

Nonverbal expression, a pivotal element in healthcare, is a mode of communication that surpasses words. It manifests through facial expressions, hand gestures, and even sign language, the most prevalent form of nonverbal expression. Its importance in healthcare cannot be overstated, as it often conveys emotions and feelings that words may fail to express.

Throughout nursing careers, both therapeutic and non-therapeutic communication will be utilized. Therapeutic communication is an interactive process between patient and provider, employing verbal and non-verbal methods. (Sharma NP, 2023) On the other hand, non-therapeutic communication is characterized by a lack of active listening to the patient. Many patients simply need someone to talk to. For instance, psychiatric patients often find solace in discussing their day or emotions. Similarly, elderly patients appreciate someone to converse with and hold their hands, especially if their family members cannot visit or communicate with them regularly. Nurses and STNAs play a crucial role in providing this communication. Non-therapeutic examples can include misinterpreting the patient, becoming defensive, or disregarding the patient's feelings.

My friends and relatives have always told me I'm bad at communication. I think they feel this because I don't express my feelings. With my stutter, I get overwhelmed when speaking; I try to stay to myself because I fear I won't be accepted into society. I have been told by my teacher that I can be an outgoing person when I get to know others. This is true; I need that first fear to be over, and then I will be okay. I never want to make that first step of communication. The only time I will make the first step in communication is at work. When I am at work compared to home, I can be a completely different person. I feel like I am partly self-awareness. I don't know when I stutter sometimes, but I know when I need to stop talking. I want to try to prevent having the question I get asked about. So, I listen to others and only comment when needed.

I try not to use verbal communication. I understand that speaking to others is a fundamental form of human interaction. I have human interaction in other forms. I listen to others and depend mostly on my nonverbal communication skills. In today's digital age, it is easy to have verbal communication. It is often conducted through texting. I have doctors where I work who don't like to have the nurses call them; they would rather text.

One way I avoid verbal communication while still having therapeutic communication with my patients is by listening to them. People want to be listened to; questions to keep the conversation going without having to say too much. Asking questions, rather than making statements, is another form of communication. It allows the other person to feel valued and appreciated.

Sharma NP, Gupta V. Therapeutic Communication. 2023 Aug 2\]. In: StatPearls Internet.

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<https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/books/NBK567775/>