

For my entire life my family has called me an old soul. They have told me how I used to sit and analyze people even at a very young age. I was the listener of the family; I was so quiet as I kid that all I did was absorb conversations of adults and other kids my age. In conversations with family, they tell me that even though I was so quiet, when I was alone with certain people I would just open and spill all my thoughts. With soaking up so many adult conversations at a young age I feel like it affected the way I communicated with others. My idiolect was shaped by my grandma and aunts conversations. So, as I grew up, I was using a higher vocabulary, my social and emotional skills were improving, and I was learning how to view other people's perspectives differently than others my age. The way the adults in my life treated me showed me such love and respect, their actions taught me to become an active listener. It helped me in my conversations, making friends, and as well as how I communicated with teachers. In my adult life it has helped me in my professional relationships with coworkers, bosses, and patients. My boss praised my communication skills when completing my employee review, with patients and colleagues alike. My colleagues have also told me that they think that I am wonderful with patients and are excited to see me grow in the nursing program. My skills with communication come from my parents putting an emphasis on speaking up at a young age. My mom is a wonderful communicator and her teaching my siblings and I to communicate effectively has been so important for many relationships and our lives in general. This has made me into an adult who talks about the details of everything, including how I feel and how others around me feel because I want others to understand my thoughts and I want to do the same for others. I have been able to use my active listening skills with patients by taking extra time when rounding to sit and listen to stories and asking questions about things they enjoy and tell me about. Nodding my head, smiling, asking those questions, giving them my full attention, holding their hand when they need, showing understanding and empathy, and communicating things about myself in some cases is what comfort patients. This is not only helping me in building rapport with patients, but it also helps patients to open and trust me. Confused elderly patients are the ones I care for in the hospital very often. Working on the nightshift makes this more prevalent because in many cases patients act starkly differently at night than during the day. Having good calm communication skills is necessary in relaxing patients. I learned a lot of skills from coworkers because coming into healthcare I did not know what to say when I encountered this for the first time.

An area of improvement of mine is sometimes this communication is difficult for me. I don't know how to explain why I have issues with it sometimes, because I will take my time and try to have conversations with all my patients, but sometimes they do not feel comfortable with me or want to have that connection or conversation. The only reason I may have trouble is because it is sometimes very difficult to have something to talk about with certain patients because they aren't interested in communicating with you. I want to learn more about how to do this and when it's ok to just let conversations end. I feel like with my communication skills I want to learn more about what are the best questions to ask when probing patients. I ask some questions but there are sometimes things that I forget to ask or don't go into more detail on, and I will miss some details. I want to grow on these skills because they can be very important in understanding how the patient is feeling, and it gives an insight on how to meet their physiological needs. For this course and clinical experiences, I want to work on these skills and become a better communicator for my patients. During clinical having one-on-one time with these patients is going to help me expand on this communication so much. I want to see how the nurses for the unit also interact with the patients so that I can use some of their techniques, questions, and conversation starters to build on my skills. Seeing how they handle patients who

do not want to communicate is something that will help me further my skills as a healthcare professional.