



# nurse+deck

THE INSIDER'S PERSPECTIVE OF NURSING

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NURSE CHRISTINA SHARES  
HOW SHE GIVES BACK  
TO THE COMMUNITY

A HOLIDAY GIFT GUIDE  
FOR NURSES

ACTIONABLE  
MENTAL HEALTH  
TIPS FOR  
NURSES

3 TIPS TO MANAGE  
COMPASSION FATIGUE



*Happy Holidays*

FROM THE  
NURSEDECK TEAM

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**Founder/CEO**

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### **A COMMUNITY OF RESOURCES BUILT FOR REAL NURSES.**

Where nurses share stories, resources & guides to help inspire and motivate.

*“When you’re a nurse, you know that every day you will touch a life or a life will touch yours.”*

*— Unknown*

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# WHAT'S INSIDE...

*You've worked hard all year, it's time for a little R & R! The holiday season can bring so much joy, but it can also be a stressful time. With COVID precautions and challenging schedules, nurses are managing more than most, but we got you! From mental health tips to gift guides, this edition of Insider's Perspective is all about how to navigate the holidays.*



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# nurse+deck Social

## Apply to join Scrub Verified



Our community advocates are passionate nurses who share their stories with our community and their followers. There are many opportunities you will have as an advocate:

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- Access to support & guidance from your network of ScrubVerified nurses
- Get free NurseDeck gear monthly
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- The opportunity to work with us on a long-term basis

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- #InTheField submission
- Currently employed in any clinical setting or be a nurse entrepreneur
- Completed volunteer work, mentored or are publicly involved in promoting the well being or advancement of nursing professionals
- Adhere and promote guidelines set by the CDC, WHO, ANA, and your licensing board
- Submit at least one high resolution photo

Meet all requirements? Apply at [nursedeck.com/scrub-verified](https://nursedeck.com/scrub-verified).

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# #InTheField

Nurse Christina shares how she gives back to the community

*California-based family nurse practitioner Christina Pingol shares her mental health tips, and how she gives back.*

**Q: TRUE or FALSE “Nurses eat their young.”**

A: True (unfortunately... thankfully not always true).

**Q: What is your specialty and where are you based?**

A: I'm an FNP (family nurse practitioner) in infection control, geriatric primary care in Oakland, CA.

**Q: Any self-care or mental health tips for new nurses?**

A: Hold firm boundaries with staff, work/life balance, remember you are only one person with a limited amount of hours in each day so you're not responsible for multiple people's jobs. Connect with other nurses for shop talk,



but also try to make time for non-healthcare related interactions.

**Q: Have you ever taken a role in nursing advocacy/volunteering outside of your job? Why or why not?**

A: I volunteer at two community clinics and social justice advocacy in my current role.

# A HOLIDAY GIFT GUIDE FOR NURSES



As 2021 is nearing its end (no, it's not just you! Time has been FLYING) and 2022 is just around the corner, there are many feelings this time of year brings. Before we say goodbye to this year, we still have one major season to observe and celebrate: the holidays!

Fun fact: all around the world, there are many different holidays celebrated within each culture and even certain geographic areas! In the U.S., Christmas is still very much a religious holiday but has also become more commercialized over the years. In fact, other cultural holidays are often dominated by Christmas especially in the retail and consumer market.

While there are many holidays, traditions and rituals observed all over the world we will be focusing on the 3 major holidays that occur in December: Hanukkah, Christmas and Kwanzaa. Though these holidays differ, they all celebrate life and are typically associated with family, togetherness and gift giving.

In the spirit of the holidays, we would like to share this holiday gift guide for the nurses in your life that centers around these 3 major holidays. Maybe you're at a loss for what to put on your wishlist, or you're not quite sure what to get a coworker for that gift exchange. Perhaps someone in your life celebrates a holiday that is different from your own, and you'd like to respect their culture!

We've got you covered! Continue reading below for some ideas that are sure to help make this holiday season memorable:

## **Hanukkah**

Hanukkah, also known as the Festival of Lights, is a holiday that reaffirms the ideals of Judaism and commemorates the rededication of the Second Temple of Jerusalem by the lighting of candles on each day - and is observed for 8 days and 8 nights. The significance of the candle lighting is due to the historical meaning, where the Temple was purified and the menorah burned for 8 days - a miracle as there was only enough

sacred oil for one day's worth of candle light.

While Hanukkah was observed from November 28 to December 6, you can still show a holiday gesture for any nurse in your life that is Jewish or observes the holiday. It's worth noting that for this holiday, as opposed to Christmas, the central theme is around small, meaningful gifts v.s. the lavish and luxury/go-big-or-go-home feel of Christmas.

A meaningful and thoughtful gift that comes from the heart is a luxury in its own, and will be much more appreciated! Some small gifts that pack a heartfelt punch include:

**Books** - books have seen a huge resurgence in popularity in recent years, which is in part due to everyone staying home and the rise of #BookTok! There are many great books to choose from this year, and the New York Times Bestseller list is a great place to start! Major platforms like Amazon and Goodreads also share the best books of the year if you need a bit of inspiration. Our reco: choose books that are lighthearted and fun, dealing with fantasy elements or fiction that can provide some stress relief to the nurse in your life!

**Food** - food is a thoughtful gift to share, that can be enjoyed and shared with family. There are many vendors online that share Hanukkah-specific food baskets and treats that respect and give nods to the Jewish tradition. Gourmet chocolate can be a yummy treat, as well as treats that can be enjoyed over breakfast like coffees and teas. It's important to note that the food must be kosher, so do your due diligence to check with any vendors on their practices and ensure that items are prepared accordingly in order to be considered kosher. Also, be sure to steer clear of Christmas-themed foods like fruitcake and gingerbread men (as examples).

The most important thing to be mindful of when gift-giving to a nurse that celebrates Hanukkah is to recognize it as its own distinct holiday. Celebrate it and honor it as much as you can, and note that although it falls in a similar timing as Christmas, it is very much its own unique holiday. Take the time to do your



homework and understand the differences, learn the traditions and revere the holiday's special and sacred practices.

### **Christmas**

Christmas is celebrated on December 24 (Christmas Eve) and December 25 (Christmas Day). The most ubiquitous of holidays, Christmas is quite literally everywhere. From red coffee cups to string lights and trees, to specially made "Christmas"-themed foods and beverages, it is typically the go-to used for decor that screams "the holidays are here!"

There are many ways you can go about gifting for Christmas, especially since it has become a more commercial holiday than ever:

**Stocking Stuffers** - Stocking stuffers are a perfect way to pack holiday cheer in a small package. If you're not sure of what to get someone, stocking stuffers are a great way to give variety without breaking the bank.

*Gift Cards:* a gift card can be a heaven-sent to any recipient and can be tailored to their interests. Is there a nurse in your life that runs on coffee? A gift card to Starbucks,

Dunkin' Donuts or (insert coffee chain here) is a great option! Nurses also work very hard and are on their feet all day, which would make a gift card to a nail salon/spa a great option as well! The good news is, there is a gift card for nearly everything these days - so you really can't go wrong!

*Personal Care:* as nurses we are constantly using our hands and especially in COVID times, where hand washing and sanitizing knows no bounds. These things can wreak havoc on the skin - which is where travel sized balms and lotions come in! It's the perfect size to carry in a set of scrubs or lab coats or for keeping in the clinic's office/main desk. Other options that can be a lifesaver are: chapsticks/lip balms, hair ties (how are those things always getting lost?). Sheet masks have also boomed in popularity, and are great to include for a nurse in your life that needs a little pampering.

*Nursing Essentials + Accessories:* here's a fun challenge: see if you can fit a stethoscope into a stocking! Jokes aside, a nurse does not play about their tools! Stethoscopes, ID card holders, lanyards, socks, hand sanitizer, pens... the list goes on!

### **Self Care and Health Related Items -**

nurses are on the go constantly and the work gets very intense! Similar to gift cards, you can give the nurse in your life something that will benefit their health in and out of work, and make taking care of themselves a bit easier.

*Sneakers and other fitness style apparel:* a fresh pair of sneakers will go a long way for any nurse, whether they decide to use them for exercise or during their shift. You just can't beat comfort and support during a long day! Other items to consider include compression socks or athletic wear, leggings and thermals for the colder months (for wearing under scrubs). If you want to really give a big gift, fleece jackets, windbreakers and hoodies are great for colder months and even colder offices and hospitals! Just make sure it is aligned with the dress code, and include a gift receipt just in case!

Meal Delivery Kits: HelloFresh, Blue Apron, the list goes on! Any service that can deliver pre-selected ingredients and recipes will really cut down on costs and the time it takes to prep fresh meals. Time is of the

essence when you're a nurse, and the convenience of having everything you need to make a delicious and nutritious meal takes the guesswork out of the equation - which is key after a long day at work or when a quick lunch is needed!

### **Kwanzaa**

Kwanzaa is celebrated from December 26 to January 1 this year, and like Hanukkah, Kwanzaa is its own unique holiday that is observed and celebrated. Dr. Maulana Karenga, a California professor, created this holiday in 1966. Kwanzaa is a 7-day cultural festival that is meant to join the values and practices of African and African-American culture.

During the holiday, families and communities organize activities around The Seven Principles: Unity, Self-Determination, Collective Work and Responsibility, Cooperative Economics, Purpose, Creativity and Faith. The holiday is also celebrated with feasts, music, dance, poetry, narratives, and a day dedicated to reflection and recommitment to The Seven Principles. Gifts are typically given on the last day of Kwanzaa, January 1, and are typically artistic, creative, and handmade in nature. The importance of Kwanzaa gifts is to focus on African heritage and promote the betterment of the Black community.

This is a great time to support Black-owned businesses, and give a gift that is culturally significant and meaningful while contributing to small businesses, as well. Consider gifting: art, poetry books, handcrafted Kwanzaa items, and things that symbolize The Seven Principles as well as art and creativity.

This holiday season, it's important to take note of the guiding principles for each of the holidays. This is a special time of year, where many cultures and faiths celebrate family and togetherness. While you're gift shopping and giving, we hope that this guide helps. Remember to always give from the heart, as a thoughtful and meaningful gift will be sure to touch the heart(s) of the nurse(s) in your life. ■



# Actionable mental health tips for nurses *(Holiday Edition)*

With the holiday season in full swing, it's a time for gathering with friends and family and reveling in the spirit of the holidays. The COVID-19 pandemic will be reaching the 2 year mark in a few months and it has undoubtedly changed everything. Many are torn between making up for lost time with loved ones and being wary of the new variant in our midst. As nurses, these feelings are amplified for us in addition to the very real strain of our work and fighting for safe work conditions.

Healthcare workers are used to working through the holiday season, sometimes skipping holiday dinners or eating way earlier than everyone due to your schedule. This year, it's more than just FOMO - we are missing out while we watch others celebrate as "normal" despite public health and/or government orders. This means many feelings can bubble up to the surface during this holiday season, especially when it feels like the general population has all but "moved on" from COVID.

The fact of the matter is, our mental health will likely continue to take hits throughout this

very busy season. It's hard to make mental health the priority when the job demands so much of us - but please know you're not alone! At NurseDeck, our nursing community is everything and we are here to help with some actionable tips for managing your mental health this holiday season.

## **Control what you can and let go of what you can't**

Take a deep breath... and do what you can to limit your interactions with news and similar media that may exacerbate your feelings of helplessness during the pandemic. Information about the Omicron variant is still coming, and it will likely be a huge topic of conversation in the coming weeks/months. Additionally, you may come across stories of people gathering for the holidays or some statistics that can cause stress and worry (i.e. 6 million people are traveling for the holidays!)

Trust us, we know it can be hard to filter out the noise. It can be even harder to ignore the very real irresponsible actions of others, especially since we will be the ones to clean up the mess and be hit with the chaos and consequences. The reality is that we cannot control the actions of others. We can do our part to inform those around us and those in our community, but if you don't set boundaries with yourself the stress can hit very hard and be very detrimental to your mental health.

### **Recreate that “holiday” feeling**

Whether or not you're home for the holidays, you may not be able to experience the full breadth of the festivities. Keep in mind that you may work with nurses or other staff who don't live near family, those who may miss the festivities and have many other reasons for not being able to celebrate.

Bringing the holiday cheer to work can help lift spirits for yourself and for your nursing family. Speak to HR or similar management about decorating the floor or clinic (within reason) and make an activity out of it! Having something to focus on that isn't work can boost your mood and provide an opportunity to bond with your coworkers.

Similarly, think of holiday activities that you can bring to work with you! Organizing a gift exchange or potluck can help recreate the feeling of community and gathering that this season brings. If a potluck seems like too much to organize, consider bringing in breakfast treats like coffee and donuts/pastries. Similarly, you can get catered orders of lunch or dinner! Fueling up during this time is important and will help you avoid hunger pains and feeling “hangry” - your coworkers will also appreciate it as well.

### **Keep in touch with your loved ones**

Do you have 5 minutes on your way to work? Do you have a long commute? Use that time to keep in touch with friends, family and loved ones. Send out a quick text or make a quick phone call! Keeping in touch with loved ones might be hard, especially when you may want to be with them rather than working. At the same time, it can provide some comfort and relief. While no one understands nursing like a nurse, your loved ones still know you and sharing a funny story or joke can bring back good feelings and boost your mood even if it's temporary.

The holidays also don't have to be lonely! You can come up with creative ways to keep in touch, including Zoom calls and sending some old fashioned greeting cards. Another

way to bring your loved ones to your holiday season is by honoring any holiday traditions you might have. Maybe your family watches movies on Christmas morning with hot chocolate, and while you won't be able to watch a movie a hot chocolate might be an opportunity to remind you of that time and memories. Do you have a favorite holiday meal? Ask family for a to-go meal prep, or for the recipe so that you can recreate your favorite meal at home.

### **Lean on your fellow nurses and staff**

One silver lining of this holiday season is that you are not going through this alone! If you will be working, you will have nurses and staff that you can lean on. No one quite knows what we're going through like a fellow nurse or healthcare staff, so don't be shy about leaning on one another for support.

Support can also look like many things! Having a nurse buddy to vent to can make all the difference. Make time for one another, even if it's a quick 5 minute walk to re-up on some water or coffee. Check in with each other and look out for one another! Be sure to be vocal about your needs. While everyone is firing on all cylinders, you never know who may be able to cover you for a quick breather. Likewise, you can be that relief for someone else!

This time of year is difficult, there is no sugar coating that. However, we hope these actionable tips can provide some comfort and guidance during this time. Be sure to practice what works best for you and prioritize your mental health as much as you can. Taking care of yourself is the greatest gift you can give to yourself and your loved ones this holiday season.



# 3 tips for managing compassion fatigue

Here come the parties, the dinners, the gift exchanges, the cooking, the catching up with old friends who fly home to see the family, and so on. The holidays can be a wonderful and joyful occasion, but everyone knows they can also cause stress, even at the best of times.

With a pandemic still raging on, it's not exactly the best of times, and nurses are feeling the impacts of an ongoing public health crisis. We are called to care - physically and emotionally - for people who are often facing difficult outcomes, and putting on a cheery face for the holiday season on top of all that can feel impossible.

Enter compassion fatigue: a well-documented phenomenon that most nurses experience some time or another. It's a little more than burnout, which is also hitting nurses hard right now. Compassion fatigue is defined as the physical and emotional impacts of helping others, often through traumatic experiences. This year, the

traumatic experiences seem to be piling up.

Many of us get into this field because we want to help people, and we do. However, we have to remember to take care of our own human bodies and minds. We are not bottomless wells of empathy. With more family gatherings and COVID precautions to navigate this December, we should use our energy wisely on others and ourselves.

Here are some suggestions for managing compassion fatigue, and caring for yourself while you care for others this holiday season:

### **Prioritize your basic needs**

Did you eat today? Did you get enough sleep? Have you moved your body in a way that feels good? Burnout and compassion fatigue are no joke, and sometimes the best thing we can do for ourselves is take a

moment to ensure we checked those boxes.

- Eat a snack with a protein, carb, and a fat to fortify your body. Think chips and hummus, an apple and peanut butter, a nut bar or mini yogurt with your pretzel sticks. Oh, and don't punish yourself for enjoying those holiday cookies
- Do some intuitive movement - stretch out your spine with a forward fold or massage your neck. If you can't get to the gym, dance around to your favorite song or do some stretches.
- Who among us hasn't delayed sleep because we're doom-scrolling on social media? Try not to pick up the phone right when you wake up or before you go to sleep, and set aside just a few minutes to wind down from your day without distraction.

The little things really are important.

### **Find and practice healthy coping strategies**

We all have to find what works for us. Someone might wind down with a book, another with a few episodes of the Great British Bake Off. Either way, it's important to pay attention to what practices and activities quiet your mind.

It could be yoga, cooking, running, napping, knitting, audiobooks, taking a bath, going to therapy - the possibilities are endless.

- Curate your social feeds so when you do use social media, it's positive. You can filter for things that encourage you and support you, or even bring you resources.
- Don't feel guilty about finding moments for yourself around and even during events. If you're hosting family or friends, make time for a break! Put on your coat and head outside for a few breaths, or just find a door you can close.

It's okay - and even necessary - for us to set physical and emotional boundaries so we're able to do our jobs and live our lives.

### **Talk to your fellow nurses**

Sometimes, the most important thing for us to know is we're not in this alone.



- Turn to your colleagues and the nursing community when you need support and resources. Maybe your work friend knows a support group, or a great cafe, or a closet you can hide in for a second.
- Establish some regular connection. Even small events, like a weekly phone call or walk outside, can make a big difference.
- Think about what communities you have available to you, like [NurseDeck Social](#), for resources and support.

We can and should turn to each other, because we understand the unique experience of being a nurse, especially during a pandemic.

Most importantly, get to know what compassion fatigue and burnout feel like for you, and learn how to manage those symptoms. We deserve rest, we deserve care, we deserve joy. As we support our patients through this challenging time, and another COVID-19 holiday season, let's remember to care for ourselves, too.

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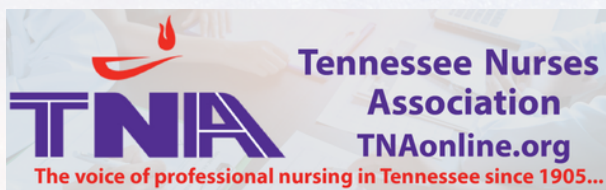
# Giving back

*'Tis the season! NurseDeck is here to support nurses and uplift the tireless, incredible work they do all year long, but the holidays are a great time to give back. With the COVID-19 omicron variant beginning to overwhelm hospitals with cases and the recent devastation left by the midwest tornados, nurses on the frontline could use some resources.*

## Here are three places you can donate to make a difference:



After the recent midwest tornados, the Kentucky Nurses Association put together a Disaster Relief Fund to help the KNF provide relief to the victims. [www.gofundme.com/f/kentucky-nurses-foundation-disaster-relief-fund](http://www.gofundme.com/f/kentucky-nurses-foundation-disaster-relief-fund)



The Tennessee Nurses Foundation established a fund months ago to support nurses affected by natural disasters. [tna.nursingnetwork.com/page/94129-tnf-disaster-relief-fund](http://tna.nursingnetwork.com/page/94129-tnf-disaster-relief-fund)



### Coronavirus Response Fund for Nurses

The ANF provides funding related to relief, recovery, and rebuilding to support the nation's nurses as they care for patients during a global pandemic. [givetonursing.networkforgood.com/projects/96756-support-nurses-today](http://givetonursing.networkforgood.com/projects/96756-support-nurses-today)

Take care, be well, and happy holidays from NurseDeck.