ACADEMY OF PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Integrative Learning Student Artifact

How Can Medical Staff Reduce the Effects of Mental Illness in Geriatric Patients? – Capstone

Abstract: The social, psychological, and arts lens provides a visual of the various therapies provided for geriatric patients. Through the social lens, patient involvement in the community help their overall well-being. Using psychology, it has been demonstrated that therapeutic animals provide emotional support to patients and might even benefit their health conditions. In the arts, music therapy has been used to help Alzheimer's patients in nursing homes. [REDACTED] University is one of few schools that are holistically endorsed. Holistic nursing allows the nurse to treat her patients as a whole, not focus only on the diagnosis. A holistic nurse is a licensed nurse who takes a "mind-body-spirit-emotion-environment" approach to the practice of traditional nursing. So, from the ideas above the question was derived, how can health care workers reduce the effects of mental illness in geriatric patients?
Keywords: holistic care, psychology, social, arts, personal experience, morals, beliefs, health, animals, music, nonpharmacological

How can medical staff reduce the effects in geriatric patients?

In this generation the desire to become a nurse is at an all-time high. Being a nursing major nowadays is extremely competitive, tiring, and more of a demanding major compared to others. Some might not understand why a person would want to go through the stress of this process to become a nurse. Some may question why someone would want to help a sick person, but that provides an understanding of who has the desire to be selfless. Throughout the years, the elderly population has impacted our healthcare tremendously, specifically the "baby boomers". The baby boomers make up about 20% of the American public. Using specific lenses to understand the geriatric population would be the social, psychological, and arts lens provide; which provide a visual on the various therapies for geriatric patients. Patients involvement in their community benefit their mental state. Animals have been proven to reduce the stress of patients. Music therapy is a major resource for Alzheimer patients. So, how does medical staff reduce the effects of mental illness seen in geriatric patients?

Arts Lens

Music therapy has been used to help Alzheimer patients. Most people associate music with important events and a wide array of emotions. Hearing a tune or certain song after a long

occurrence can evoke a memory. Music can stir up positive interactions, shift moods, and even spark a memory. Through the documentary *Alive Inside: A Story of Music and Memory,* cameras follow a social worker Dan Cohen, who is trying to promote using iPods in nursing homes. Cohen goes around a nursing home in his fight against a broken healthcare system. He demonstrates music's ability to fight memory loss. Cohen at the same time goal is to restore a deep sense of identity to those suffering from this disease. In the documentary there is an 85-year-old patient named Henry, sadly Henry was diagnosed with Alzheimer's. Henry doesn't socialize with anyone and normally sits by himself in the corner with his head down. Henrys illness was so severe that he did not recognize his own daughter. One day the iPod was introduced to him; when the music started playing his face had lit up and showed expression once again. Cohen then removed the headphones from him and asked; "what was your favorite music when you were younger". He immediately started singing his favorite artist Cab Calloway, and the words starting flowing out of his mouth, he had restored some memory from the past. As nurses in acute settings it could be hard to have the time to try this nonpharmacological method; but it simply takes a few simple minutes to smart a memory for these patients. This lens provides society with a sense of hope that change is possible.

In the article "What Do the Arts Teach," Elliot Eisner brainstorms the idea that multiple solutions lead to multiple questions, which leads to multiple answers, which then leads to inquiry. In life, there are many different outlooks on the world. Some people are visual learners and some are auditory learners, but through the arts, a person can understand the concept by simply looking or through communication. Does an older person get the same idea from a painting as a high school student? If two different people are given a painting to look at, there's a big chance that they won't get the same message. Perspective is everything. Every problem has multiple solutions, and every solution has many problems.

Psychology Lens

The psychology lens provides an observation on how therapeutic animals give emotional support to people. So, how does the use of therapeutic animal's limit one's anxiety? According to the National Service Animal Registry, "an Emotional Support Animal is an animal that, by its company, helps with the emotional or psychological symptoms associated with their handler's condition or disorder." Domesticated dogs provide the feeling of safety, security, and relief. Several authors hypothesized that dogs decrease stress and anxiety. Therapeutic animals act as a constant friend and companion to their owners and help them cope with their mental health issues. How do therapeutic animals improve the health of a patient? In recent studies, "patients with heart failure surrounded by the therapeutic animal for just 12-minutes improved cardiopulmonary pressures, necrohormone levels, and anxiety" (K.M . Cole 578). In 2012, a study showed that pet owners had lower heart rates and blood pressure levels. These owners also reacted better to physical and psychological stress leading them to recovering time. Therapeutic animals are another form of nonpharmacological agents that have been proved to benefit patients.

Social Lens

The social lens gives an understanding of how patients involved in the community help their mental state. How do forms of entertainment help people suffering cope in society? Entertainment is an escape from life in some cases. In nursing homes some popular activities that are provided include mind games such as cards, bingo, and name that tune. These activities are not only for the entertainment of the patient, but to make the patient think in ways they wouldn't do on a normal basis. Keeping your brain active is beneficial for a patients well-being. If a patient sit in their room with no entertainment or no knowledge of the outside world: how could this benefit, there overall well-being. A patient doesn't have to turn their life upside down, or make extreme changes to achieve a good mental state. They could Start with something small, like a daily walk. Reconnecting with old friends over the phone, it doesn't always need to be a big leap sometimes all it takes is a few baby steps; in life there is always room for improvement and knowledge.

Experience

During a person's life their personal, external, and emotional experiences are what shapes him or her into who they become. Without a person having interests, personal experiences, or values, how do you really grow? In the article "The Promise" by C. Wright Mills, the author provides an understanding of the sociological standpoint of society and environment, as well as how it builds a person. In the reading "What Do the Arts Teach" by Elliot Eisner, the author shows how the arts can teach, and how they don't always have to be visual but can be taught through communication. In the reading "The Promise," Mills provides an understanding of how society, environment, time, and place shape a person. An individual can understand his or her own personal experience or fate through his or her time and place in the world. In Mills work he stresses the five main problems of the American society: alienation, moral insensibility, threats to democracy, threats to human freedom, conflict between bureaucratic rationality, and human reason. So, what is our role in society? A person who lacks understanding goes through two stages: growth and power. For a nursing major, personal development is needed. Through experiences like clinical or summer internships, one could be faced with life or death situations. However, this builds strength that allows a person to overcome the challenges of becoming a nurse.

Growing up as a child, I was faced with many different obstacles like most of us. One of those was to watch my grandfather develop Dementia. Living with him I learned more about myself I learned patience and how somethings are inevitable. Watching my grandfather forget the words to his favorite songs or forget family traditions taught me the importance of time. Nurses should be that resource who help a family in their time of need. Living with my grandfather for the last 5 years has provided myself a visual on how patience and kind someone has to be. In the next 3 months I'm going to hopefully be a nurse, nurses should practice with compassion, acceptance, and patience. Dealing with these hardships only provided me with the growth and strength that is needed to be a nurse. When someone's family is in a dark place,

nurses could be the light that picks them up. A person's perspective is shaped by his or her environment. How could a household environment change an individual? In certain cases, some children are brought up with a white picket fence, expensive cars, or materialistic items. Other children come from broken families or surrounded by substance abuse and never had the "typical" childhood. These two diverse kinds of population provide an understanding of how someone's upbringing can change a person's morals, values, and beliefs.

So, how does medical staff reduce the effects in geriatric patients? Using just a few lenses stated above has shown the positive outcomes of social, psychological, and the arts. Using nonpharmacological methods to benefit the minds of the elderly can work better than some medications. Being a nurse isn't always medication administration, wound care, or a head to toe assessment; if a nurse performs like a robot than he/she does not understand what it takes to be a holistic nurse and sadly they are missing the entire point. Our elderly population are often overlooked, but at some point in time they might have been a nurse, cop, even be in congress. They built the foundation of the world we are currently living in and it takes a simple task that can benefit them for a very long time.

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