No Bullies Allowed
Practicing Conflict Resolution in the Workplace

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Clearly Stated

Objectives
1. Describe ways that nurses can recognize overt and covert bullying in the workplace.
2. Describe the various reasons that conflict exists in healthcare.
3. List strategies nurses can use to address conflict when it arises in the workplace.
4. Describe ways to foster an environment of collaboration in the workplace which allows for conflict resolution.

Why is this learning about bully and conflict resolution important?

- Patients pay the ultimate price
- Major patient safety concern

Joint Commission has mandated that leadership "manages conflict ... to protect the quality and safety of care".

How prevalent is the problem?

- More than 50% of the nurses reported being abused at work
- More than 90 % had witnessed abusive behavior

Bullying causes emotional distress

- Hinders ability to work
- Develop post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD), anxiety, depression, or insomnia
- Leave nursing
- Suicide

Center for American Nurses takes a stand

"It is the position of the Center for American Nurses that there is no place in a professional practice environment for lateral violence and bullying among nurses or between healthcare professionals."
What is bullying?
The Center for American Nurses:
- Offensive, abusive, intimidating, malicious or insulting behavior
- Abuse of power
- Conducted by an individual or group
- Makes the recipient feel upset, threatened, humiliated or vulnerable, which undermines their self-confidence
- May cause them to suffer stress

Bullying has many names
- Nurse-to-Nurse hostility
- Emotional abuse
- Lateral or horizontal violence
- Eating our young
- Mean girl games
- Rudeness
- Incivility
- Joy stealers
- Disruptive and inappropriate behaviors

Disruptive and inappropriate behavior has a negative impact
- Retention of nursing staff
- Quality and safety of patient care
- Resource Utilization

In summary, why do we need to pay attention?
- Patient safety
- Mutual respect
- Retention of a solid workforce
- Mandated by the Joint Commission and Center for American Nurses
- Right thing to do

Working on this problem requires
- Constant self-monitoring
- Changes in the way we interact
- Team work
- Tenacity
- Constant surveillance
- Motivators to get things going
- Sustainers to keep things going

Three Levels of Organizational Conflict
- Intrapersonal - when confronted with two or more incompatible demands
- Interpersonal - between two or more people when one person perceives or values a situation differently than the other: ethical dilemmas, role conflict, work overload, and uncertainty about job expectations. Ex. Include determining how a job should be done, or setting different priorities or expectations
- Intergroup - competition between departments within a single healthcare facility or from rivalry among several organizations.
Relational Bullying

- Psychological not physical abuse
- Gossiping, withholding information, and ostracism
- Passive: refusing to perform assigned tasks, uncooperative attitudes during routine activities, not returning phone calls

Nurses are susceptible to display bullying behaviors

- Work in stressful situations
- Personality types that might result in the tendency toward bullying behaviors

Personality Type – Super Nurse

More senior, educated, or specialized than the others, and has “been there, done that.”

http://www.flickr.com/photos/29679138@N05/5331444704/in/photostream/

Personality Type – Resentful Nurse

Develops and holds grudges, and asks others to take sides

"Holding on to anger is like grasping a hot coal with the intent of throwing it at someone else: you are the one who gets burned"

Personality Type – PGR Nurse

- Put-downs
- Gossip
- Rumors

Personality Type – Backstabbing Nurse

Betrays, withholds and uses information as a weapon

Caption reads: Ronald refuses to tell what was in his special sauce.
Personality Type – Green-with-envy Nurse

Covets what she doesn’t have

Personality Type – Cliquish Nurse

Exclusion as a means of aggression and shows favoritism

What is conflict?

Conflict is a basic social interaction process that is part of our daily lives.

What is the goal of managing conflict?

- Manage conflict constructively
- Improve communication
- Reduce losses
- Create even better solutions

Benefits of conflict resolution

- Makes work life happier
- Personal growth
- Increases self-esteem and self-control
- Develop resolution skills
- Reduces stress and anxiety
- Reduces social withdrawal
- Reduces victimized behavior
- Reduces staff turnover
- Reduces the number of discipline actions

Experiencing Conflict

- Disbelief - how can others not agree with me on this?
- Disconnected - bewildered and confused.
- Obsessed - thinking about the problem and wondering what to do.
- Frenzied activity - need to understand the situation.
- Self-evaluation - recover a sense of balance or experiences symptoms of burnout.
- Purposeful alienation for self-preservation — take time off or seek to avoid confrontation.
How do you handle conflict?

- Avoid conflict - not a very helpful strategy
- Make compromises or accommodate - temporary peace but could build up resentment
- Collaboration - successful approach to resolve conflict

Look to yourself for resolution
How do I react when the earth is unstable under my feet?

Get back – take revenge?

Let it all hang out?

Run for the hills?

Sit on your pity pot?
Road Rage?

Silent Scream?

Hibernate?

Get sick?

Look to yourself for resolution

Do I ever display the personality characteristics described by Cheryl Dellasega?

Super Nurse? Practice humility.

- Seek awe-inspiring experiences such as natural wonders to put yourself in perspective.
- Seek out opportunities to see self honestly – you’re not great at everything.
- Practice giving honest feedback about another nurse’s strengths.
- Ask if you can help before butting in.
- Ask “May I offer a suggestion?”
- Wait for others to ask you for help.
- Develop a genuine sense of gratitude towards your teammates.
- Engage in physical labor or menial chores.

Developing Humility @http://respectrisk.com/component/content/article/120.html
Resentful? Stop holding a grudge

For a PowerPoint on how to stop holding a grudge click on “Eight ways to stop holding a grudge”

PRG Nurse? How to stop gossiping

- Repeating a name over and over? Stop and ask yourself how bringing this up is bettering the world.
- Repeating a story about someone? Pause for a moment and take some time to think about that person and what bothers you about him/her.
- Someone constantly challenging your world? Remove the person from your life or work through or around the challenge.
- Recall that stories told over and over tend to morph and grow more fantastic with time.
- If you must talk about a person, set a time limit. Tell the story in 1-2 minutes. Wrap it up. Change the topic.

http://tinybuddha.com/blog/how-to-stop-gossiping-and-creating-drama/

Backstabbing? Learn more about the reasons for backstabbing …

Lifescript – Healthy Living for Women
“Backstabbing Friends and Co-workers: Learn how to deal with backstabbing friends” @

Green-with-envy? Here’s Dr. Phil ….

- Recognize this is all about you – you can control it.
- Require more of yourself. Focus on self: what talents you have, what are you thankful for, what gifts you’ve been given.
- You may be creating a problem out of perception. Change perception – reframe.
- You thought your way into this, now think your way out of it.
- Every day for one week, write down 100 blessings in your life.
- Express thanks to others.
- Work at a homeless shelter or soup kitchen - write about your experience.

http://www.drphil.com/articles/article/340

Tend towards being cliquish?

Learn more about breaking up cliques “Breaking Up Cliques in Small Groups” @

Learn more about showing favoritism “Employee Favoritism: Favoritism is a Fast Track to Employee Resentment” @

Four Agreements

- Be impeccable with your word
- Don’t take anything personally
- Don’t make assumptions
- Always do your best
Be impeccable with your word

- Choose words wisely
- Avoid gossip

“Sticks and stones may break my bones but words might break my heart.” Anger words spoken do cause damage.

Don’t take anything personally

- Recognize feedback for what it is
- Learn something about yourself
- Learn something about the other person

Don’t make assumptions

- Seek clarification
- Avoid jumping to conclusions

Always do your best

- Our best is not always the same
- Trying halfheartedly is noticed

Cultivate the qualities of successful conflict resolution

- Ask for help
- Delegate – remember to hold management responsible and accountable
- Prioritize - not everything needs to be done immediately and learn how to let go
- Think critically
- Respect everyone on the team
- Relax

Apply the concepts of team work

- Appreciate differences
- Maintain the proper skill mix
- Build trust
- Respect
- Clear roles
- Clarify how the team will work together
Focus on the team

- Don’t try to figure out who “started it”
- Focus on the problem - not people
- Attack problems - not people
- Listen to understand
- Use constructive language

Focus on the future, not the past
- Always point out what is going right
- Make sure everyone is clear about the desired goal or objective
- Always show respect

Focus on culture of politeness and civility

- Dr. Pier Forni – professor at Johns Hopkins University
- 25 Rules of Considerate Conduct
- The Civility Solution: What to Do When People Are Rude Books
- http://krieger.jhu.edu/civility

Use reframing

- Create a frame of reference that focuses on the desired outcome
- Look at the same situation from a different perspective
- Think in a different way.
- This changes your interpretation of the event
- This changes your response to the event

Foster an environment of collaboration

- Challenge yourself & your colleagues
- Reframe conflict as an opportunity
- Make it a win-win
- Focus on expected behaviors

Pay attention
- Acknowledge others
- Think the best
- Listen
- Be inclusive
- Speak kindly
- Don't speak ill
- Accept and give praise
- Respect even a subtle "no"
- Respect others' opinions
- Mind your body
- Be agreeable
- Keep it down (and rediscover silence)
- Respect other people's time
Respect other people's space
Apologize earnestly
Assert yourself
Avoid personal questions
Care for your guests
Be a considerate guest
Think twice before asking for favors
Refrain from idle complaints
Accept and give constructive criticism
Respect the environment and be gentle to animals.
Don't shift responsibility and blame

Be gentle helping to move teammates forward
Sense of failure - must be doing things wrong
May feel shame or regret
Deal with the emotional reaction
Relate so that they feel accepted and connected
Repeat what is expected – practice new behaviors - reframe so that everyone wins

Apply the platinum rule:
Treat others the way they want to be treated

Nurse Managers - find out what your staff thinks
Anonymous survey about their perceptions of the emotional climate on your unit
Be very clear about your expectations
Learn to use the same language
Raise awareness
Distribute a handout describing specific behaviors

Nurse Managers - conflict resolution stage
Start the dialogue
Brainstorm solutions
Let staff know what is expected in simple words from you
Don’t make assumptions

Nurse Managers - create group guidelines
Post them
Check understanding
Revisit guidelines often
Check progress
Tweak
Share what you learn
Outline for Successful Conflict Resolution

- Focus on the issue at hand.
- Do not personalize the conflict.
- Only one person talks at a time.
- Practice active listening.
- Seek a positive outcome.
- Identify issue & state exactly what the conflict is about according to each person’s perception.

Role of Supervisor/Manager

- Make sure the facts are straight
- Do not take sides
- Make sure the nurses know that you believe in them
- Set a future date for review

Don’t expect too much from your supervisor

- Supervisors are not to solve your problems
- Supervisors provide the environment where you can work it out together

Work as a team toward collaboration

- Willing to participate?
- See the whole picture?
- What are the anxieties, fear, and needs of everyone involved?
- Make this fair for everyone?
- All possible resolutions?
- What am I feeling?
- What needs to change?
- What are the opportunities?
- How to show understanding?
- Can we work it out together? OR do we need help?
- How can we make it so that everyone wins?

References