Relational Aggression, Organizational Cynicism, and Commitment in the Nursing Workplace
Overview

- Health care is about relationships.

- “Relationships are central to our identities: They shape who we are. Relationships are therefore central for creating collective identity in an organization and for enabling work to be coordinated effectively.”


- A comparison of high performing and low performing ICUs revealed better communication between nurses and doctors in high performing ICUs

  *Christopher Nemeth, (2012) Improving Healthcare Team Communication*

- An analysis of 1,200 responses from nurses, physicians, and hospital executives suggests that daily interactions between nurses and physicians strongly influence nurses' morale.

  *Alan Rosenstein, 2002, American Journal of Nursing*
What Makes a Workplace Healthy?

• “Clearly, we have a long way to go in creating healthy work environments in nursing as these results show that basic human factors that foster individual health and well-being are still lacking in current nursing work environments.”


• Psychological aspects
• Spiritual aspects
• Physical aspects
Our Presentation

- Define organizational cynicism, commitment and relational aggression
- Discuss why these concepts can create a toxic vs. terrific work environment for nurses
- Provide examples of interventions which have been used to address the emotional environment of the nursing workplace.
Organizational Cynicism: A New Concept for Nursing

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Organizational Cynicism & Organizational Commitment

- Definitions
- Relevance to “the healthy workplace”
- Research
Cynicism & Commitment

- Two components of a healthy work environment:
  - Organizational cynicism
  - Institutional commitment
Organizational Cynicism

- OC is the negative evaluation, by employees, of the motives, actions and values of the employing organization.
Causes of OC

- Causes—mostly speculation
  - Fewer opportunities for autonomous behavior
  - Workplace hassles
  - Psychological contract violations
  - Procedural injustice perceptions
  - Perception of organization/management incompetence
Effects (Correlates) of OC

- People high in organizational cynicism
  - Have increased negative behavioral work intentions
  - Are less likely to perform extra-role behaviors
  - Have lower work motivation
  - Lower job satisfaction, burnout, emotional exhaustion
Institutional Commitment

• Three types of institutional commitment
  – Affective: employee has an emotional attachment to the organization; they are there because they like it
  – Normative: employee feels obligated to the organization
  – Continuance: employee is there because they feel like they have to be: golden handcuffs
Institutional Commitment

Striking intergenerational differences
Cultural beliefs and values
Factors that influence commitment can be modified
  Shadow a Nurse Day
Strong positive relationship with job satisfaction
Related (negatively) to turnover and burnout

Let's hope he has a lot of commitment!
OC and Commitment in Real Time

• Study: explored interrelationship among 3 variables in group of 1,104 RNs in Australia:
  – Perceived fairness of change management and personnel practices
  – Employee cynicism
  – Affective commitment

• Findings
  – High cynicism → low commitment
  – Positive perceptions of fairness → high commitment

OC and Commitment in Real Time

• Study: explored how OC affects three employee work outcomes (manufacturing setting)
  – Institutional commitment
  – In-role and extra-role behaviors
  – Employee involvement activities / empowerment

• Findings:
  – High OC → low organizational commitment
  – High OC → fewer in-role behaviors
  – High OC → low involvement/empowerment

Outcomes of OC and Commitment

• So what?
  – Hospital environment (which includes variables like OC and commitment) is a key predictor of
    • Burnout
    • Leaving the institution
    • Job dissatisfaction
Relational Aggression in the Nursing Environment Workplace

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FAQs About RA

• What is it?
  • The use of relationships rather than fists to hurt one another.

• Why does it happen?
  • Great question

• Who is involved?
  • Aggressor, target, bystanders

• What does RA look like in the workplace?
  • Scenario

• What can be done about it?
  • Stay tuned
What Do the Behaviors Look Like?

- Gossip
- Manipulation
- Intimidation
- Exclusion
- Gestures
- Ridicule
- Saying something mean then pretending you were “joking”
- Name calling
- Teasing/harassment
- Cliques
- Campaigns
- Shifting loyalties
- Betraying confidences
Useful Frameworks

• Morality and ethics
• Biobehavioral theories
  • Psychological and physical interventions
• Empowerment theory
  • Recognize and reward nurses to give them a sense of value
• Conflict theory
  • Conflict resolution strategies can offer concrete solutions
Activities

Relationship Bootcamp for Nurses™
Eight hour workshop
ERI
E=Educate in a nonthreatening way
R=Relate new information to your life
I=Integrate healthy relationship skills that are feasible for you
Improving the Emotional Work Environment for Nurses

Dr. Cole Edmonson, DNP, RN, FACHE, NEA-BC
Robert Wood Johnson Foundation Executive Nurse Fellow
Chief Officer, Texas Health System
• Teamsteps CUS
• Nurse Advocates (promise coaches)
• Residency (civility education generational precepting)
• Orientation (civility education)
• Civility Dashboard (turnover rate, call ins, float nurse ratings of float experience, gender mix, diversity mix, SALTS, longevity measures, NDNQI scores)
- Leader to Patient Program
- Open Forums (CWC)
- Moral Courage Model
- Manager Civility Education
- Safe work place policy on bullying added: HR supported
• Crucial Conversation / Confrontation
• Cognitive Rehearsal SWAT
• Reflection Practice
• Practice Gratitude and Forgiveness (unit story book - Inspired Nurse)
Data

- NDNQI (N = 701)
- 99% participation rate (avg. 72%)
- Job Enjoyment Scale 66% (avg. 56)
- 95% plan on staying on same unit
- Turnover controllable < 1%
Questions

- Does the nursing workplace look different than others?
- Is it a gender issue?
- Impact of a toxic environment on the emotional climate
- Can patients be bullies?
THANK YOU!