

Communication Paper

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101 Fundamentals of Nursing

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October 7, 2024

Therapeutic communication is using interactive communication skills like expressing concern and empathy, active listening, and being accepting of the client to build a relationship while promoting functional behavior to help their health and wellbeing. This is important to nursing as it allows for the patient to be open and have a more willingness to receive care. Two factors that make up an ideal environment are providing privacy and quietness. Privacy allows the patient to feel confidentiality and makes them be more open to sharing. Quietness allows for no distractions, so the conversation can solely be based on the client themselves with no interruptions. All of this comes down to providing client comfort.

Analysis of Therapeutic Techniques

Using verbal therapeutic communication techniques can enhance the relationship with the client in many ways. There are two that are very important in this process. The first one being vocabulary. The words that are used are detrimental in-patient care. A huge reason why is because the patient needs to understand what it is we are telling them. It is important not to use medical jargon, which could cause them confusion. The best way to make sure this doesn't happen is by relaying information in a 5th grade level. With good vocabulary that the patient can understand, there will be no mistakes in care. Another reason why vocabulary is so important is because it can affect the client/ nurse relationship. It is important to not use vocabulary that could be offensive or taken the wrong way. The best way is to use open vocabulary with no assumptions, targeted words, or slang. This ensures also that the dialogue is professional. A good example is telling the client, "Have you voided today?" vs "Mr. Smith, have you urinated today?". The second example is on a level that Mr. Smith could understand so there is no confusion and a clear answer.

Another very important verbal therapeutic technique is timing and relevance. This idea considers the patient's feelings. A bad way to start off a conversation with the client is by doing it at the wrong time. Timing in healthcare is everything. Catching on to the client's social cues, or even body language is important in this process. If the client is complaining about pain and hunched over, it would not be a good time to ask what they had for breakfast. This could cause anger in the patient, or even a state of more pain. A good scenario is when you see the client up, watching tv, or something of that sort and you could go in and ask them then how they are feeling and so on. So, as a nurse it is important to be able to get a good read on the patient to know if the patient is ready to talk about what is needed to discuss. If it is not a good time, there is always another opportunity throughout the day to get that question answered.

A barrier to effective communication could be the environment. If communication is trying to be done in a noisy, not private, uncomfortable environment, nothing good is going to come out of that. The patient is going to feel uneasy, and get frustrated, or even shut down. There will be no progress in that situation with the client.

Non-verbal therapeutic techniques are debatably more important than verbal. Nonverbal communication sets the tone for the conversation between the nurse and patient. The first important nonverbal technique is facial expressions and eye contact. If an interview is being done of the patient, a good way to use facial expressions would be to smile when needed, have a relaxed face with no grimacing or furrow of the brows, and keeping good eye contact. Eye contact is very important also as it shows the client that you are engaged. These good facial expression techniques enhance verbal communication in that it can validate what you say. If you are greeting the patient, it is important to smile rather than furrow because smiling shows the patient that you really are glad to meet them and converse.

Another nonverbal therapeutic technique is touch. Touch can be taken as a good or bad thing, so it is always important to ask before touching. In the case that you do ask, and it is accepted it can be a huge therapy technique. Holding the patient's hand while they are sad, or going through a painful procedure can relax them and bring them comfort. Touch is very powerful and can make the client also trust you as they feel they have a supporter. Touch can enhance verbal communication as it validates what you say. If you tell the client, you are sorry and then you hold their hand, it gives that extra reassurance to them that you care and are there for them.

Reflection

It is known that nonverbal communication is just as important if not more important. During this communication unit I did some self-reflection on my strengths and weaknesses. With verbal communication I believe I'm good at credibility. I think in general that is something I've always been good at because I don't like to make promises I can't keep. I also know what not being credible can do to the patient and their care. On the other hand, with verbal communication, I think I can improve on my denotative and connotative meaning. Sometimes I get used to saying things a certain way and it is hard for me to break that cycle. I already since being in nursing school, and have learned new terminology, am noticing that I use medical words in my everyday life. That is something that I struggle with and hope to improve. Regarding nonverbal communication, I think I also have strengths and weaknesses. A strength of mine is eye contact. I always have held good eye contact when speaking with anyone, it comes naturally with me. I feel more connected with the person I'm talking to, and it makes me feel like the conversation flows better. An area where I can improve regarding nonverbal communication is facial expressions. I struggle with my face matching my feelings. Sometimes I can be really

happy inside or even fine but on my face, I look the complete opposite. I know that when communicating with a patient facial expressions are super important.

There is defiantly room for improvement with my communication. One way that I can fix my connotative and denotative meaning with words is by practicing with my classmates' certain scenarios that may come up with a patient and to see how I would respond. That way I can practice and catch the words that I may or may not use. A way that I can fix my facial expressions is to be more aware and think about my face. I think its common to not think of what my face looks like when I'm speaking, but from now on that I now know the importance of communication techniques I am going to be more aware. During this I know I may encounter some challenges like at first forgetting to be aware of my face or just not thinking when speaking about the words and the terminology but I will continue to try to think and prepare myself for my patient interaction. What I learned will make a difference in my nursing care because these improvements will make my patient more inclined to receive my care and be open about their feelings, which is helpful for both me and the patient.

Communication with a patient is one of the most important things a nurse can do. It is beneficial for not only the nurse to get a better understanding of the patient but for the patient's comfort and openness to care. Just as little as a smile when saying certain words or keeping eye contact can build a better rapport with the patient. I think these communication techniques are not only great for the patient nurse relationship but in all relationships in our lives.