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CNA Edge: Reflections From Year One



Synopsis

CNA Edge: Reflections from Year One is a collection of essays written by three Certified Nurse Assistants (CNA). The essays were originally published in 2014 as posts on CNA Edge: A Voice from the trenches of long-term care, a blog devoted to telling the stories of CNAs and what the current long-term care system looks like from the perspective of the direct care worker. The essays deal with a variety of topics such as stress and burnout, preserving the dignity of residents, how heavy workloads negatively affect patient care and the impact that of all of this has on residents and caregivers. They describe what it feels like to be a caregiver, the unique blend of emotions that are widely felt, but rarely discussed. The book is divided into three loosely defined sections: Coping and Growth: the CNA and Stress, Advocate and Caregiver: the CNA and the Resident and Perception and Reality: the CNA and the work environment. * * * While the nation's long-term care system seeks to develop increasingly sophisticated quality assessment tools and inspection protocols, the picture will always be incomplete without the insight of direct care workers. Certified Nursing Assistants (CNAs) serve as the backbone of the long-term care workforce. They provide hands-on care for residents living in nursing homes, assisted living facilities and home care settings. CNAs spend the most time with the residents, they know them better than anyone and CNAs are often the last people to have any meaningful contact with residents in their final years, months or days on this planet. The nature of the work provides caregivers with a unique perspective. They are able to witness firsthand how residents experience life in the long-term care system. Since they accompany them through that experience on a daily basis, they see and feel the impact of when the system is working - and when it fails. They are familiar with the flaws of long-term care in a way no one else can be: in intimate detail and within the context of the lives of the people in their care. While the long-term care system routinely seeks caregiver input in a variety of formal settings, something precious is lost in the process. Caregivers express themselves best through action and when they find themselves outside of their primary work environment their input does not always translate well on a conceptual level. Furthermore, for reasons of professional propriety or public consumption, this voice is often filtered and shorn of its rougher edges thus reducing the substance to the banal and obvious. Meanwhile, the potentially more valuable insights - sometimes discomforting insights - from the deep wells of their inner experience as caregivers go unheard. While we make no claim that we represent the "CNA Voice" in its fullness, we hope our attempt to bridge the gap between those of us who deal with the front line realities of long-term care on a daily basis and those who set, assess and enforce industry standards will somehow be useful.

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Customer Reviews

A must read if you know a CNA or know someone in a nursing home. A real look at the industry and those directly caring for our elderly. Some essays are quite an emotionally moving read. I have an even greater appreciation for these workers now.

The authors tell the "real" story of health care from the perspective of the caregivers. Their empathy with their patients and their optimistic enthusiasm comes through each narrative. Their good humor and personal style brings each "character" alive for the reader.

An absolute must read! Being a CNA for 30 years in various aspects from a worker in LTC, hospitals, private duty, facilities for development delayed, homecare, hospice and also as a CNA preceptor and Secondary Instructor at our local community college. I have seen it all! This is a delightful read, it takes you through all emotions you have! I truly enjoy the professional writing, yet there is true rawness at times that is true to this profession! It proves you can not simply do this work, you live and breathe it! It is you, you are it! It weeds out the ones who want a paycheck or a

step up! It definitely is not for the weak or weary! These stories will stay with you, especially if you have been there, done that! I am excited to see what is next for CNA Edge!! Great JOB! Donna Mask CNA FOR LIFE! Owner/Administrator of Certified Nurse Aides Rock and Certified Nurse Aides Rock Gone Wild

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