

Usefulness of Structural Analysis as a Nursing Intervention for Assisting Para and Quadriplegic Patients in Coping with their Disability—An Abstract*

Jolly K. Simon

The purposes of the study were : (i) Increasing the ability of the patient to cope with his disability through structural analysis (ii) providing a guide for nurses in using structural analysis as a way of assisting para and quadriplegic patients in coping with their disability.

The hypothesis was "Structural analysis as a nursing intervention assists the patient in coping with his disability".

Case studies of ten patients (eight paraplegic patients and two quadriplegic patients) were done. Behaviour of these patients during the period of observation was described in the case study.

Observation, interviewing and psychological assessment by the patient, were the methods used for the study. The instruments used were anecdotal records and ego-grams drawn by the patient before and at the end of nursing intervention.

A comparison of the two ego-grams which were drawn by each patient was done. An action plan chart of contracts made by the patient for setting and achieving goals, was maintained for each patient throughout the period of study. The behaviour of the patient was recorded daily by maintaining the anecdotal records. Goals or contracts which were set by the patients in the beginning and at the end of the nursing intervention were analysed to see how far the patient had achieved his objectives.

This study demonstrated the usefulness of structural analysis as a nursing intervention for assisting

para—and quadriplegic patients in coping with their disability. It was found that these patients were able to cope with their disability to some extent after assessing their own personality functioning through the egogram. Some of the patients showed a uniform pattern of ego states. One salient aspect of this study was the setting and the achievement of goals by the patient. Most of the patients showed a marked improvement in the achievement of goals as well as in taking up some things which they had been unable to do themselves previously. Most of the patients were able to cope with their disability satisfactorily by assessing themselves and their own personality functioning and to make changes by setting and achieving goals.

Recommendations

(a) In the rehabilitation wards, it would be helpful if the nurse recognizes the need for stimulating and facilitating the patient to take responsibility for himself.

(b) A brief course in the use of structural analysis would be helpful and could be planned as an inservice education both for the faculty and other staff.

(c) It would be helpful if all nurses use the concept of structural analysis with the patients continuously. This may be especially useful in disability rehabilitation of blind, deaf and leprosy rehabilitation.

Implications for nursing and role of Nurses

Under the stress of illness, the behaviour of the patient and his family often indicates that the executive control has shifted from the adult ego state to either the parent or the child ego state. A certain amount of regression common in all illnesses may precipitate the need for more nurturing and

the child ego state is more clearly seen. Many a times the patient is quite aware of this shift. In the critical parent ego state he stands in judgement of himself. Therefore, structural analysis provides a useful concept for the nurse for viewing the behaviour of the patient.

Modern concepts of nursing include the expectation that the patient is a partner in his care—that he will use his adult ego in exercising responsibility and decisions regarding his life and care. The nurse uses her adult ego state to determine the patient's needs. She decides whether he needs her to nurture him or whether she should refrain from direct help. She can observe the patient objectively and detect the child ego state which is represented by such symptoms as a demanding nature, withdrawal, hypochondriasis and manipulation. Then she tries to understand how this meets the needs of the patient at the present time. She refrains from labelling this behaviour as childish or immature. Working on this basis she can help the patient develop more satisfying and more satisfactory ways of achieving recognition.

Suggestions for further study:

(1) Personality analysis using a script questionnaire in order to assess relationships of personality traits and the coping ability of the patients in dealing with their disabilities.

(2) A study may be done to assess the ability of the patient to cope with his disability after continuing structural analysis as a nursing intervention for a longer period of time.

(3) A future study may be done by using control group to test the usefulness of structural analysis.

(4) A future study may be done with patients who were admitted immediately after the injury.

*This study was undertaken by Miss Jolly K. Simon as partial fulfilment of the requirement for the degree of Master of Science in Nursing in 1975. She did her Masters in Nursing at College of Nursing, C.M.C. Hospital, Vellore.