

Therapeutic Communication Gerontology Assignment

Learning Objectives and Outcomes		
Area	Objective	Course Student Learning Outcome (CSLO's), Baccalaureate Essential's & QSEN
Knowledge	Apply therapeutic communication nursing concepts in the delivery of nursing care to gerontology patients. Examine the influence of age on nursing care decisions and actions for patients.	CSLO #1 & 2 Baccalaureate Essential VIII QSEN Patient-Centered Care
Skills	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. Increase their own self-awareness of judgments and pre-conceived notions that may affect their advocacy for older adults.	CSLO #1 & 4 Baccalaureate Essential VIII QSEN Patient-Centered Care

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

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/ace-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.

. 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.

Of the two statements, the most important one is to preserve a good quality of life even if that means I may not live too long.

This statement is essential because I grew up in a strict, faithful household that taught me that nothing should stand in the way of the Lord calling me home when it was time to leave this world.

2. Do you feel you have full autonomy for decision making? Yes. I have full autonomy for decision making. I learn to accept the decisions I make, along with whatever consequences come from those decisions.

3. How do you feel when people make decisions for you? I do not necessarily enjoy when others make decisions for me. I am an independent and powerful individual. For this mindset, I should be able to make crucial decisions independently. However, when it comes to work or school when decisions are made as a group or by someone, I learn to accept those decisions.

4. What do you see as important in your life? The most important thing I see currently is not only health but also the health of my children. I grew up in a loving home that practiced Christianity.

I was taught things in life are not free, and to appreciate material things, one needs to work hard for them.

Everything I have on this Earth is “borrowed” from the Lord and that it is all on loan until he calls us home.

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

The risks I have taken are probably working too much while trying to attend school. I always had to pay for college courses; therefore, I needed to work to pay for the classes. My grades suffered over the years because I worked too much while trying to attend school. Another risk is taking time off school for a few years. When I look at my life now, I would have initially gone to school and not waited so long to finish a degree. Now that I am thirty-something, I am working on my second Bachelor's degree that should have been my first degree. I have decided this is a life lesson, and I am now facing my decisions and actions.

6. What risks have you taken in the past, and how has this affected you? The risks of not attending college right after high school and maybe stopping college when my children were born. The stigma of returning to college as an adult is much harder than it sounds.

7. What risks do you want to take now? The main risk I want to take is to stay working my job part-time while I finish my BSN degree.

8. What risks are you not willing to take? I am not willing to sacrifice my schoolwork to work extra hours at my job. Homework and learning are too important to me.

9. How would you explain to the people who love you why you want to take this risk? I explain to my girls that this is a sacrifice that mommy is making to have a better life. So if that means not being able to watch television after their baths and homework is complete, that is fine for now, as this is temporary.

10. What frightens you about taking this risk? I am scared that I will fail a class or my grade will suffer because my Professors do not think I am trying enough. I have to stay focused to prove to myself that I can finish my BSN.

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.

For my interview, I decided to interview my dad. He is 87 years of age and was born towards the end of The Great Depression Era. Families, such as my grandparents', were still trying to rebuild what they had lost in the years leading up to this Era.

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 want to preserve a good quality of life even if that meant I might not live much longer. I grew up learning that when it is time to die, then you die. No doctor should try to prolong your life because it may not be the same as before you became ill.”

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

“I feel like I have full autonomy when making decisions. When it comes to our healthcare decisions, your mom and I make those decisions together as a husband/wife team. She knows my wishes if I ever get sick and need a hospital stay, and I know her decisions as well. When it comes to household decisions or money, we usually talk about what is best for us at present.”

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

“I do not like when others make my decisions. Your mom decides what clothes I will wear after taking my shower or what I will eat for my meals. I am not too fond of her decisions most of the time, but she is a good cook, and I am still here living, so she must be doing something right. Decisions outside of my direct control, I have to live with those decisions that are made for me and adjust to consequences.”

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

“Your mom is important in my life. My health is important, having a roof over my head is essential. Watching your brothers farm the ground that has been in my family for well over 100 years is meaningful. Not only that, but them bringing in the grain from farming to make a good profit each year.”

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

“I have taken risks in the past which may have affected my quality of life are farming and raising a large family. When I was 16 years of age, my dad passed away from a heart attack. It was essential for me to carry on his farming legacy and help mom. My older siblings were grown and married and had families of their own, so I knew it would be difficult for them to help mom with the farm she built with my dad. Marrying your mother was a big risk because we knew we wanted to start a family not long after being married. Farming is a unique career. Some years, you may have the best crops that yield well, and some years you have rain or drought, which hinders farming season, and farmers make little to no money. Raising children is also a risk that not only me, but your mom also took. We raised twelve healthy children from our unity. We were raising that many children over forty years and some days were rough. I

am certain that none of us had medical insurance. We rarely ever went to the doctor, and when we did, it was because we were very ill.”

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

“A big risk I took was farming and raising a large family. Farming is a unique career. Some years, farmers may have the best crops that yield well, and some years they have rain or drought, which hinders your farming season, and you make little to no money. Raising children is also a risk that both of us took. We raised twelve healthy children from our unity. Raising that many children over forty years was a gamble because some days, life was tough. I am certain that none of you or your siblings ever had medical insurance, and neither did your mom and or me. We rarely ever went to the doctor, and when we did, it was because we were very ill. I think that both risks turned out in my favor because I have twelve children and thirty-two grandchildren, and six great-grandchildren. The family farm is still in operation by two of my sons, and they just grossed half of a million dollars this year on their crops because I taught them that watching the markets and selling at the proper time was the way to make the best money.”

7. What risks do you want to take now?

“ I do not have any risks that I want to take now. I feel like I have lived a great life for 87 years, and I want just to relax and enjoy being retired.”

8. What risks are you not willing to take?

“I do not want to risk my health or your mom’s health. When the COVID-19 vaccine became available, we decided we wanted to get it because we did not want our children and grandchildren to be afraid to visit us.”

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

“I would explain to people that everyone has their own opinion on COVID-19 and why it became an issue in 2020. We spent many days and months isolated and not visiting our children and grandchildren because they were afraid that they might give us the virus. I am glad to say that we received our vaccine and feel much better now, and we have no reason to fear other people.”

10. What frightens you about taking this risk?

“The fact that it can take up to two weeks to take effect and that one of us could contract COVID before those two weeks.”

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? The techniques I used during the interview were actively listening as my dad talked about the risks he took, placing the event in time sequence; especially when he talked about grandpa passing away and he felt he needed to farm in grandpa's place. He was so young when he took over farming which likely made him grown up quick. With that story, I also used empathy, silence and acceptance.
- 2.) What went well? I felt like the interview went well. I have heard my dad's stories before, but not in the manner and seriousness he was telling them. I felt privileged to be able to interview him.
- 3.) What would I do differently next time? I would make up more questions so I could go more in depth with his stories.
- 4.) What are the major take-home lessons after interviewing an older adult? Adults feel they need to be accepted, so when I talk to an older adult, I need to acknowledge that I heard them and understand what their needs are. They also need the empathy, especially if they do not feel well and are in a hospital. Sometimes, silence is a good technique to have because some of them want someone to sit with them. Above all, I think actively listening to older adults is something I should always possess.

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

I should practice the communication techniques and learn to use them each time I work whether my patients are young or old. This way, I will be in more of a habit to use them daily.

In what way am I building my nursing skills?

The skills I am building include learning communication techniques, writing more effectively and tying critical thinking into what I have learned to be a better nurse so I can gain trust from my patients.

STUDENT NAME_____

RUBRIC FOR THERAPUTIC COMMUNICATION GERONTOLOGY ASSIGNMENT

Pre-Assessment

Objective	Unsatisfactory 0 points	Satisfactory 5 point	Grade
Increase own self-awareness of judgments and pre-conceived notions that may affect their advocacy for older adults.	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.	
Content Contribution	Information that is off-topic, incorrect, or irrelevant to discussion.	Factually correct, reflective, and substantive contribution.	
Clarity & Mechanics	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.	

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Comments:

Pre-Assessment POINTS:_____/15

Interview Evaluation-Reflective Activity

Objective	Unsatisfactory 0 points	Satisfactory 10 point	Grade
Evaluation therapeutic communication process with older adult	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.	
Content Contribution	Information that is off-topic, incorrect, or irrelevant to discussion.	Factually correct, reflective, and substantive contribution.	
Clarity & Mechanics	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:_____

