Therapeutic communication and therapeutic nurse-patient relationship

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Nursing as a profession

- Nursing is an art and a science.
- Nursing cannot be an occupation
- Nursing is more of a vocation
- The heart of a nurse is a noble work of art.
- Nursing’s business is to make sickness a pleasure.
- Becoming a nurse is difficult, to keep one’s sanity while being a nurse is extremely difficult.
Communication

- The process people use to exchange information between themselves
- could be Verbal or nonverbal
- What we say or the content what is said represent verbal
- Our behavior such as facial expression, tone of voice, distance from the person are verbal
- The context is the environment or the situation, including the culture of the individual
- may either be congruent (when content and process agree) or in-congruent (when content and process do not agree).
Nursing communication is an interpersonal interaction between the nurse and the patient.

- The process by which nurses exchange information with their patients.
- The nurse focuses on the specific needs of the patient.
- It is used to promote effective exchange between the nurse and his or her patient.
- Allows the nurse to use himself or herself in a therapeutic way in order to be of help to the patient.
The process of communication is learned and it includes three basic elements- the sender, the message and the receiver.

The process is influenced by:
- a person’s attitude,
- socio-cultural or
- ethnic background,
- past experiences,
- knowledge

The context of communication is the environment or the situation which may include individual’s culture.
Verbal and non-verbal communication

- Communication can be verbal or non-verbal. Verbal communication is most often accompanied by non-verbal communication.
- Many communication experts believe that nonverbal communication is a more accurate description of our true feelings because people have less control over their non-verbal reactions.
- Communication is therefore behavior and we cannot not communicate since communication is behavior.
Therapeutic communication

- It involves interpersonal interactions between the nurse and the client
- It focuses on the client’s specific needs and is used to:
  - Establish the therapeutic relationship
  - Identify the client’s most important concerns
  - Assess the client’s perceptions
  - Recognize the client’s needs
  - Guide the client toward satisfactory and acceptable solutions
More on therapeutic communication

- Therapeutic communication is depicted by the following characteristics:
  - Positive regard for the patient/client,
  - Empathy, Genuineness (authenticity),
  - Warmth and respect,
  - Purposefulness,
  - Confidentiality,
  - Self-disclosure,
  - Privacy and respect for boundaries
The following skills are important

- KNOW WHO YOU ARE
- BE HONEST WITH YOUR FEELINGS
- BE SECURE IN YOUR ABILITY TO RELATE TO PEOPLE
- BE SENSITIVE TO OTHER’S NEEDS AND FEELINGS
- BE CONSISTENT IN YOUR DEALINGS WITH OTHERS
- RECOGNIZE SYMPTOMS OF ANXIETY IN YOURSELF
- WATCH YOUR NON-VERBAL REACTIONS
- CHOOSE AND USE WORDS CAREFULLY
- RECOGNIZE DIFFERENCES BETWEEN YOU AND OTHERS
- RECOGNIZE YOUR OWN ACTIONS AND RESPONSES AND EVALUATE THEM
- DEVELOP ABILITY TO LISTEN VERY CAREFULLY
The skill of listening

- Listening is an important skill for the nurse to develop and master.
- It is very hard to master.
- Active listening is concentrating exclusively on what the patient is saying to you.
- It can be promoted by facing the client, using eye contact, removing any barriers, and maintaining an open body posture.
- Active listening requires active observation.
- Every nurse must master the following ten commandments of good listening.
Ten commandments of good listening

- STOP TALKING (you cannot listen if you are talking)
- PUT THE TALKER AT EASE (let him feel free to talk)
- SHOW THAT YOU WANT TO LISTEN (give total attention)
- REMOVE DISTRACTIONS (concentrate on the speaker)
- EMPATHIZE WITH THE BUYER (put yourself in his place)
- BE PATIENT (allow plenty of time, do not interrupt, don’t walk away)
- HOLD YOUR TEMPER (angry people get wrong meaning from words)
- GO EASY ON ARGUMENT (do not argue, it puts the speaker on the defensive)
- ASK QUESTIONS (it encourages the speaker and shows that you are listening)
- STOP TALKING (first and last commandments show how important it is. We have two ears but one mouth which shows we should talk less and listen more)
Relationships

- Communication involves relationships
- Without communication, relationships become bland.
- Human beings thrive better when they make contacts with other human beings
- These contacts are called relationships and are classified as follows:
  - Social relationship
  - Intimate relationship
  - Therapeutic relationship
Therapeutic relationship is the only one of the three relationships earlier identified that the nurse can professionally form with the patient.

Forming a therapeutic relationship with clients and communicating with them is the primary vehicle for implementing the nursing process.

The therapeutic nurse-patient relationship is a very important aspect of the nurses’ encounter with the patient.

A therapeutic nurse-patient relationship is described as the foundation upon which psychiatric-mental health nursing is established.
Forming a therapeutic relationship with clients and communicating with them is the primary vehicle for implementing the nursing process.

Relationship-building behaviors require:

- honesty, being direct, making only promises that can be kept, being congruent, avoiding defensiveness, seeking input from the clients, and letting clients make their own decisions with little or no assistance.

- The therapeutic nurse-patient relationship is a very important aspect of the nurses’ encounter with the patient.
Hilgard Peplau and therapeutic nurse-patient relationship

- She described therapeutic nurse-patient relationship as the foundation upon which psychiatric-mental health nursing is established.
- A relationship in which both the nurse and the patient must recognize each other as unique and important human beings.
- Identified six roles a psychiatric-mental health can employ during a therapeutic nurse-patient relationship.
- All these roles are dependent on effective therapeutic communication.
- Teacher, mother surrogate, technical expert, manager, socializing agent and counselor.
imported ingredients that are needed for forming a successful therapeutic nurse-patient relationship

- empathy
- acceptance
- love
- independence
- dependence
- interdependence
- genuine interest
- trust
Behaviors that hinder therapeutic nurse-patient relationships.

- Inappropriate boundaries (relationship becomes social or intimate).
- Feelings of sympathy rather than empathy.
- Encouraging client dependency rather than promoting independence.
- Non-acceptance of client as a person because of his or her behaviors, leading to avoidance of the client.
- Making promises that are difficult to fulfill
- Being unprofessional in dealing with clients/patients
- Giving or demanding gifts
Behaviors that promote or encourage therapeutic relationship:

- Positive regard is unconditional, nonjudgmental attitude towards the patient.
- Expressing empathy towards the patient instead of feeling for the patient allows the patient to grow.
- Genuine interest in the patient is an attitude that shows concern for what the patient is going through.
- Confidentiality is that attitude that allows the patient to tell you about himself or herself.
- Trustworthiness is that behavior that allows the patient to tell the nurse his/her story.
Therapeutic communication is used to establish the therapeutic nurse-patient relationship.

The therapeutic use of self is important to therapeutic communication.

Therapeutic nurse-patient relationship is aided by therapeutic use of self.

Therapeutic use of self is essential in applying therapeutic communication to patient care and requires self-awareness by the nurse.

Self-awareness is essential for the nurse.
Self-awareness

- Self-awareness is a process of understanding one’s
  - own values,
  - beliefs,
  - thoughts,
  - feelings,
  - attitudes,
  - motivations,
  - strengths,
  - and limitations and
  - on how one’s thoughts and behaviors affect others.
The nurse needs to understand self.

continue to discover self

Ongoing self-assessment is necessary to gain self-awareness.

*Johari window*, contains four quadrants as shown in the diagram below.

56 adjectives listed below were used to arrive at the four quadrants shown in this diagram.

They are the open self, the blind self, hidden self and the unknown self.
Diagram of the Johari window
Some of the Johari adjectives

- A technique created by Joseph Luft and Harry Ingham in 1955 in the United States,
- It is used to help people gain a better understanding of their mental instability
- Subjects are given a list of 56 adjectives and asked to pick five or six that they feel describe their personality.
- Then peers of the subjects are then given the same list, and each is asked to pick five or six adjectives that describe the subjects.
Johari’s adjectives

- able
- accepting
- adaptable
- bold
- brave
- calm
- caring
- cheerful
- clever
- complex
- confident
- dependable
- dignified
- energetic
- extroverted
- friendly
- giving
- happy
- helpful
- idealistic
- independent
- ingenious
- intelligent
- introverted
- kind
- knowledgeable
- logical
- loving
JOHARI’S ADJECTIVES

- mature
- modest
- nervous
- observant
- organized
- patient
- powerful
- proud
- quiet
- reflective
- relaxed
- religious
- responsive
- searching
- self-assertive
- self-conscious
- sensible
- sentimental
- shy
- silly
- smart
- spontaneous
- sympathetic
- tense
- trustworthy
- warm
- wise
- witty