

*Tribute Poem for Nurses written with appreciation by  
Stephanie Staples, [www.YourLifeUnlimited.ca](http://www.YourLifeUnlimited.ca)*

Hey nurses, I been watching for quite some time  
How you work and how you unwind  
I see some things, I'm not sure you do  
Can I put it on the table and discuss it with you?

When you started in healthcare the future looked grand  
The difference you'd make, when you'd lend your hand  
Your patient's would love you and you go home each night  
Glowing from your halo's bright light

The uniform looked great for the first 20 minutes  
Until there was blood and poop and pee in it  
No glamour in nursing, no name in big lights  
No million dollar paycheck, even if you work nights

You care about people so you choose this profession  
A Nurse is a most trusted designation  
You went into this job because you love to help  
But somehow in the years, you lost a piece of yourself

The giving and loving and sharing and more  
The people you serve as you walk down the wards  
The public doesn't see the tole that it takes  
The overtime, double-time shifts and backaches.

Your patients, your clients, your residents  
Desperately need you to be at your best  
But how can *you* be mentally well  
When you're stressed and overworked and tired as hell.

Hey Nurses, hang in there, I've got your back  
Though I can't protect you from the vicious attack  
Of condescending doctors or patients or staff  
Or when someone tears a strip off your back

But please don't despair, please don't get hard  
We need your good care and your brains and your heart  
We need you to continue to do what others cannot  
To make split second decisions with both science and art

For most mere mortals could never do this vocation  
And the world be in a terrible situation  
So in the end, it's all up to you  
To care for yourself, it's what you must do

Stop waiting for the perfect time  
A better place, a better rhyme  
Grab your life by the horns and demand to reclaim it  
Pick your priorities now and show them you mean it

Start small with the things that matter most to you  
Set that example, you know just what to do  
*You* go first, with your health and well-being  
So a clear picture of a good life is what others start seeing

When they look in your eyes, resilient and strong  
It may make them wonder what they're doing wrong  
So they ask your advice, then actually follow through  
For the example you set is an inspiration too.

Hey Nurses, I thank you on behalf of the many  
Who you've helped to get better and you've helped keep steady  
Go take your time now - finally it's your turn  
Be the next to recover, the next one to learn

That if happy and healthy is what you want for this planet  
Then *you* must go first, and I mean *now* dammit  
You can only give 100%  
When you honor yourselves, you can then give your best

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