

Influential Women Spotlights Marlys Neis: Author, Educator, And Speaker On Resilience, Caregiving, And Navigating

SURPRISE, AZ, UNITED STATES, July 2, 2026 /EINPresswire.com/ -- Bringing Five Decades of Healthcare Leadership, Education, and Caregiving Through a Life of Service, Compassion, and Lifelong Learning

Surprise, Arizona — Marlys Neis has spent more than five decades working at the intersection of healthcare leadership, education, caregiving, and writing. Her career began as a bedside nurse before advancing into senior executive roles. She began her administrative leadership career at the University of Michigan Hospitals in Ann Arbor, before serving as Vice President of Nursing at community hospitals in Madison, Wisconsin, and suburban Chicago. Across these roles, Marlys worked closely with physicians, educators, and clinical teams to strengthen patient care systems and support the development of healthcare professionals during a period of significant transformation in American medicine.



Throughout her leadership career, Marlys became known for her ability to bridge clinical practice with organizational strategy, while championing the perspectives of frontline nurses. She helped develop research initiatives examining patient care practices and staff nurse job satisfaction. Her work was recognized when she received the University of Wisconsin School of Nursing's Nurse of the Year award for nursing research.

Before leaving her leadership career, Marlys worked with a colleague to publish two books, drawing on her leadership philosophy and research. The books, *Leadership In Transition*, and *Meetings: How to Hold 'Em, When to Fold 'Em*, were used as adjuncts to consultations, helping other organizations implement decision-making strategies and organizational change.

Marlys' personal journey deeply shaped her professional perspective when her husband was diagnosed with Parkinson's disease at a young age. She stepped away from nursing administration to work alongside him as his legal assistant and partner in his law practice. As his Parkinson's disease progressed, he was later diagnosed with terminal cancer. Throughout those years, Marlys became not only his caregiver but also his advocate and constant source of support. These experiences transformed her understanding of resilience, turning it from an abstract concept into a lived practice grounded in patience, strength, and adaptability.

Her years as a caregiver deepened Marlys' commitment to preparing future caregivers and emphasizing compassionate bedside care. As an educator committed to preparing the next generation of caregivers, Marlys spent more than twelve years teaching biology, medical terminology, and health science pathway courses. In the classroom, she combined real-world healthcare experience with mentorship and compassion, helping students connect academic learning to practical application in clinical settings. Her teaching emphasized both technical knowledge and human-centered care, reinforcing the importance of empathy in healthcare professions.

Life has repeatedly called upon Marlys to adapt. While still teaching, she was diagnosed with stage 4 lymphoma. She continued teaching throughout treatment, but subsequent battles with pneumonia and ongoing health challenges eventually brought her classroom career to a close. Unwilling to step away from education, she now develops teaching materials and classroom resources for health science educators through her online educational platform.

In 2025, Marlys published her memoir *Sing, Even If You Can't*, followed by *Keep Singing: A Guided Journal for Finding Resilience*. Through her writing, she draws on both her professional background and personal caregiving experience to support individuals facing illness, loss, transition, or reinvention. Her message centers on the belief that it is always possible to begin again.

Marlys attributes much of her early development to her upbringing on a farm in Iowa, where she learned that meaningful work requires responsibility, discipline, and accountability. Those early lessons shaped her expectations of herself throughout her career and influenced her leadership approach in healthcare settings.

She also credits strong mentors with helping her recognize her leadership potential and encouraging her to pursue advanced education in healthcare administration. One mentor in particular guided her toward graduate study in nursing administration and helped her understand that effective leadership requires both clarity and compassion. This perspective emphasized balancing operational decision-making with a deep awareness of the human impact behind every healthcare choice.

That philosophy carried through every stage of Marlys' career and continues to guide her writing

and speaking today. She consistently emphasizes that healthcare leadership is not only about systems and processes but also about the people those systems serve—patients, families, and the professionals who provide care. Whether leading hospitals, teaching future healthcare professionals, caring for family, or writing for readers, Marlys has remained guided by one enduring belief: knowledge has little value unless it is shared in service to others.

Marlys believes healthcare is fundamentally about service to others. She encourages young women entering the field to remain curious, continue learning, and recognize that leadership opportunities often emerge earlier than expected. She also stresses the importance of self-care, noting that sustaining a long and meaningful career in healthcare requires balance, resilience, and intentional reflection.

Today, Marlys believes one of healthcare's greatest challenges is supporting and retaining skilled professionals while managing increasing complexity and cost. She believes stronger partnerships between frontline caregivers and organizational leadership remain essential to improving both patient care and staff satisfaction.

Her experiences as a caregiver later in life deepened her understanding of resilience and reinforced her commitment to helping others navigate illness, change, and loss with clarity and hope. Through her writing, teaching, and leadership legacy, Marlys Neis continues to inspire others to approach both healthcare and life with compassion, courage, and the belief that new beginnings are always possible.

Learn More about Marlys Neis:

Through her Influential Women profile, <https://influentialwomen.com/connect/Marlys-Neis> or through her website, <https://www.marlysneis.com/>

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