

Cathryn Palagyi: Unit 2 Psychiatric Nursing Reflection Paper Assignment

Friends and close relatives often describe my communication style as empathetic, thoughtful, and sincere. They've shared that I come across as very genuine, which helps other people feel comfortable when opening up to me. I tend to be emotionally present during conversations, often using both my words and body language to communicate. Using steady eye contact, a relaxed posture, and gentle facial expressions, I'm able to convey understanding and interest. These are essential components of nonverbal expression, and I've learned how much they can influence how safe and respected someone feels in a conversation.

One of the most important communication techniques I rely on is active listening. I make a conscious effort to tailor my responses to each unique conversation, asking clarifying questions, reflecting what was said, and using empathetic language to show that I'm fully engaged. This approach helps make conversations feel more personal and relevant to the person I'm speaking with. My goal is always to ensure that the other person feels truly heard and supported. I believe this intentional way of interacting creates deeper, more meaningful connections and promotes mutual trust.

I also use various therapeutic verbal communication techniques, such as open-ended questions, offering broad openings, summarizing, and validating emotions. These strategies help encourage clients or peers to explore their thoughts and feelings. On the other hand, I try to avoid nontherapeutic techniques like giving unsolicited advice, interrupting, or minimizing someone's concerns, as these can unintentionally shut down communication or make someone feel dismissed. However, I recognize that I have areas for improvement. At times, I find myself interrupting others- usually out of eagerness to contribute or share a related thought. While my intention is not to dismiss others, I understand how this can be disruptive or make someone feel unheard. This is a habit I'm actively working to change, especially as I continue to grow both personally and professionally. Developing more patience in conversation will help me become a better communicator, particularly in emotionally intense or fast-paced environments where calm, intentional communication is crucial.

In the context of therapeutic communication, these strengths- and the self-awareness of areas I need to improve- play a key role. By combining effective verbal techniques with supportive nonverbal cues, and grounding every interaction in active listening, I can help clients feel safe, respected, and understood. As emphasized in *Townsend's Essentials of Psychiatric Mental Health Nursing*, effective therapeutic communication depends on being genuine, empathetic, and fully engaged in the interaction (Townsend & Morgan, 2021). By continuing to build on these communication skills, I hope to foster trusting therapeutic relationships that promote healing, growth, and understanding.

Reference:

Townsend, M. C., & Morgan, K. I. (2021). *Davis Advantage for Townsend's Essentials of Psychiatric Mental Health nursing: Concepts of Care and Evidence-Based Practice* (9th ed.) . F.A. Davis Company.