REFLECTIVE JOURNALING TO INCREASE CRITICAL THINKING FOR RNS

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Is a thought process basic to problem-solving and decision-making.
Involves reflection, judgment, evaluation, and criticism.
Challenges assumptions and biases.
Leads to decisiveness that is vital to achievement of goals.
Fundamental to development of clinical thinking
Is a choice!

CRITICAL THINKING SKILLS

Critical Thinking

Explanation

Analysis

Inference

Interpretation

Evaluation

Self-regulation

Facione and Facione, 1996
CRITICAL THINKING DISPOSITIONS
“HABITS OF MIND”

Inquisitiveness

Systematic

Analytic

Open-minded

Judicious

Truth-seeking

Confident in reasoning

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PURPOSE AND DESIGN

- To explore how using reflective journaling focused on CT dispositions might influence use of CT dispositions in participants in a Critical Care/Emergency Department fellowship program.
- Qualitative, descriptive study used content analysis for participants’ journal entries on CT dispositions.
SETTING

- Large multi-hospital health care system in northeastern USA
- 1 year Critical Care /Emergency Department Fellowship Program
- Uses a blended learning approach to educate nurses

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IRB approval obtained

Participants of Fellowship program invited to participate, informed consent obtained

1st day of the Fellowship program, 1 hour presentation on critical thinking dispositions using simulated videos and discussion

Researcher emailed a weekly prompt with a brief description of one of the CT dispositions for each of the first 7 weeks of the fellowship

Participants journaled about their reflections or experiences with that particular disposition

Line by line content analysis used to develop first themes for each disposition and then through reduction, to two overarching themes
DEMOGRAPHICS

- 74.8% Female
- 51.1% White
- 80.0% Baccalaureate Degree
- 74.8% has less than 1 year of Nursing Experience
71 Participants completed Demographic Survey

- Journal Entry submissions
  - 56 Inquisitiveness
  - 55 Analyticity
  - 58 Truth-seeking
  - 46 Systematicity
  - 42 Critical thinking maturity
  - 43 Open-mindedness
  - 38 Critical thinking self-confidence
IDENTIFICATION OF THEMES

- Unit of analysis was the phrase, not the participant
- Journal entries were read several times by researcher
- Key phrases were coded
- Initial coding validated by researcher with expertise in qualitative methods
- Categories were given a descriptor
- Categories were further reduced resulting in sub-themes for the dispositions

Krueger & Casey, 2009
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Major Themes and sub-themes for each critical thinking disposition</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Over-arching Themes</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>1. CT Is a process that develops during a period of time</td>
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<tr>
<td>2. Purposefully Using CT dispositions may help prevent</td>
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<tr>
<td>negative patient outcomes.</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Inquisitiveness</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>1. Being inquisitive facilitates patient assessment and helps</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>prevent missed information and errors.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Purposefully being inquisitiveness furthers individual</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>learning.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
| Systematicity                          | 1. Systematicity is essential to the nursing process and develops over time with experience.  
|                                      | 2. Systematicity helps in organizing and prioritizing the delivery of patient care. |
| Open-mindedness                      | 1. Open-mindedness prevents judgmental, biased behavior.  
|                                      | 2. Being open minded promotes teamwork. |
| Analyticity                          | 1. Analyticity works together with inquisitiveness to put the puzzle pieces together.  
|                                      | 2. Allows one to recognize patterns and anticipate and prevent complications, thus promoting patient safety. |
| Truth-seeking                                                                 | 1. Truth-seeking requires courage to ask questions and result in better learning  
2. Truth-seeking requires putting biases and preconceived notions aside to focus on the patient |
| CT Maturity                                                                   | 1. CT maturity develops over time and helps make sense of different ways of doing things to reach the same goal.  
2. CT maturity works with open-mindedness and allows for learning through reflection |
| CT self-confidence                                                           | 1. CT self-confidence develops over time with clinical experience to allow one to question things and verbalize it to other team members.  
2. Works with other dispositions to help make decisions and problem solve |
IMPLICATIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

- Focusing on and using CT dispositions was valued for providing safe patient care and helping to reduce errors and negative outcomes
- The purposeful use of CT dispositions guided the RN’s individual learning
- Reflective journaling as a learning strategy was helpful to learning about and using CT dispositions during the 7 week fellowship program
- Further research that explored the internalization of CT disposition use over time would be helpful
- This study did not include the participants satisfaction with reflective journaling as a learning strategy and could be explored in further research

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QUESTIONS AND DISCUSSION


