

The Nurse as a Student

S.G. SAHIWALA
N.K. BOMBAYWALA

(Continued from Last Month)

Learning

Learning may be defined as the acquiring of knowledge or skill in a subject by study, experience, or by instruction.

Learning is self-active and depends largely upon the application of effort, system, organization, and energy, by the learner in attaining a goal. Self-activity may take many forms, among them are listening, visualizing, memorizing, recalling, reasoning, thinking, and judgement. Mental tests and distribution curves have helped to show that individual abilities of learners are widely divergent.

The teacher of experience also notices that the ability of the individual varies greatly in the learning of different subjects. There is a definite relationship between ability and achievement, but it must be recognized that extraneous factors, such as personality, social environment and emotional stability, also enter into learning and achievement: that ability alone does not insure learning. Achievement is influenced by personal qualities, such as good working habits, the purposeful self-activity, consistently high school achievement. Learning ability is affected by the experience or background of the learner. This includes her reading ability and vocabulary facility, the attitude towards learning, the use of the technique of learning (how to plan, knowing sources of information and how to use them effectively), knowing how to concentrate and how to make practical application of the knowledge gained. Above all is proper motivation, that force, drive, or enthusiasm within the individual which causes sustained activity in some direction. These are desires and purposes which may extend over a long period of time. Incentives or motives originating outside the individual may include class rivalry or competition, a knowledge of the results of the effort, praise or reproof from those in authority, tests and examinations.

Effective Learning

There are several necessary tools for effective learning: (a) Adequate vocabulary, (b) Reading skills, (c) Communication skills; and (d) Calculating skills.

(a) *Adequate Vocabulary*: No student can progress very far unless she or he understands the meanings of the words she reads or hears. This refers to everyday vocabulary as well as scientific vocabulary. As we have seen previously every student can

increase vocabulary skills by using a standard dictionary. Scientific words are more difficult. Students often feel that they are in a world where foreign language is spoken. In each subject they must learn the meaning of many words before they understand and master the subject. This involves a great deal of memory work. One method of building a vocabulary is to use small cards (about 1" by 2"). Write the unfamiliar word on one side and the meaning on the other. Make sure both spelling and meaning are correct. Quiz yourself frequently from these cards. Mastery of an extensive vocabulary results in more meaningful study and more comprehensive understanding in patient care.

(b) *Reading Skills*: Many of you have learned to read quickly and comprehensively. Slow readers often have formed the bad habits of vocalizing when reading, i.e., they audibly or inaudibly say the word as their eyes move along the printed page. If you have this habit, try to break it by thinking the words instead of uttering them.

(c) *Communication Skills*: Communication involves relating one to another. There are two methods of communication: (i) Verbal and (ii) Non-verbal. (i) Verbal communication not only involves the spoken word, but also includes the subject matter, the manner in which the thoughts are expressed, and aids hearing and vision. (ii) Non-verbal communication refers to the non-spoken methods of communication, which may be more important than the spoken word. Symbolism is considered part of non-verbal communication. All senses are involved in non-verbal communication.

Communication skills in Nursing include talking, listening, observing and writing. Students learn to make accurate and significant observations about their patients. Is this enough? Of course, No! Because, they must also learn to describe vocally or in writing their observations to their supervisor or to the physician, and be able to write those observations in a correct form, using accurate scientific terminology. They must be able to spell and pronounce correctly.

The nurses use communication skills in: (1) interpreting assignments, both written and oral, (2) writing acceptable reports, (3) giving oral reports, (4) observing patients, and (5) listening.

They learn to listen to the patients' story, to reports and discussions and to instructions.

Speaking, Listening, and Observing: Speech is a

(Continued on page 276)



Miss Gratia D'Souza

In the Part I examination conducted in May 1984, Mr. Balaji secured the second rank. Miss Vyjayanthi, Mr. Vishnudas Kudva, Mr. Christopher, Miss Sarala T., Miss Rose P.D. and Mr. Thomas Abraham passed with Distinction. 60 candidates appeared for the examination. Eighty seven per cent of the students passed the examination.

Nazareth Hospital, Mokama

The SNA Unit, Nazareth Hospital, Mokama, performed the following activities for the year 1983:

The unit consists of 147 members. We had regular and emergency meetings, quarterly social gatherings and celebrated institutional, national and international days with great enthusiasm. Educational programmes like quiz contest, panel discussion, role plays and Nursing procedure demonstrations are part of our SNA meetings which stimulate learning. We celebrated Capping and grand Graduation days. We assisted the eye camp by the Rotary Club of Mokama. We also participated in the Rotary Club discussion on 'The Changing Role of Women in the Society'. We were very happy to welcome the Secretary of TNAI, Mrs. Narender Nagpal to our unit last May. Our Nurses' Week celebration was a joyful one with educational as well as cultural competitions and prizes were given to



Mr. Balaji

the students by the hospital. Our representatives attended State's meetings and the Secretary to the State Executive is from our unit. We have a good library, and our spiritual, personal and emotional needs are taken care of by retreats, group dynamics, sports, movies and leisure activities. We also are active in the Community Outreach Programmes of the hospital.

Terry Rozario
Unit Secretary

Nurse as a Student

(Continued from page 274)

person's most important method of communication. First impressions are often based upon one's voice. The tone may be high or low, it may sound pleasant, or it may grate on the nerves. Our knowledge of grammar, our vocabulary, our pronunciation, and our enunciation all add to the impression. Most emotions—sorrow, anger, happiness, disgust, and so forth—can be relayed by inflections in the voice.

Make a recording of your voice, if possible. Hear yourself as others do. You may be quite surprised. Do you speak too rapidly or too slowly? Do you enunciate well? Is your voice high-pitched with a nervous quivering? Do you speak with a nasal twang or in a monotone? An individual can do much to improve her speech, but she must know her faults and admit to herself that practice is needed for improvement. Observe others whom you admire. What are the qualities that first attracted you to them?

Remember that listening is as much or more a part of the conversation as speech. You can show courtesy toward and interest in people by giving your undivided attention to what they say. You can become a "wonderful conversationalist", merely by learning the art of listening. How many people have you talked to recently, who did not interrupt you one or more times in a brief conversation? Your replies and interested questions show the other person how carefully you are listening.

Making quick and accurate observations is as important in Nursing as giving the proper treatment to the right patient. In order to make intelligent observations, one must have attained the basic knowledge needed to make the proper judgement. In other words, before you perform a particular treatment for the patient, you must not only know how to do it correctly and what are the expected effects and adverse reactions but you must also be alert for unexpected reactions.

(d) *Calculating Skills* : The nurse has to do a certain amount of calculation. Calculating skills are used in preparing solutions, and in giving medicines. A review of basic arithmetic with practice in its application is essential.

Conclusion

Successful nurses are those who are physically and mentally healthy, alert and willing to learn about new ways of doing things. They are competent in carrying out Nursing procedures and become more proficient as they develop self-confidence. Good nurses are dependable, resourceful, considerate of others, and well-poised. Because of knowledge and competence, they inspire confidence, both in the patient and in others with whom they work. In order to be successful, nurses must derive personal satisfaction from work, and through this, develop a sense of social and vocational responsibility.

THE NURSING JOURNAL OF INDIA