

Connecting the Dots: Simulated Participant Interaction

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Received 01/07/2020

Published 16/09/2020

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Reflection

Please share your perspective on the links between days 1 through 4 and describe how they may inform or influence your future clinical practice.

Days 1 through 4 illuminated me with a variety of aspects of human communication that we experience in our day to day lives. The transition was gradual starting from the known to the unknown. We fruitfully and comfortably shared our ideas and feelings without being criticized. The simulation sessions were nonjudgmental and the feedback were honest and constructive that enabled learning new concepts. The simulation experience, the knowledge learned and the raised awareness of the importance of effective human communication have sparked a conscious desire within me to take my communication skills to a higher level.

Clinical practice is far beyond the application of scientific knowledge as healthcare professionals. We will come across a great variety of human beings, each having a different mindset, attitudes, values, beliefs and cultural filter. The conscious application of communication skills will enable a stronger human connection with the patients. Hence, this becomes an essential component of providing patient-centered care. By improving patient experience, we are likely to achieve better compliance to treatments and reduced professional errors thereby eliminating potential lawsuits and a loss of reputation. While we cannot keep everyone happy, we surely not want anyone sad or angry because of any reason. In essence, good communication skills will enable my success as a professional, a registrant in good standing of the regulatory College, a respected Alumnus of my institution and above all a better human being at the very least!

Describe the communication skills that you observed to be most effective from the session 4 simulation. What was the effect of these communication skills on the patient?

I became aware of and got a chance to practice some great communication skills during this course. I observed the importance of giving space and actively listening to the patient. A variety of active listening techniques were used throughout by various participants. I noticed how those helped establish an environment of trust between the participants and the patient. By validating the feelings of the patient in a respectful manner we were able to see the real person surrounded by the words, emotions and behaviour. This approach helped the patients lower their defences and share information that reflected their concerns and anxiety.

The knowledge derived from this information allowed the participants to identify the real needs which need attention. I observed and learned the importance of "pause" and "silence". By taking our time to think and choosing nonjudgmental and supportive words we will be able to create an empathetic response.

An empathetic response will steer the conversation in the positive direction. Moving into the other person's shoes then becomes easier and empathy becomes more real when we let the other person know that he or she is not alone in fact we are together. As a result, we will be able to calm down our nerves, swallow and exchange thank you at the end.