

## **Turning to One Another & Polyvagal Connections**

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### **Describe:**

After the reading, the connection technique I chose to implement is to "recognize that we need each other's help to become better listeners" (Wheatley, 2009, p. 35). I realized that we spoke a lot without listening to each other. Listening is essential in all patients, colleagues, and family conversations. It helps in relationships, and we need each other's help to listen. We must be in the present when in conversation with each other. Although we have busy schedules and cannot keep up with the work, everyone is on their own. Our slowing down and listening gives us a greater understanding of one another. I chose to start a conversation and listen from my heart which goes a long way. When we listen to each other, we can reflect on how our actions affect others and how to build a stronger team. I became an active, authentic listener with empathy and compassion for my patients and colleagues. The myelinated vagus allows humans to interact without fear, so we can use our neuroception to feel and sense others. (Vinson, 2019). In social engagement, we can feel the emotions of others if we are present.

Therefore, I use the second Caritas to be "authentically present, instilling faith and hope and honoring others" (Bolima, 2021) and myself. I apply this process daily and regularly to all relationships.

### **Examine:**

After one week of implementing this technique at work. I realized how much know and do not know about some of my colleagues and patients. It was very transformative, and I became a better listener by asking more questions. Not that it was easy because I struggled to stop myself from just listening, but I reminded myself that I would learn something from them. I was acknowledging and validating their feelings, being more curious, and wanting to know more about the other person, which I did. Being an authentic active listener, I was less judgmental and more open to them. As I listened, I learned more and something new, and my relationships with them improved. For example, I now see why Nurse A is always moody, nurse B is always anxious, and Nurse C is always worried and helpful. I learned why patient A is always coming late to her appointments. I discovered that she sometimes gets occasional diarrhea and cannot leave home on time. Everyone had something to say and was happy to share their stories; some inspired me. It amazes me how starting conversations and being an active listener helped me understand the people I worked with and some of my patients. It also helped to build a stronger team and better relationships in the department.

### **Articulate Learning:**

I learned that my genuine presence and attentiveness to my colleagues and patients allow them to trust me. It helped me to develop this loving, trusting, and caring

relationship with them. The fourth Caritas Bolima stated that helping, trusting, and caring relationships "require authenticity and genuineness of human connection" (2021). Cody (2007) described healing as a sense of wholeness in the presence of a disease or not and "a sense of being fully oneself while connecting with others" (p. 17). There was healing during my conversations with my colleagues for me and hopefully for them too. I realized that we are divided because we judge each other and not because of our differences. I must learn more about my patients, their families, and their peers. I must remain curious and want more knowledge about others.

I have a patient that is always upset and cries over anything, like delays in medication delivery. When I got to know her, I realized that her daughter had been missing for many years. Her son is a drug addict, and she is raising her grandson. She has underlying psychological issues, not about the delayed medication. She would not have any other nurse touch her except me when she came for her treatment.

Furthermore, she will call and ensure I will be at work when she comes. This is the power of authentic listening, empathy, and compassion, the willingness to bear witness to others' suffering. A solid and meaningful relationship develops when we share our stories and authentic listening. I aim to remain an authentic listener with patients, their families, friends, peers, and my family. I am encouraging other nurses to participate.

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