

Communication Paper

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Therapeutic communication is intentional to help build supporting relationship with others. It is essential in the profession of nursing to ensure client safety and clear communication. This communication relies on empathy for making sure the client is heard and their needs are addressed. Above all else, therapeutic communication is goal-oriented to elicit optimal behavior and outcomes from both sides of this interpersonal relationship. The environment where this communication takes place contributes to its effectiveness. Cultivating an environment that is comfortable and free of distractions can help promote this therapeutic communication. Besides the environment, there are other key techniques one can use to make sure therapeutic communication occurs.

Analysis of Therapeutic Techniques

A technique that can be easily overlooked but is paramount to this communication being successful is active listening. This type of listening is giving full attention to the speaker and conveys the message that they are important. This should allow the client to feel able to share their thoughts and feelings, knowing they are being heard by the nurse. All situations are applicable for this technique to be best utilized because active listening benefits the clients experience and health as well as the nurse providing thorough care. Active listening also works the other way in favor for the nurse. If a nurse observes the client is actively listening, they know their teaching in client education will be communicated more effectively as well.

Another verbal technique would be effective questioning. This technique is eliciting the most thorough and concise information from the client through different types of questions at the right time. There can be either open-ended or direct questions. Open-ended allows the client to elaborate on their health that can give the nurse a better understanding. Direct questions are for obtaining concrete yes or no answers. Using these types of questions correctly will contribute to

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effective communication, making sure that everything is covered. Situations where effective questioning is beneficial are any nurse-client interaction to improve client's health.

For non-verbal techniques, body language is probably the most important. It conveys what we are not verbalizing and makes up most of our actual communication with one another. If our body language does not match with what we are saying, then our verbal techniques will not be as effective. Body language deals with our facial expressions, eye contact, body posture, and appearance. Another non-verbal technique is using distance and touch for effective communication.

There are varying levels of distance that allows different types of communication with patients. Social distance allows nurses to check in on patients when doing rounds. Personal is most nurse-client interactions dealing with interviews and interventions. Intimate distance is when touch is utilized for non-verbal therapeutic communication of gentleness and empathy. One barrier to effective communication is language. If there is a language barrier between the nurse and client, it is much harder to employ other effective communication techniques. Patient centered care cannot be fully utilized when we are unaware of their concerns and needs.

Reflection

My Strengths and weaknesses in verbal and non-verbal techniques to effective communication vary because of my limited experience in the healthcare and professional world. I feel my biggest strength with communication would be my ability to be empathetic. To use many of these therapeutic techniques effectively requires empathy. This non-verbal technique will guide most of my actions. I feel this strength will allow me to implement the best possible patient centered care I can provide by being able to empathize with the client. Having this quality

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will help make me a good patient advocate in which I strive for. Other strengths can be my tone and language to speak clearly and reflect my empathetic nature. I also feel my body posture and personal appearance can be an innate strength.

A weakness regarding my verbal communication can be gauging what to say and when to say it as well as what not to say and when to be silent. A non-verbal weakness could be my facial expressions that sometimes can be incongruent for how I feel. Eye contact is also sometimes an issue when speaking to my peers that might get in the way. As I said before, I am new to these fields and ways I can improve these interpersonal skills is just more time and experience going forward. Choosing my words carefully, having clear speech when talking about something that I am still learning, and being more mindful of my body language can help better these skills.

Challenges I think I will experience in the future that can prevent me from implementing these techniques can be varied as well. I feel challenges I will experience can come from the patient if they are unable to communicate or understand. This will make me use different and new approaches that I am not used to or unaware of. Some challenges can come from myself, whether it is what's going on in my life outside of my work or how I am feeling can be a barrier. Spending more time in this field as a professional and utilizing therapeutic techniques or resources for myself is how I can overcome these personal issues. The skills and techniques I learned can make a difference in my nursing career by having a wide range of them to choose and implement in my care as well as being more mindful overall on how many things can enhance or inhibit effective communication.

Conclusion

Effective communication techniques are vital in healthcare to improve quality of care, client safety, and overall therapeutic environment. Verbal communication techniques are conscious decisions such as active listening and effective questioning discussed before to help clear and effective communication for both the messenger and the receiver. Non-verbal behaviors strengthen our verbal communication by acting in congruence to convey what we are saying is true. We must be mindful of our body language and facial expressions in our professional relationships. As well as gauging our distance and use of touch in these interactions. Using this information will guide my future interactions and work through any barriers I will experience. What I have learned will aid me in improving my strengths and weaknesses to becoming the best nurse I can be.