

# Stress Release for Nurses

## Terra Firma Monthly Newsletter

April 16, 2023



### Nurse Spotlight

Jodi Waddoups graduated Nursing school in 1994 from the University of Illinois. Of her 29 year career, she spent 19 years doing bedside nursing in pediatrics, surgical centers, and hospital settings. Jodi received her Masters Degree where she transitioned to Nursing Administrations and is now not only our Chief Content Officer here at Terra Firma, but is the Director of the Post-Bachelorette Occupational Health Nursing (OHN) Program at the Annie Taylor Dee School of Nursing at Weber State University.



Here are few fun facts about Jodi!

- She was recently accepted into the Post Master's to DNP-Executive Leadership program in the Annie Taylor Dee School of Nursing at Weber State University.
- She has six kids, one of them followed in her footsteps and is an ER nurse.
- Jodi Published an article in My American Nurse, which you can read [here](#).
- One of Jodi's passions in life is to create positive change in the nursing profession.

### Ask the Expert Survey

The Terra Firma team is holding an Ask the Expert Q and A session focusing on stress release for nurses with Dr Michael Olpin. At Terra Firma, we want to answer nurses' questions about stress and stress release. For this reason, Terra Firma invites you to participate in our [Ask the Expert Survey](#). The session will be recorded and made available to all nursing associations and registered users of the Terra Firma app for Nurses.

If you'd like to join Terra Firma today, click [here](#).

### The Next Best Decision

Having a lot to do can be viewed as being "stressful." We seem to have so much to do that we don't know where to start. Sometimes, we work on well-thought-out plans, and nothing seems to go as planned. Nurses experience this firsthand daily. How do we handle these situations? How do we prevent ourselves from getting overwhelmed? How do we succeed when so much seems out of our control?

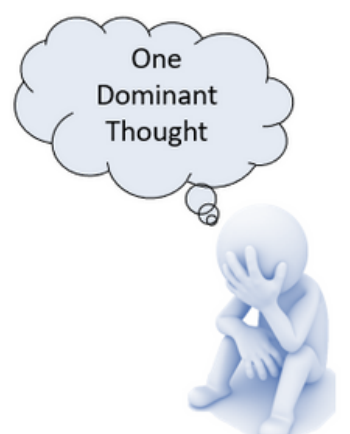
To move forward effectively, we need to maintain a sense of calm. We do this by changing our focus from everything that needs to be done or how many things aren't going as planned to prioritizing, making the next best decision, and staying focused on what we are doing right now. We can ask ourselves, "What is the next best decision?" As we follow through on that decision, we focus squarely on the actions of that decision rather than thinking about all the next ones that will need to be done. Once we complete the task associated with that decision, we ask, "What is the next best decision?" We keep asking ourselves this question repeatedly and then follow through mindfully. We soon calmly accomplish one "best decision" after the other. We maintain our calm by staying focused on "this moment." Soon we find that we can be successful, even with so much that is out of our control.

Wishing you a Happy Spring,  
The Terra Firma Team

### Thoughts Precede Emotion

A specific set of dominant thoughts precedes every emotion you ever feel. You never have an emotion without having thoughts about something first. The pattern is this:  
Dominant thoughts result in emotions.

**Dominant Thought -> Emotion**



#### Here's how it works:

Events happen in your environment, and you observe the event and interpret the meaning of the event and how it might affect you. For example, we feel sad about something after interpreting it sadly. We feel happy, peaceful, or joyous depending on how we interpret (think about) something.

Our interpretations of situations (our thoughts) generate our emotions. Here's another example: the thought that always precedes the emotional anger sounds like, "This should not have happened (or be happening) the way it did."

#### Test the Principle:

Think of a time, recently, when you felt sad, angry, frustrated, happy, elated, or joyous. Step back from your emotions and ask yourself, "What was the dominant thought that preceded this emotion?"

Concerning stress, the dominant thought that precedes activation of the stress response is a "threat thought." A threat thought sounds like "Uh-Oh!" or "Oh No!" Anytime you have a threat thought about anything (whether accurate or imagined), that interpretation automatically leads to feelings of wanting to run or fight (the stress response).