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Mentoring...

How does it address nurses' learning needs?

A thesis presented as partial fulfilment
of the requirements for the degree of
Master of Education (Adult Education)
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Abstract:

Mentoring is regarded as a valuable process to support development in a variety of practice orientated disciplines, and nursing is no exception. The diversity of mentoring required within the clinical and academic context provides challenges for the nursing profession. The New Zealand Nursing Council [NZNC] requires nurses to develop a mentoring relationship to support postgraduate study. Learning and development can be supported both personally and professionally, I believe, through sound mentoring relationships.

This study offers insights into mentoring experiences of nurses, seeking to understand the impact of mentoring on learning. The cohort is a group of New Zealand Registered Nurses who completed a Postgraduate Speciality Nursing Practice programme.

A qualitative interpretive research design was employed using interpretive phenomenology, to explore nurses' experiences of the mentoring phenomenon. A review of the literature supported by data collection using focus group conversations during late 2006 and early 2007 provided the basis for data generation.

Nursing education has been in transition over the past decade. Training programs have moved from the hospital base into the polytechnics and universities. This transitional process has resulted in a diverse mix of nurses in current practice bringing different views and perspectives to the practice setting and their educational pursuits and therefore provides challenges for mentoring relationships. Transition theory was integrated to understand the relationship of learning during times of transition and change.

Findings indicate the mentoring process is complex and highly individual, often ill defined and confusing. This study illuminates some of the issues and complexities seeking to identify areas for future initiatives.

Acknowledgement:

This thesis has challenged my thinking about nursing and nursing practice, helping me to understand the supporting roles that provide nurses with many opportunities for advancement and professional development. There are many people, some nurses, some not who have travelled this journey with me, it is difficult to know where to start with acknowledgements.

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And finally to my dear Dad, my first and most powerful mentor, his incredible enthusiasm and keen interest in my life and passions has been exceptional and inspirational. Sadly he passed away before the completion of this project. This work is a tribute to him.

Just a Nurse

By Susanne Gordon

I'm *just a nurse*. I just make the difference between life and death.

I'm *just a nurse*. I just have the educated eyes that prevent medical errors, injuries, and other catastrophes.

I'm *just a nurse*. I just make the difference between healing and coping, and despair.

I'm *just a nurse*. I just make the difference between pain and comfort.

I'm *just a nurse*. I'm just a nurse researcher who helps nurses and doctors give better, safer, and more effective care.

I'm *just a nurse*. I'm just a professor of nursing who educates future generations of nurses.

I'm *just a nurse*. I just work in a major teaching hospital managing and monitoring patients who are involved in cutting-edge experimental research.

I'm *just a nurse*. I just educate patients and families about how to maintain their health.

I'm *just a nurse*. I'm just a geriatric nurse practitioner who makes a difference between an elderly person staying in his own home or going to a nursing home.

I'm *just a nurse*. I just make the difference between dying in agony and dying in comfort and with dignity.

I'm *just a nurse*. I'm just the real bottom-line in health care.

Wouldn't you like to be *just a nurse*, too?

Mentoring...

How does it address nurses learning needs?

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'Come to the edge', he said.

They said, 'We are afraid'.

'Come to the edge', he said.

They came.

He pushed them.....

And they flew!

Giullaume Apollinaire

Cited in Cooper-Morton & Palmer (2000 Pg 35)