

Nursing : A Wonderful Calling

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NURSING is something much more wonderful than a mere employment, or even an absorbing profession. It is a call or a vocation from a God of Compassion who really cares for each one of us. He calls us to do the work which will develop us most, and will help our neighbour.

We are created by God through our parents, but we were in God's mind long before we were in the womb of our mothers. He created us to fulfil a purpose in this world and we must try and find his purposes for us and co operate with them.

Attraction to Help

God has not only created us nurses for a work of caring or compassion but He has also prepared us for it by the disposition, family life and education, which he has provided for us, by the attraction he has given us to help sick people in bed, or not in beds.

However, it is not sufficient to offer to be a nurse, even to be enrolled in a School of Nursing, and remember it is a School or College in which we must learn, study hard, and fulfil the practical duties of a nurse involved in caring for a patient as a mother fulfils the duties of caring for a child and does not shirk them.

We must appreciate our lovely vocation—to help to bring back life to a poor exhausted body, to help to make it more useful. We are to care for the whole person not only the body, but the mind and soul of the person. We are to help to make the patient whole. We will not do this if we give way to impatience and irritation to which we shall often be tempted. You must never try to get accustomed to seeing suffering and get hardhearted. May be that patient has never suffered physically before.

You will always try to be gentle,

both with your hands and your hearts. One has to not merely respect but love your vocation by doing your work in the most perfect way possible. While I was doing my Nursing training and working hard at it, a young student (I was not young even then!) said to me "Sister! why do you study so much after you finish duty? If I get 51% and you get 99% what difference will there be between us—we shall both only be appointed as a Staff Nurse!" She got her 51%. I did not get quite 99% but I consider that I was more knowledgeable than she in the absence of a doctor when sometimes very seriously ill patients were admitted and needed immediate Nursing care!

So, please develop your intelligence, read books and articles on your subject, don't be content with R.N., R.M., want more B.S., Nursing etc. or specialisation in your favourite branch. You will have noticed that a nurse can inspire a doctor with confidence. Once a Sister-in-Charge told an Obstetrician that a certain Midwifery student was leaving. The doctor said he never knew she was a student. She knew so much and he always felt that if she was on duty when he had a difficult case it would turn out well, which it always did, he said. When you are ignorant or puzzled, ask, and ask before you act.

In one case a patient came back from the theatre and on his chart was written a certain drug TDS, given "stat". I was on the medicine round as a 2nd year student and noting that the drug was one not usually given to such patients, I enquired from the senior nurse on duty. All she said was: "It is doctor's order—give it". I did not give it. The Professor came in soon to ask about the patient. When I pointed out the instruction he said: "That is a mistake. I ordered it

"Stat" only as an emergency dose. I hope you didn't give it." Fortunately, I could say 'No' and all was well. But the other nurse would have given it, although it had come into a lecture we had both attended just a few days before.

Be willing yourself to explain to younger nurses when they ask information and encourage them to do so. You ask them a question to be sure they understand.

Book Review

Behaviour of the Mentally Ill

Behaviour and Rehabilitation : Behavioural Treatment for Long Stay Patient By Richard J. Butler and Gerald Rosenthal, II Ed. Wright, Bristol, 1985, Pp. 204, Price : £ 9.95.

THERE are some mentally ill patients who do not respond to various treatments. Thus, they stay in the hospital for a long time, may be more than two years.

This book gives the methods to understand their behaviour and motivate them to learn new constructive behaviour in place of maladaptive behaviour.

This book is divided into four sections. The first section describes the environmental conditions and traditional treatment. The second section explains the nurse as therapist, her role how she can modify the environment and interaction with the patient. The third section is about what normal behaviour is and how we can measure and record it. Some check lists are made which are very helpful to the nurses working in psychiatric units or mental hospitals. The fourth section describes the treatment part, e.g., positive reinforcers, developing initiative, developing new behaviours, etc.

This book is written in a systematic way in a language easy to understand. I recommend this book for all the Nursing teachers teaching Psychiatric Nursing, Nursing students, therapists, social workers, Clinical Psychologists and all those who are involved in looking after the patients who need long-term treatment in the hospital.

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