experiential Engagement

- S – Slow Down: Step back, clear your mind.
- O – Orient: Focus on one grounding thought or value.
- S – Self-Check: Rate stress (1–10) & sense of control.

Practice skills:

- Intentionality: choose your focus.
- Conscious acknowledgement: name and feel the emotion.
- Non-reactivity: respond, don't react.

Quick Reminders



- You have control over your reactions.
- No one can 'make you mad.'
- Anger often signals loss of control → refocus to regain calm.
- Small, consistent practices build resilience like a muscle.

Takeaway: Protecting your energy sustains your well-being and your care for others.

The fifth provision of the American Nurses Association's Code of Ethics mandates that nurses extend the same reverence and moral respect that they give to their patients to themselves.

References (Putting Self-Respect into our Self-Care Toolkit!)

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Why is self-care so hard?



By Cara Young, PhD, RN, FNP-C, FAANP, FAAN

In February of 2021, I posted a brief article on LinkedIn titled, "Why is it so hard to take care of ourselves?" www.linkedin.com/pulse/why-so-hard-take-care-ourselves-cara-young/

We were one year into the COVID-19 pandemic, and I was feeling called to learn everything I could about nurse well-being (or the lack thereof) and how to support faculty, students, and practitioners to flourish within our profession. Here we are, four years later, continuing to dialogue about preventing burnout and compassion fatigue by supporting wellness and human flourishing. Unfortunately, the systems within which

we work are not often structured to value personal well-being, so much of the 'actions' we can take to promote personal wellness land back on our shoulders.

As nurse practitioners, we are educated from a holistic care model that recognizes the intertwined nature of body, mind, and spirit. Health promotion is our wheelhouse, yet I would assert that as we put health promotion education and guidance into practice our focus is often on nutrition, physical activity, and sleep hygiene along with recommendations to minimize alcohol use and avoid any form of tobacco. These are certainly essential aspects of living a healthy life, but how much of our patient-facing time is spent asking about the ten additional dimensions of wellness as proposed by the Ohio State University?

Our clinical practice is influenced by an incredibly high number of competing demands in addition to our other roles as significant other, parent, aunt/uncle, caregiver, son/daughter, sibling, friend, and community member. Carving out time to care for oneself seems at times an insurmountable task that is a luxury rather than a necessity.

I just attended a webinar kicked off by Bernadette Melnyk where she said two key things I want to share (minus quotation marks because I am paraphrasing)

1. Self-care is a necessity, not a nicety.
2. Behavior change is character building.

Of course, 'character building' is just putting a positive spin on the fact that IT IS HARD! Lasting behavior change is hard, but we are worth it. If you are already nailing the whole self-care thing, that is awesome, and we want to hear from you!

For now, maybe take two minutes to repeat these phrases.

Loving Kindness Meditation

May I be safe.

May I be happy.

May I be healthy.

May I live my life with ease.

Texas NPs Shine at TNP's 2025 Annual Conference

TNP's 2025 Annual Conference once again proved to be the premier event for nurse practitioners in Texas—offering cutting-edge CE sessions, a dynamic keynote, insightful poster presentations, an energized exhibit hall, and unmatched opportunities to connect with colleagues from across the state.

Highlights included the TNP Awards honoring outstanding NPs, the popular TNP Silent Auction with more than 90 donated items, and the PAC Breakfast featuring Texas Senate candidate Leigh Wambsganss. Members turned out in full force Friday evening for the always-fun outdoor Member Appreciation Event, and the weekend wrapped up with the Foundation's "Walk & Wine Down," Sunrise Yoga, and a heartfelt tribute to NP co-founder Dr. Loretta Ford.

Thanks to everyone who joined us—your passion and energy made this year's conference unforgettable!



Save the Date: ★ September 24-27, 2026 | Moody Gardens, Galveston, TX!







ANNUAL CONFERENCE 2026

Moody Gardens | Galveston
September 24-27, 2026

We're already working on next
year's conference experience!

SAVE THE DATE





LET'S CELEBRATE National Nurse Practitioner Week November 9-15, 2025



TNP 2025 Resource Guide

texasnp.org

#NPWeek

Happy Nurse Practitioner Week!

This week, we celebrate you and your fellow NPs in Texas and beyond.

We created this Resource Guide to help you raise awareness about the important role NPs play in the healthcare system. In Texas alone, over 47,000 NPs improve the lives of their patients by providing high-quality, cost-effective, patient-centered care to their communities.

We hope this guide inspires you to share your story with the community you serve each day.

Here are a few ideas to help you get started:

- ▶ **Participate in TNP's NP Week photo contest.** Snap a photo of yourself celebrating NP Week, post to Facebook/Twitter/Instagram, and use the hashtag #TNPPhotoContest25 to enter. *See page 30 for more information.*
- ▶ **Use TNP's ready-made resources.** We've provided graphics, sample social media posts, and other communication strategies to help your community learn more about your profession. *See pages 28 and 29 for more information on how you can help promote your profession on social media.*
- ▶ **Connect with your city leaders.** Reach out to your local city council and request an NP Week proclamation or recognition. *See page 31 for more information.*

Thank you for your interest and participation. We would love to hear more about your practice, patient stories, and successes as an NP. If you'd like to share your story or how you plan to celebrate NP Week, please email connie@texasnp.org.



Shine the light on the role of NPs online, in your workplace, and in your community.
November 9-15, 2025

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Top 10 Ways to Celebrate NP Week

November 9-15, 2025

- 1 Join our NP Week photo contest. Snap a photo of yourself celebrating NP Week, post to Facebook/Twitter/Instagram, and use the hashtag #TNPPhotoContest25 to enter.
- 2 Obtain a proclamation from your mayor, city council, or city manager. If you would like a sample, please contact TNP at erin@texasnp.org or see the example in our guide.
- 3 Help TNP team up with your practice, hospital, or health system to promote NP Week activities. See the “how-to” in the guide for more information on getting started.
- 4 Remember the power of local media. Contact your local radio, TV, or newspaper, and ask them to do an interview or run a piece on NPs.
- 5 Celebrate NP Week in your new TNP gear or t-shirt. Check out our exciting new merchandise [online here](#). Use promo code SHIP4FREE for free shipping on all TNP store items.
- 6 Membership matters. To show appreciation for our Texas NPs, we are offering \$30 off TNP membership during NP Week. Use promo code NPWeek2025.
- 7 Write a “Letter to the Editor” regarding how NPs are a part of the solution for Texas’ healthcare access crisis. If you would like assistance, please contact Erin Cusack at erin@texasnp.org.
- 8 Support your fellow NPs and the profession! Shop online at kendrascott.com, 11/9 - 11/15, and use code GIVEBACK-NPWK25 at checkout for 20% of your purchase to be donated to TNP Foundation.
- 9 Change your Facebook cover photo to our “Happy NP Week 2025” graphic and spread the word about NP Week.
- 10 Get involved with your local group and attend a TNP Affiliate meeting in your area, virtually, or otherwise!

Celebrating NP Week: Educate Your Employer

Sample Promotion

To help us raise awareness during Nurse Practitioner Week, one of the easiest things you can do is simply notify your employer that NP Week is coming up (or, if you own your own practice—make sure NPs working at your practice know about NP Week). Send an email to connie@texasnp.org with NP Week activities, events, and NP provider spotlights, and we will highlight your celebrations on our website and social media.

If you would like to encourage your employer to celebrate NP Week, follow the two simple steps below.

Step 1: Contact Your Manager or Communications Office

Look up or find the contact information for the Human Resources or Communications point person where you work. You can also contact your supervisor or manager. Send them an email (see below) letting him or her know about NP Week and how they can join the festivities.

Step 2: Make the Pitch

Sample Pitch:

Dear _____,

November 9-15 is National Nurse Practitioner Week. As part of this national appreciation week, it would be wonderful if _____ (name of employer) could recognize our NP providers and help educate the public about the role of NPs with an NP Spotlight, newsletter story, or appreciation event.

Texas Nurse Practitioners will be partnering with organizations across the state to spotlight and raise awareness of different NP Week activities taking place throughout the week. If you'd like them to share coverage of our clinic's/hospital's/practice's NP Week activities, you can contact connie@texasnp.org for more information.

Sincerely,

Celebrating NP Week: Educate Your Employer



Sample Social Media Posts

Happy #NPWeek to the over 47,000 NPs across Texas providing high-quality, patient-centered care to Texans like YOU. #WaitingforCareTx #NPsLead #txlege

During #NPWeek, we also recognize patients. Watch this video of three Texas patients, who share their stories on how access to an NP made a critical, life-saving difference. #WaitingforCareTx #txlege #MaternalHealth #MentalHealth bit.ly/WaitingforCareTx

9 in 10 voters want to make it easier for patients to get care from NPs and help alleviate the provider shortage. bit.ly/45qW0gK #NPWeek #WaitingforCareTx #txlege

#NPWeek fun fact: Psych Mental Health NPs now account for 1 out of 3 mental health visits in the U.S. for Medicare patients. Psych NPs provide cost-effective, accessible, quality #mentalhealth care to bridge the gaps in care. #WaitingforCareTx bit.ly/3CzvyFf

A new public health study funded by the T.L.L. Temple Foundation found that Texas can alleviate its primary care provider shortage by 32% by removing regulatory barriers to nurse practitioners. bit.ly/46lbwWw #NPWeek #WaitingforCareTx #PrimaryCare

#NPWeek fun fact: Nationally, 87% of NPs are certified in an area of primary care. #WaitingforCareTx #PrimaryCare bit.ly/3WJpBjm

#NPWeek fun fact: Did you know NPs are more likely to practice in #rural and underserved areas? NPs play a critical role in extending care to these communities. bit.ly/3LYT4kC #NPWeek #WaitingforCareTx

#NPWeek fun fact: Decades of data show that patients who receive care from #NPs have good health outcomes and high levels of patient satisfaction. bit.ly/3PTKJQ7 #NPsLead #WaitingforCareTx

#NPWeek fun fact: Nationally, 80% of NPs are seeing Medicaid patients and 74% are seeing Medicare patients. #NPsLead #WaitingforCareTx bit.ly/3WJpBjm

#NPWeek fun fact: The #NP profession is expanding to meet the challenge of the nation's healthcare shortfall, with more than 431,000 NPs currently licensed in the U.S. and 40,000 entering the field each year. bit.ly/3WJpBjm

It's #NPWeek. What better time to talk about removing barriers to NPs and their patients? Sign up for the Texans for Healthcare Access campaign today: texans4healthcareaccess.org #MoreAccessMoreOptions

Send your #NPWeek fun facts to @TNPAustin. #NPWeek may only be a week, but #NursePractitioners offer high-quality care year-round. #NPsLead

Social Media Promotions

Want to spread the word on social media? Change your Facebook cover photo or share our social media graphic below and encourage others to join the conversation during National NP Week.

Facebook Cover photo



Sample Social Media Graphic



NP Week Photo Contest

We love to see our members in action, celebrating NP Week in their workplace, with colleagues, or in the community. This year, we will be holding an NP Week photo contest to spotlight Texas NPs. Just follow these three easy steps to participate:

1. Take a photo of yourself celebrating **#NPWeek**.
2. Post your photo on Facebook, Twitter, or Instagram (make sure your account is public and not private)
3. Use the hashtag **#TNPPhotoContest25** and tag TNP.



Contest ends on noon Sunday, 11/16.

We'll select the photo with the greatest number of likes.

The winner will receive a \$100 Amazon gift card, courtesy of TNP.



You could win an Amazon gift card!
Enter TNP's Photo Contest
Submit by November 16, 2025



#TNPPhotoContest25

Sample Proclamation

WHEREAS, Texas is home to more than 47,000 highly skilled nurse practitioners (NPs) who have completed advanced graduate nursing education and rigorous clinical training, equipping them to deliver high-quality, patient-centered care across a wide range of settings; and

WHEREAS, nurse practitioners provide expert care in primary, acute, and specialty settings, serving individuals and families in communities large and small, urban and rural, and contributing to more than one billion patient visits annually across the United States; and

WHEREAS, as Texas continues to face rapid population growth, provider shortages, and increasingly complex healthcare needs, nurse practitioners are uniquely positioned to meet these challenges in clinics, hospitals, emergency rooms, schools, and long-term care facilities throughout our state; and

WHEREAS, nurse practitioners serve as trusted health care providers for patients of all ages, performing essential functions such as diagnosing and managing chronic diseases, ordering and interpreting advanced diagnostic tests, responding to urgent medical conditions, and prescribing needed medications—ensuring access to timely, safe, and effective care; and

WHEREAS, the dedication, compassion, and professionalism of nurse practitioners reflect the very best of the Lone Star State, and the thousands of Texans who choose this path play a critical role in strengthening our health care system and improving health outcomes; and

WHEREAS, decades of research consistently affirm the high quality and cost-effectiveness of care delivered by nurse practitioners—findings that are supported by respected institutions such as the National Academy of Medicine, the National Governors Association, the Federal Trade Commission, and the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation, as well as more than 40 healthcare and consumer organizations in Texas; and

WHEREAS, each year, a week in November is set aside to recognize and celebrate the extraordinary contributions of nurse practitioners to the health and well-being of individuals and families across Texas and the nation; to raise awareness of NPs' essential role in health care, a public awareness campaign will be conducted throughout the City/County of _____ during a week in November.

Be it resolved, THEREFORE, that I _____ hereby declare November 9-15, 2025, as Nurse Practitioner Week.

Signed: _____

Date: _____

Letter to the Editor

Don't know how to get started writing a letter to the editor? Here are some helpful hints to guide you along the way.

Tip 1: Include Contact Information.

Include your name, title, and contact information. Your title and affiliation will give you credibility and increase the likelihood your letter will be published. Also, sign your letter. Editors will not publish anonymous letters.

Tip 2: Be Concise and Accurate.

Keeping it brief, yet punchy is key. Typically, letters to the editor are 1-3 paragraphs or under 300 words. Short letters show confidence in your position. Also, always remember to fact check. The facts and evidence support NPs, but only if you cite them correctly.

Tip 3: Be Eye-Catching, Timely, and Relevant.

Capture the editor with a compelling first sentence or headline (this may be all they have time to read). If there is something in the news headlines related to NPs or health care, find a way to tie this into your article. For example, "the paper (include specific name) reported last week that Texas patients wait months to access mental health care..."

Tip 4: Pitch a Local Angle.

Editors are more likely to print letters that talk about issues relevant to your local community. Make sure to include a local angle.

Tip 5: Put Yourself in the Letter.

Tell a personal story. For example, "As a Family Nurse Practitioner at [NAME OF HOSPITAL/PRACTICE], and member of Texas Nurse Practitioners, I know firsthand..."

Tip 6: Avoid jargon.

Stay clear of nursing jargon and acronyms only known to your profession. Also, be sure to always check for grammar and spelling. Editors are more likely to print a letter if it is well written and doesn't require extensive editing.

Tip 7: Avoid personal attacks.

Show respect for the opposite opinion. Being rude takes away from the strength, persuasiveness, and professionalism of your position.

How to Submit Your Letter to the Editor

Amarillo Globe News

For information on how to submit a Letter to the Editor at the Amarillo Globe News, please contact Dave Henry, Director of Commentary at dhenry@amarillo.com.

Austin American-Statesman

Edited letters typically address a single idea and do not exceed 150 words. A reader can submit their letters directly to views@statesman.com. Photographs may be included for possible publication but will not be returned. For more information regarding sending letters to the editor at the Austin American-Statesman, [please see the link here](#).

Corpus Christi Caller

To submit a Letter to the Editor, please [fill out all fields in the form here](#) or you can email your letter directly to ctletters@caller.com.

Dallas Morning News

Letters must be under 200 words to be considered for publication. In addition, full contact information is required. For more information regarding sending Letters to the Editor to the Dallas Morning News, [please see the link here](#).

El Paso Times

To submit your Letter to the Editor, [fill out the form here](#). Limit letter to 225 words or less.

Fort Worth Star Telegram

To submit a Letter to the Editor please [fill out all fields in the form here](#) or you can email directly to letters@star-telegram.com. Letters must include author's full name, address, and day and home phone numbers for verification purposes only. Suggested length is 150 words.

Houston Chronicle

To send a Letter to the Editor, email viewpoints@chron.com. Please [read the Houston Chronicle's guidelines here](#) to learn what the editorial staff looks for in Letters to the Editor.

Lubbock Avalanche Journal

Letters to the Lubbock Avalanche Journal can be submitted via email to letterstotheeditor@lubbockonline.com.

San Antonio Express News

Letters should include the reader's full name, address, and daytime telephone number. There is no preference regarding the length of the letter; however, the shorter the better. The letter should be long enough to make your point. Letters can be submitted to letters@express-news.net. For more information, [please see the link here](#).

The Monitor

To submit a Letter to the Editor please [fill out all fields in the form here](#) or you can email directly to letters@themonitor.com. Limit letters to 300 words. Include your full name, address, and a phone number for verification.

Radio Public Service Announcements

Are you looking to spread the word about your service, practice, or association? Radio spots are a great venue for getting your message straight to the listener's ear. Stations even offer Public Service Announcement (PSA) spots for free.

Step 1: Identify your local radio stations. (Tip: if you live in a town with a university, college, or community college, they usually have student-run radio stations, too).

Step 2: Prepare your pitch. Know what you want to get across in your message and what it's for.

Step 3: Locate the contact person and information for Community Outreach or Community Education. Give that representative an email or a call.

Step 4: Make your pitch! Keep in mind most PSAs are between 10-20 seconds. Having trouble getting started on your pitch? Here's a sample script:

"Hello! I'm _____ from _____ (group or affiliation) and I'm looking to publish a public service announcement about Nurse Practitioner Week. We'd like to say: **November 9-15 is Nurse Practitioner Week. Texas is home to over 47,000 Nurse Practitioners providing high-quality, patient-centered care that Texans depend on. As Texas addresses our healthcare provider shortages, NPs play a critical role in bridging the healthcare gap. For more information and events across Texas, visit texasnp.org**

Things to Remember:

- PSAs do not contain specific organization names and are meant for increasing public awareness on a certain topic or event.
- If you're looking to purchase an ad spot for your practice, nonprofit, or business, you can search for and contact an advertising representative.
- Radio stations host **Community Event Calendars**. Search "Community Calendar" on the radio website and add your event. Simply fill out the form request. This is a free service and any community member may add their organization's event to the calendar. (There is a 3-4 day turn around between submitting the form and seeing it on the calendar).

**We'd love to hear about your plans
and activities to celebrate National NP Week.
Email us at connie@texasnp.org.**



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