

Chapter 8

Communication and the Nurse-Patient Relationship

Chapter 8

Lesson 8.1

Learning Objectives

Theory

- 1) Describe the components of the communication process.
- 2) List three factors that influence the way a person communicates.
- 3) Compare effective communication techniques with blocks to communication.
- 4) Describe the difference between a therapeutic nurse-patient relationship and a social relationship.

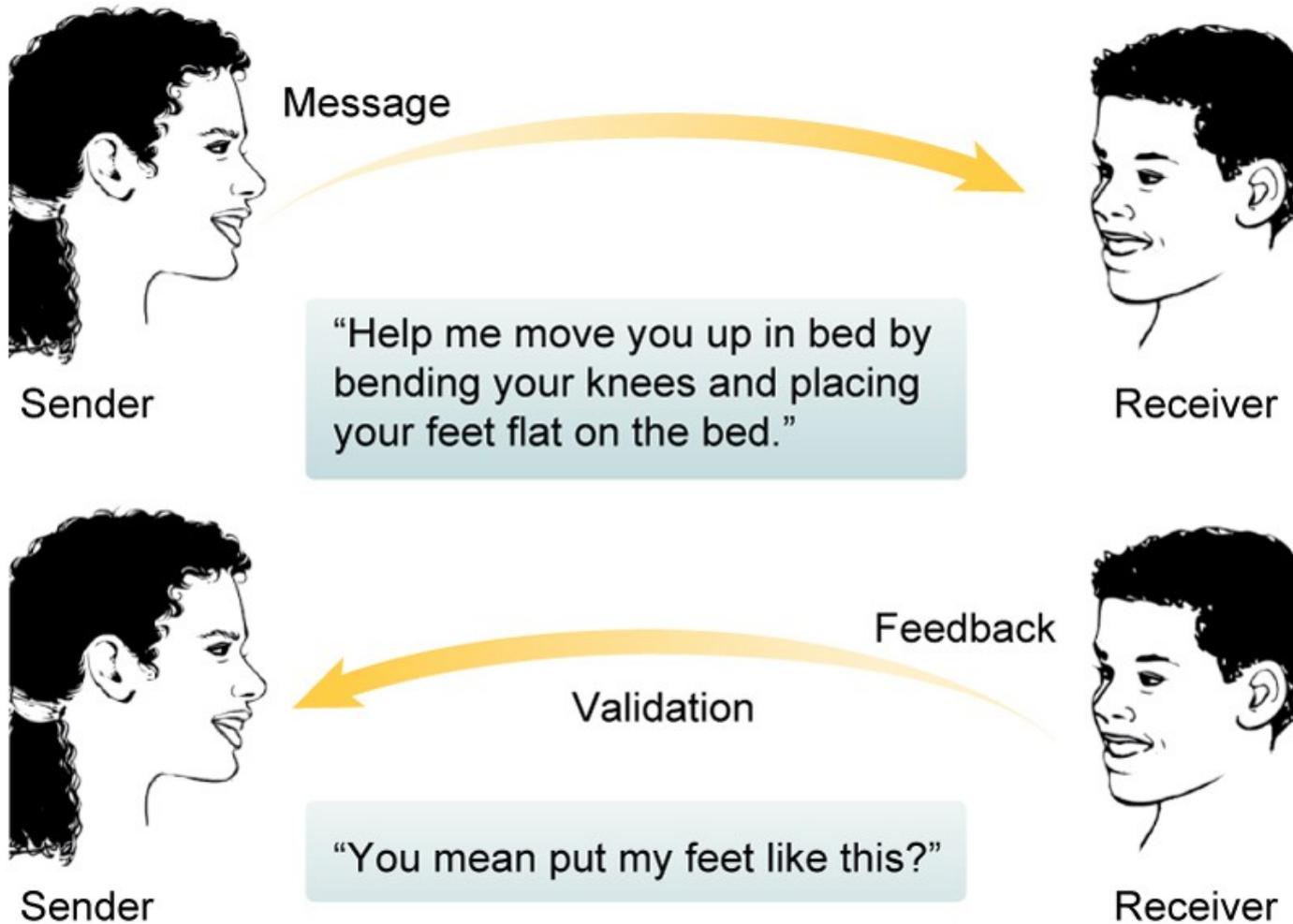
The Communication Process

- Communication occurs when one person sends a message and another person receives it, processes it, and indicates that the message has been interpreted
- Is a continual circular process
- Can be either verbal or nonverbal

The Communication Process (cont'd)

- Verbal communication: spoken or written words
- Nonverbal communication: without words
- Nonverbal communication may be by:
 - Gesture
 - Body posture
 - Intonation
 - General appearance

The Communication Process (cont'd)



Copyright © 2014, 2009 by Saunders, an imprint of Elsevier Inc. All rights reserved.

Factors Affecting Communication

- Cultural differences
- Past experiences
- Emotions and mood
- Attitude of the individual

Cultural Differences

- Personal space
- Eye contact
 - Averting eyes is normal in some cultures
- Meanings of words
 - “Yes” may not mean yes
- Cultural norms
 - Older adults may not want instructions from younger people
- Religious beliefs

Past Experience and Communication

- How we perceive what is communicated to us depends on:
 - Cultural values
 - Level of education
 - Familiarity with the topic
 - Occupation
 - Previous life experiences

Emotions and Mood

- Anxious patients may not hear all that is said or may not interpret it correctly
- An upset person may speak more loudly than usual
- A depressed person may communicate minimally
- A person's attitude may affect how a message is received

Communication Skills

- Active listening
 - Requires concentration and focused energy
 - Uses all the senses to interpret verbal and nonverbal messages (feedback)
 - Listens for feelings as well as words
 - Maintains eye contact without staring and makes a conscious effort to block out distractions

Interpreting Nonverbal Messages

- Observe for:
 - Posture
 - Gestures
 - Tone
 - Facial expression
 - Smiling or frowning
 - Eye contact

Obtaining Feedback

- A vital part of communication is checking to see if you interpreted a message in the way the speaker meant it
- Accomplished by rephrasing the meaning of the message or directly asking a feedback question

Focusing

- Keeping attention focused on the communication task at hand
- Continually check to see that the patient is still the topic of the interaction

Adjusting Style

- Patient's style and level of usual communication should be considered when interacting
- If the person is a slow, calm communicator, adjust to that pace
- If a response is slow in coming, allow plenty of time for consideration and a response

Therapeutic Communication Techniques

- Promoting communication between sender and receiver, obtaining feedback
- Focusing on the communicator
- Using silence and open-ended questions
- Restating the message
- Clarifying
- Using therapeutic touch

Therapeutic Communication Techniques (cont'd)

- Giving general leads
- Offering self
- Encouraging elaboration
- Giving information
- Looking at alternatives
- Summarizing

Blocks to Effective Communication

- Changing the subject
- Offering false reassurance
- Giving advice
- Making defensive comments
- Asking prying or probing questions
- Not listening attentively
- Using clichés

Question 1

Andy is having difficulty communicating with his patient. His patient barely understands English, is highly anxious about being hospitalized, and doesn't look at Andy when he is speaking. Which four factors affect communication?

- 1) Cultural differences, past experiences, emotions, and attitude
- 2) Age, attitude, language, and tone of voice
- 3) Style, cultural difference, experience, and mood
- 4) Focusing, style, cultural differences, and past experiences

Question 2

Holly is trying to encourage her patient to elaborate rather than replying in short one- or two-word answers. Her patient relates to Holly that she doesn't feel safe at home. Holly replies, "Would you tell me more about this?" This is an example of what type of therapeutic communication technique?

- 1) Encouraging elaboration
- 2) Restatement
- 3) Open-ended question
- 4) Clarification

Question 3

Marisol's patient is diabetic. Marisol notices her patient eating cheesecake and a cola from a visitor, and states, "I don't think that is a good thing for you to do, considering you have diabetes." This is an example of which block of communication?

- 1) Changing the subject
- 2) Judgmental response
- 3) Defensive response
- 4) Giving advice

Question 4

Emily's patient is very nervous about her surgery. She is having a breast biopsy. Emily tells her patient, "I'm sure it will turn out fine. You don't need to worry." This is an example of which communication block?

- 1) Changing the subject
- 2) Giving false reassurance
- 3) Defensive response
- 4) Using clichés

Chapter 8

Lesson 8.2

Learning Objectives

Theory

- 5) Discuss the importance of communication in the collaborative process.
- 6) List three guidelines for effective communication with a physician by telephone.
- 7) Identify four ways to delegate effectively.
- 8) Discuss five ways the computer is used for communication within the health care agency.
- 9) Describe how communication skills can affect the quality and safety of patient care.

Learning Objectives

Clinical Practice

- 1) Use interviewing skills to obtain an admission history from a patient.
- 2) Interact therapeutically in a goal-directed situation with a patient.
- 3) Communicate effectively with a patient who has an impairment of communication.
- 4) Give an effective report on assigned patients to your team leader or charge nurse.
- 5) Be present and non-judgmental when communicating with patients and be mindful of their needs.

Challenges for Nurses

- Developing interviewing skills
- Using the nurse-patient relationship
- Using empathy
- Becoming nonjudgmental
- Maintaining hope
- Applying the nursing process
- Communicating with hearing-impaired patients, elderly, children, and people from other cultures

Interviewing the Patient



Copyright © 2014, 2009 by Saunders, an imprint of Elsevier Inc. All rights reserved.

Communicating with the Hearing-Impaired

- Speak very distinctly
- Do not shout
- Speak slowly
- Get the person's attention
- Maintain a good distance (2 1/2 to 4 feet)
- Watch for nonverbal feedback
- Use short sentences
- Paraphrase for clarification

Communicating with the Elderly

- Assess for hearing deficits
- Assess for visual deficits
- Give time for elders to formulate responses
- Wait for an answer to one question before asking another
- Obtain feedback

Communicating with Children

- Approach at eye level
- Use a calm, friendly voice
- Keep parent in the room when possible
- Use short sentences
- Give simple explanations and demonstrations
- Allow child to handle equipment

Communicating with People from Other Cultures

- Determine the language spoken
- Obtain an interpreter if necessary
- Enlist the aid of a family member if appropriate
- Give printed materials if available and answer questions
- Beware of cultural differences in:
 - Eye contact
 - Personal space

Communicating with the Assistance of a Translator



Copyright © 2014, 2009 by Saunders, an imprint of Elsevier Inc. All rights reserved.

Communicating with Health Care Team Members

- Nurses' notes
- Physician's orders and progress notes
- Dietitian's notes
- OT, PT, and speech therapy notes
- Shift report
- Radiology and laboratory findings

Telephoning Physicians

- Have patient data on hand: laboratory data, vital signs, urinary output, medication received
- Keep chart handy and anticipate information that the physician may request
- Know patient allergies and perform a quick assessment before calling
- Prepare a concise problem statement
- Document the call and physician's response

Assignment Considerations and Delegating

- Give clear, concise messages and listen carefully to feedback
- Include the result desired and the time line for completion along with the task assignment
- Ask person to whom you are assigning a task if any questions about what is to be done, and ask for a summary of what is understood about the task to be done

Computer Communication

- Ability to use a computer for communication is essential for today's nurse
- Transmit requests for laboratory, dietary, radiology, physical therapy, respiratory therapy, and other services
- Medication orders
- Supplies for patient care
- Update patient care plans
- Computerized form of charting

Communication in the Home and Community

- Essential to state when instructions are about to be given so active listening can occur
- Leave written step-by-step instructions with the patient whenever possible
- Office and clinic nurses often assess patients who call in to see if they have an urgent need for medical attention

Question 5

Sara has just graduated from nursing school. She realizes all of the following statements are true regarding communication *except*:

- 1) the ability to use a computer for communication is essential for today's nurse.
- 2) when communicating with a child, you should speak loudly and maintain an even tone so that the child can hear you.
- 3) phrases that tend to block or terminate communication should be avoided.
- 4) giving an organized, efficient end-of-shift report is an important communication skill for nurses.