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Journal #3

N443

9 September 2021

The provided article this week concerns effective communication, a topic that we discussed during Wednesday's lecture (Payton, 2018). Although the author is specifically addressing staff on nephrology units, I felt the information she offers is broadly useful (Payton, 2018). In the article, Payton (2018) covers several facets of communicating effectively. I appreciated that the author not only gives recommendations but highlights ineffective approaches and things to avoid. For instance, while you should use the client's preferred name, the nurse should avoid interrupting, offering unsolicited advice, focusing on themselves, or claiming to know how the client feels (McCorry & Mason, 2011, as cited in Payton, 2018). I also found that the advice Payton (2018) gives regarding handling challenging people or situations impactful. Specifically, the author calls on nurses to concentrate on what we can control; while we may not have influence over the circumstances we work in, we can take ownership of how we react (Payton, 2018).

Something discussed in the article that I would like to improve in my own practice is a focus on listening. I think that Payton (2018) correctly assesses that working in a busy setting with many distractions can make doing this a challenge. I do find that I often get caught up on specific language or trying to mentally record a verbatim account of what the person said. Payton (2018) says this is unnecessary and suggests that it is more important to understand the overall message the client wants you to hear.

Another item I want to work on is focusing on conversing with the patient rather than talking at them (Pietrucha, 2014, as cited in Payton, 2018). Sometimes, especially if I am in a hurry, I have a habit of rattling off what I think the key things the client needs to know are. I rationalize this behavior as making

the best use of limited time. However, it occurs to me that because I am not truly listening when I do so, that the client probably does not have time to process what I have said or ask questions.

References

Payton, J. (2018). Improving communication skills within the nephrology unit. *Nephrology Nursing Journal*, 45(3), 269-271, 280.