

## Therapeutic Communication Gerontology Assignment

Learning Objectives and Outcomes		
Area	Objective	Course Student Learning Outcome (CSLO's), Baccalaureate Essential's & QSEN
Knowledge	<p>Apply therapeutic communication nursing concepts in the delivery of nursing care to gerontology patients.</p> <p>Examine the influence of age on nursing care decisions and actions for patients.</p>	<p>CSLO #1 &amp; 2 Baccalaureate Essential VIII QSEN Patient-Centered Care</p>
Skills	<p>Apply therapeutic communication principles, concepts such as active listening, silence, focusing, open ended questions, clarification, exploring, paraphrasing, reflecting, restating, providing leads, acknowledgement, and offer of self.</p> <p>Increase their own self-awareness of judgments and pre-conceived notions that may affect their advocacy for older adults.</p>	<p>CSLO #1 &amp; 4 Baccalaureate Essential VIII QSEN Patient-Centered Care</p>

	Evaluate effectiveness individual performance.	
Attitudes	<p>Values the role of therapeutic communication in nursing care decisions and actions.</p> <p>Recognize personally held attitudes about working with patients from different age, ethnic, cultural and social backgrounds.</p>	<p>CSLO #1 &amp; 4                      Baccalaureate Essential VIII                      QSEN Patient-Centered Care</p>

**Instructions:**

This assignment is designed to help students feel comfortable initiating conversations with older adults and raising awareness of older persons' wishes, expectations, resources, cultural traditions, and strengths. Students will select an older adult to interview. Interviews can be completed virtually or by phone. Students will utilize therapeutic communication to explore the quality-of-life perceptions, risk the person is willing to take or has taken to preserve the quality of life.

Therapeutic communication is a fundamental component of nursing and is a complex concept. Ensuring positive encounters between nurses and patients is essential for improving the quality of nursing interactions, the performance of various nursing duties, and meet patients' diverse needs (Abdolrahimi, et al., 2017).

Reference

Abdolrahimi, M., et al., (2017). Therapeutic communication in nursing students: A Walker & Avant concept analysis. *Electronic Physician*, 9(8), 4968-4977. doi:10.19082/4968

National League of Nursing (NLN). Retrieved from <http://www.nln.org/professional-development-programs/teaching-resources/aces-s/teaching-strategies/aces-knowledge-domains/individualized-aging/examining-risks-and-benefits-to-enhance-quality-of-life>

## **Pre-assignment work-**

Students should answer the following questions to fully understand the quality of life, personal choice of decision making, and self-reflection.

### **1. Which of these two statements is most important to you?**

- I want to preserve a good quality of life even if this means that I may not live too long.

It is essential to me to preserve a good quality of life, even if it means not living a long life. I want to live most of my life without pain or significant illness. Changes in lifestyle and diet are a huge factor in reducing the risk of certain diseases and disorders. I know I cannot rule out the possibility of getting a disease due to genetics and other outside factors out of my control. However, I choose to focus on the factors I can control to preserve a good life quality.

### **2. Do you feel you have full autonomy for decision making?**

I can make most of my own decisions now. My parents still help me with making decisions by giving me advice, and at times can be overbearing, but in the end, they let me make the final decision. This new boundary is an improvement after years of my mother micro-managing my life

### **3. How do you feel when people make decisions for you?**

I feel like an incompetent child when I have no say in decisions. That incompetence doubles it is a significant life decision. If I do not have a chance to make those decisions, I become conditioned to think I cannot trust my judgment, and that is why I do not get a say. Before college, my mother was a control freak who loved to coax me into making decisions that she wanted. Just last year, before nursing school started, I had a sit-down conversation with my parents to set boundaries and enable autonomy for my own decision making.

### **4. What do you see as important in your life?**

I see my family, friends, mental health, and music as essential things in my life. Each gives me so much passion in life.

**5. What risks have you taken in the past that has affected your quality of life?**

I would eat sweets all the time, especially before bed. Binge eating has affected my quality of life since I was young. I was an obese child who ate when he was bored. It took my grandpa being diagnosed with Diabetes to get me to think about a change in eating. I can proudly say that I eat healthy most of the time now and workout four days a week. I want to live a lifestyle that is preventative of diseases and disorders.

**6. What risks have you taken in the past, and how has this affected you?**

Another risk that I have taken in the past is vaping tobacco. I vaped from my junior year of high school to my sophomore year of college. I vaped because my friends were doing it. Vaping affected me by showing me what it was like being addicted to a substance for the first time. It started affecting my ability to work out and lift heavier weight due to shortness of breath. When I quit, I learned how hard withdrawal could be. The more research that comes out on vapes and health problems, the happier I am I quit.

**7. What risks do you want to take now?**

I found a lump on my testicle and will be getting an ultrasound this week. I am anxious because this is my first real health scare as an adult. In the worst-case scenario, the risk I would take (if it came to it) is to get the pea-sized mass removed surgically. There is always the risk of complications with surgery.

**8. What risks are you not willing to take?**

I am not willing to take risks that have a high chance of harming others or myself. For instance, If I needed to have surgery to have the mass removed, I would want to know the possible complications and the odds of those complications before I would make my decision. To me, it is all about weighing the cost against the benefit.

**9. How would you explain to the people who love you why you want to take this risk?**

My parents want grandchildren, and this risk would make them nervous about the possibility of complications leading to me not giving them any. I would talk to them and let them know that I weighed the pros and cons. With that noted, I do not think they would have an issue with the surgery or any medical procedures because my father is a nurse practitioner, so my family has a positive view of healthcare and treatment.

## 10. What frightens you about taking this risk?

I am afraid that a new mass will grow, and the risk will have been all for nothing. I worry about how my girlfriend and family will react to potential bad news.

### Interview process:

Find an older adult to interview. The interviewee may be a family member and does not have to be a patient. Each interview should be a minimum of 20 minutes. Students should use therapeutic communication techniques to build therapeutic relationships within the community. Students should ask a minimum of 5 questions listed below. Students can phrase the questions in their conversational tone. A student may ask a question not listed below but will need to write down additional questions in the post-interview evaluation. The interview process notes are not graded but assist the student in the reflection process.

#### 1. Which of these two statements is most important to you?

- I want to live as long as possible regardless of the quality of life that I experience.
- I want to preserve a good quality of life even if this means that I may not live too long.

“I would rather live a short, quality life than a long life regardless of quality. I would not want to be in pain or have to depend on someone else fully. Your grandpa depends on me to take care of him since he has more health problems. I would never want to be a burden towards someone.” “I love your papa, but I would never want someone to take care of me how I take care of him.”

#### 4. What do you see as important in your life?

“Family is the most important thing in my life. I have things that I like to do, but nothing compares to being a mom, a grandma, and a great-grandma.” “Andrew and Morgan just had their baby girl on Monday. I am a great-grandma to another baby!”

#### 5. What risks have you taken in the past that has affected your quality of life?

“Well, I have had both of my knees replaced about 11 months apart. It was a hard time in physical therapy, but I am thankful I took the risk. I was barely able to walk before the surgeries, but now I can walk normally.” “I have been going to restaurants and the supermarkets during Covid. Your mom would probably yell at me if she knew that.”

**9. How would you explain to the people who love you why you want to take this risk?**

“They do not need to know everything.” “I would explain to your mom that I need to go out and get things for your grandpa since he is the one that really should not be out in public. I wear a mask, stay away from crowds, and have hand sanitizer in the car.”

**10. What frightens you about taking this risk?**

"I was not scared about going out in public. I probably should have been scared." "I am more concerned about your papa than me because he has the risk factors. I go out to get us things so he can stay home." "We got our first Covid shot already and get the second one next week!"

**Interview Evaluation-Reflective Activity**

After interviewing an older adult, students are to complete a self-reflective evaluation.

**1) What therapeutic communication techniques did you use during the interview? Provide examples.**

I interviewed my maternal grandmother. I restated a few of her responses back to her to explore deeper into the question asked. One example is when she said that family is what matters to her most. I restated it back to her, which led to her stating, "I like to knit, go on walks, and watch TV, but that's nothing compared to the family for me. Andrew and Morgan just had their new baby Sadie Rae on Monday. I'm a great-grandmother again!" I used silence in between to ensure that I wasn't putting ideas into her head while waiting for a response to questions. It helped give my grandmother time to think and get her thoughts together.

**2) What went well?**

The interview was a flowing conversation without anything forced by my grandmother or me. This flow was due to several excellent therapeutic communication elements, the most important one being active listening. Active listening helps figure out what and when you need to restate or clarify things and make the person feel heard while they are talking. I used clarification when asked for clarification on a few questions. One example is when I first asked what is important to her. She wanted to know if that could be anything or just something about health. I said, "it can be anything important to you." I used good intonation over the phone, making sure I was not mumbling or trailing off when talking.

**3) What would I do differently next time?**

Non-verbal signals are essential in excellent therapeutic communication, but everything besides intonation and pitch were useless because it was a phone interview. We got off track towards the end before the last question because my grandmother asked me about my life and school. Next time, I need to learn how to move the conversation back onto the topic rather than myself.

**4) What are the major take-home lessons after interviewing an older adult?**

After years of living life, one of the essential things in life to older adults is their family. It makes me think about my answer about what is most important to me. When I have arthritis when I'm old, my family will take more importance than playing the guitar. I also learned that many older adult couples take care of each other "silently." My grandma does so much for my grandpa without complaining. To the older adult, a family is more than just loved ones. Family is a legacy that the older adult gets to leave behind when they pass. Many older adults realize that they have helped shape a new generation. Seeing that the new generation grow and prosper well is more satisfying to my grandmother than knitting lots of blankets or walking a 10k.

**5) How can I adapt my nursing practice to be more responsive to the unique needs of an older adult client?**

I can adapt my nursing practice to be more responsive to an older adult patient's unique needs by understanding that family visitors are of great importance to older adults. I need to make sure that I can allow my patient and their visitors adequate privacy and time to talk. I also need to understand that lots of older adult couples take care of each other. Understanding this shows how crucial prioritizing teaching the significant other of a patient how to care for them is.

**6) In what way am I building my nursing skills?**

I am building my nursing skills by fine-tuning my therapeutic communication skills, facilitating sharing of information, and understanding clients and their perspectives. Therapeutic communication is the best way to develop a close relationship with the patient while keeping that relationship professional. Therapeutic communication is essential since, as nurses, we have to treat all of our patients equally. Therapeutic communication is vital for older adults because some may need more time to respond or understand what the nurse is saying.

**STUDENT NAME: Kenny Johnson**

**RUBRIC FOR THERAPUTIC COMMUNICATION GERONTOLOGY ASSIGNMENT**

**Pre-Assessment**

<b>Objective</b>	<b>Unsatisfactory 0 points</b>	<b>Satisfactory 5 point</b>	<b>Grade</b>
<b>Increase own self-awareness of judgments and pre-conceived notions that may affect their advocacy for older adults.</b>	Description adequate with superficial thought and preparation; does not address all aspects of the task	Description well developed assignment that fully addresses and develops all aspects of the task.	
<b>Content Contribution</b>	Information that is off-topic, incorrect, or irrelevant to discussion.	Factually correct, reflective, and substantive contribution.	
<b>Clarity &amp; Mechanics</b>	Communicates in manner with some 2-3 errors clarity, spelling, grammatical, or mechanics errors.	Contributes valuable information with minor 1 clarity, spelling, grammatical, or mechanics errors.	

**Comments:**

**Pre-Assessment POINTS:** \_\_\_\_\_/15

**Interview Evaluation-Reflective Activity**

<b>Objective</b>	<b>Unsatisfactory 0 points</b>	<b>Satisfactory 10 point</b>	<b>Grade</b>
<b>Evaluation therapeutic communication</b>	Description adequate with superficial thought and preparation; does not address all	Description well developed assignment that fully addresses and	

<b>process with older adult</b>	aspects of the task	develops all aspects of the task.	
<b>Content Contribution</b>	Information that is off-topic, incorrect, or irrelevant to discussion.	Factually correct, reflective, and substantive contribution.	
<b>Clarity &amp; Mechanics</b>	Communicates in manner with some 2-3 errors clarity, spelling, grammatical, or mechanics errors.	Contributes valuable information with minor 1 clarity, spelling, grammatical, or mechanics errors.	

**Reflective POINTS:** \_\_\_\_\_/30

**Total Points:** \_\_\_\_\_/45

**Instructor Signature:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Date:** \_\_\_\_\_

