

Human Relationships in Nursing

By Miss Agnes Forrest

There is perhaps no field in which the study of human relationships is more necessary than in nursing because the nurse comes across a large number of people of different kind in her day-to-day life. It is the duty of the nurse to work for and strive to enhance the relationships with those around her.

Adherence to recognised lines of authority, helps prevent friction. The channel of communication in her official capacity is through the person to whom she is directly responsible and these channels ensure smooth functioning. It is when these accepted channels are overlooked, questions like "why am I here?" or "why have I not been consulted?" arise paving the route for strained relationship.

Delegation of Authority

The art of delegating authority is a rare skill. The person to whom the authority is delegated has a right to feel that the whole responsibility has been delegated to her with the right to make relative decisions. She also has the right to expect that the decisions made by her will be upheld by her superiors who might have at times personal reservations about a decision. This is because of the realisation that the authority was delegated to make decisions and that there is room for difference of opinion. Where such confidence exists the relationships will be at its best. But an attempt to over-rule decisions often shakes the confidence of the person delegated with authority and she may no longer take pride in doing the job well.

Relationships between staff working on the same level e.g. staff nurses working together on a ward if not harmonious, are bound to affect the character of the work done. When open disputes arise in the wards among workers of the same level it would be unwise on the part of the person in charge to favour one person

against the other. Such an unwise step will bring in groupism and regionalism. Another area in which a person in authority can help to keep harmonious horizontal relationships is in the passing on of information. There is a delightful superiority feeling about knowing something no body else knows and a corresponding depth of mortification in finding later that the information was denied to you by someone with whom you are associated. Information of general interest should be divulged to all at the same time. This demands a certain amount of self discipline. The person in authority might develop a liking to one of her staff but this should not reflect in favouring one over the other. Therefore, she must be on her guard against her own natural inclinations.

Difficulties

Difficulties in relationships are bound to arise in a group working together. The person who is always involved in difficult personal relationships may have some unsolved emotional problems which reflect in his or her behaviour to others. Temporary difficulties may be the result of some emotional stress, such as a temporary work overload. This can be overcome by adhering to a reasonable work schedule providing time for recreation.

Lack of confidence in the job to which a person is assigned may be the cause of aggressive behaviour, which will set up a chain or bad relationships. Inability to acquire some skill which others in equal position have acquired may also be the cause of such behaviour.

Sometimes because of lack of courage or for fear of being misunderstood people do not speak out what they feel. Instead they grumble to other people which creates bad feeling. The best way is to take courage and clear the

point with those involved. An honest statement of the difficulties is likely to bring about better results. One must accept that there may be situations where relationships never seem to be right. In these cases continued feeling of goodwill towards the other person may be all that can be achieved. This is an achievement as it is more natural to harbour all sorts of ill-will against the person concerned.

Good human relationships brings job satisfaction and high morale. With morale high production will also be good. In hospitals this means the best possible care for the patient.

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M. Mela Ram
SNA Conference Secretary

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B. G. Dawson
Nursing Superintendent

U Did It



Constable : Multiple riding ! Your case is referred to the nearest Family Planning Unit.

Cyclist : But my wife is a Nurse.