Instructor Guide Chapter #9 - Family and Nurse Presence in Family Focused Care

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This quote can provide nurse educators with a perspective of teaching and learning to guide students as they develop understandings about the significance of presence as a powerful nursing action to promote family health.

Chapter Objectives

1. Differentiate between the ideas of nursing presence and family presence.
2. Describe nursing and family presence in various health and illness experiences.
3. Describe nursing actions that support family caring strategies and family presence.
4. Evaluate implications of being present with individuals, family members, and supportive others during nursing care encounters.

Chapter Concepts

Adaptation
Family as Advocates
Family Balancing
Family Connecting
Family Emotions
Family Inquiry
Family Integrity
Family Presence
Family Vigilance
Hope
Nurse Presence
Satisfaction
Vulnerability
Chapter Introduction

Presence can be viewed as “the difference that nursing makes” in promoting the health of individuals and families (Newman, 2008). Presence addresses commitment to another, full engagement or openness, interconnectedness, valuing another’s dignity, and recognizing what is important to another (Melnechenko, 2003; Parse, 1998). Presence is relevant whether caring for an ill individual or a family in distress. Human presence can lessen the suffering and distress of another human through relationship and connections (Bell, 2011; Eggenberger & Nelms, 2007). Presence can also be viewed from the perspective of being a family member who is connected to others in the family unit. Family members often strive to support each other during times of illness and transition. Individual and family bonds must be respected. Nurses that think family acknowledge the value and potential of connectedness and its powerful influence on health and illness. During times of illness, crisis, and uncertainty, intensified connections often occur within families. Nurses that think family realize that members often want to be together at poignant points in life. The presence of a supportive family member can minimize the distress of an illness situation and maximize the health and healing potential of nursing care.

In 1995, a Family Nursing Research Team (FNRT) was formed at the School of Nursing at Minnesota State University, Mankato to investigate family nursing care linked with family health and illness experiences. The team aimed to develop practice knowledge that assists nurses with ways to support and care for families. Families were studied during health and illness experiences. This team collaborated in teaching nursing students about the importance of nurse presence in health or illness care and worked with other faculty colleagues in academic and practice settings. This chapter shares findings learned through this focused research program. The ways nurses can incorporate presence as they think family and provide family focused
nursing actions are described. The chapter includes an evolving case study that addresses the effects of a family tragedy. Examples of interpersonal relationships, availability, sensitivity, holism, intimacy, vulnerability, and adaptation are included. The case study highlights family presence and nurse presence as the family transitions through various healthcare settings. The ebb and flow of both family strengths and effects of nursing presence upon these transitions is described as Meloni’s mother tells her story. This chapter provides many ways to work with students as they consider what cognitive, psychomotor, and affective skills are needed to effectively provide family focused nursing care.

References


