Where Do You Want to be Oiled First?
Mentoring Lessons From Oz

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Objective

Identify practical strategies for coaching and mentoring nurses, helping them to find within themselves the Heart, Courage and Intelligence for success in their new roles.
A nurse participant in our research study:
“Please mentor me. Don’t just orient me!”

Mentoring is essential in the fast-paced health care environment where nurses often assume new roles with little formal preparation.

Lack of self-confidence in a new role can lead to frustration and withdrawal, creating increased costs for the institution and dissatisfaction for nurses themselves.
Three areas of mentoring:

• Clinicians learning new roles as clinical nurse educators;
• New graduates learning to find their place in clinical practice;
• Nurses implementing clinical research at the bedside.
Clinicians learning new roles as clinical nurse educators

- Study framed within a Clinical Nurse Educator Academy
  - designed to prepare experienced clinicians for new roles as part-time or full-time clinical nurse educators
- Explored process of nurses moving from “expert to novice” Benner (1984)
  - written narratives of nurses enrolled in the Academy
Research Question

• How can narratives of clinicians participating in a Clinical Nurse Educator Academy enhance understanding of the unique perspectives of these individuals as they prepare for roles as clinical nurse educators?
Design & Method

- Two 4-day Clinical Nurse Educator Academies
- Only reflective papers from participants who signed the informed consent included in data analysis
- Nine students from 1st Academy and 36 from the 2nd Academy participated. Each participant wrote 3 reflective papers (N=135)
Design & Method

Three reflective papers focused on the following questions:

– Describe an incident that reflects your concerns about moving from the clinician to the clinical nurse educator role.

– Describe an incident that reflects your ideas about how you can make a difference for students as they learn new clinical skills.

– Describe an incident that reflects your ideas about what you need from a mentor as you move to a new role as clinical nurse educator.
Data Generation & Analysis

- Reflective journey papers analyzed at the end of each Academy
- Each paper generated memorable reflections of “good” and “bad” experiences as preceptors and/or novice educators
- Research team developed categories from the data through online discussion & face-to-face meetings
Data Generation & Analysis

- Interpretive phenomenology identified categories and themes
- van Manen's (1997) human science research approach used for holistic data analysis
  - Individual words, sentences, and phrases studied for meanings, differences, and commonalities
The Overarching Pattern

Phenomenon of Learning to Teach
Buckle your Seatbelt

I am buckling my seatbelt to explore the educator’s role. It is a short distance ride. However the next ride could possibly be with an educator in the driver’s seat; my seatbelt will still be needed but I will further investigate to ascertain other items to take on the trip.

Melody
Buckle your Seatbelt

What I fear most has to do with the discomfort of feeling totally inadequate. I felt as though the expectation was that I should be the “expert” on each medication, and I just wasn’t. I really hate feeling stupid, and that’s exactly how I felt in that situation.

Sabrina
Buckle your Seatbelt

If I could only use one word to describe my move from a role as a clinician to a nurse educator, it would have to be fear… I don’t believe I had any idea of what a full time educator’s role was.

Fiona
Buckle your Seatbelt

When I was offered the position [of clinical nurse educator], it both excited and delighted me, but also terrified me. I was leaving my comfort zone and entering new waters.

Karen

I am compelled to address my own crisis of confidence as a nursing professional...How will I deal with being a novice again?

Linda
Embracing the Novice

I have been a nurse for 32 years. I have been a novice many times. I have been an expert a few times...Being a novice makes me feel young...I allow myself to be a novice, to not know everything and to learn from others and the job itself.

April
Embracing the Novice

I must admit that as I have matured in this profession, sometimes I like being a novice. It means there is so much more knowledge out there for me to obtain. And if we think about it, you really can’t be an expert and be an educator. Learning is continuous and it is life-long. That’s what I love about education. I aspire to not only be an educator, but a life-long learner as well.

Lynn
Embracing the Novice

I had forgotten how anxious students are about accomplishing simple tasks. I was forced to begin thinking about nursing from the novice point of view. The observations and conclusions made on a daily basis by seasoned nurses are not something that can be taught in a four hour clinical.... If we put ourselves in the place of the student and remember what it was like for us, we have an opportunity to make a huge difference in a student nurse’s professional journey.  Eileen
Embracing the Novice

We all must remember that we also were novices once. Those that took the time to nurture and mentor us have done us a great service; moreover, they are the reason why we stuck it out through rough times and helped us to learn to love the nursing profession. — Ellyn

Honor the knowledge they [students] bring with them; nourish the teachable spirit; role model the behavior you hope to inspire in them; think out loud; affirm their success. — Joyce
Mentoring in the Dark

Not knowing what I should know about clinical education was a bit like playing pin the tail on the donkey. I realize now that I didn’t know enough to ask meaningful questions …

Cara
Most [preceptors] are just thrown into the situation and expected to do well since they are usually very competent in their practice...Looking back at the situation, I was really not prepared to be a preceptor...I did the best job I knew how to, but there was no formal training for me.

Francis

I was left on my own to teach subject matters I was not very comfortable with, and trying to figure out how to teach.

Ruth
Mentoring in the Dark

So now in my role as Educator, I find myself “muddling” through, so to speak, trying to figure out the difference and help people learn… As a novice Educator I hadn’t dug more into objectives, goals and curriculum. In my haste to be helpful…, I hadn’t asked the right questions.

Kelly
Mentoring in the Dark

I know I need a mentor who truly respects me. I need a mentor who encourages me. I need a mentor who serves as my role model. One who affirms that what I do is meaningful, effective, and valid. I need a mentor who helps me to help myself.

Jill
“Please mentor me! Don’t just orient me.” Those that orient me will play an integral part in my success as a new clinical educator and I will greatly appreciate their efforts. However, I know that I will want (and need) ongoing support, encouragement and expert guidance along my career journey. I will surely need a mentor …

Rex
Implications and Recommendations

The vulnerable students that are just barely surviving can easily fall through the cracks and get written off by other educators. These are the students that disappear – just stop showing up to class one day or don’t show up the next semester. As educators, we could have made a difference for these students, but we didn’t, and now we have a few less future nurses.

Callie
Implications and Recommendations

• The phenomenon of learning to teach revealed in these themes is multifaceted.
• Research is needed to investigate strategies that facilitate the recruitment and development of expert clinicians as clinical nurse educators.
• Open discussion and dialogue is desirable to light the path during the process of learning to teach.
Student Learner Protégé

Novice educators need to be reassured!
Educator Coach Mentor

Novice educators want your guidance!
Learning to Teach

If we provide an enabling environment, then it is my strong belief that novice educators will blossom and will be great assets for that school. If a university wants excellence from their teachers, then university faculty have to spend time and find out what novice teachers need and work on it. We cannot use trial and error theory with our new faculty and students because chances are it can fail both of them.

Estelle
Mentoring nurses as new clinicians

- Critical preparation-practice gap for new graduate nurses.
- Nurse Executive Center (NEC) identified six important competencies for improving new graduate performance.
- Clinical knowledge and critical thinking were among these six.
- Nurse residencies have been recommended as a critical step in helping to eliminate the preparation-practice gap.
Accelerating Practice Readiness of New Nurse Graduates: A Six-Month Pilot Nurse Residency Program

- Residency Program designed to specifically focus on clinical reasoning and self-confidence.
- Extensive literature related to need for clinical reasoning skills but little research focused on teaching this skill.
- Residency structured with framework of clinical reasoning taught by thinking aloud and Socratic type dialogue.
- Implemented model teaching strategies for Clinical Instructors.
Research Design

- Quasi-experimental design with randomization; qualitative data from open-ended questions.
- New medical-surgical nurse hires at 10 hospitals (n=200) randomly assigned to the Clinical Instructor or Coach group.
- Anticipated outcome variables: accelerated practice readiness, reduced voluntary turnover rates, improved perception of self-confidence and comfort, increased job satisfaction, and increased productivity.
Soft Skills Competencies

• Communication
• Build relationships and support groups
• Understanding of needs of hospitalized older adults
Docudrama Intervention

- Docudrama emerged from qualitative research study
- *Six Characters in Search of an Answer* - focused on ethical concerns of persons with Alzheimer’s
- Small groups of 5 nurses/2 clinical instructors
- Each nurse (and instructor) read the part of a character in the play
- Debriefing session focused on insights gained about ethical concerns in working with hospitalized persons with Alzheimer’s and other older adults
Mentoring nurses to implement clinical research at the bedside

• Increasing numbers of nurses are learning about evidence-based practice but evidence is not being implemented into practice.

• Need for mentorship in:
  – Understanding strength and quality of evidence.
  – Designing research studies.
  – Implementing research into practice.
  – Publishing findings from research and innovations.
Structure of Mentoring Support

• Team of 6 PhD/DNP nurse researchers.
• Each nurse researcher assumes responsibility for specific institutes in the medical center.
• Nurse who has idea for research project requests research mentor.
• Mentor meets with nurse/team to facilitate design of study, review of literature, writing of proposal, IRB application, data collection, analysis of data, and dissemination of findings.
Funding Supports

- **Nursing Research Award Fund (NURF)** – Nurses can apply for $2500 award.
- **NURF-LIT funding** – Nurses can apply for $500 award for review of literature.
- Encouraged to present findings at annual research conference.
Mentoring throughout a career

Relationship-based mentoring shapes a career.

We are creatures of community. Those individuals, societies, and cultures who learned to take care of each other, to love each other, and to nurture relationships with each other during the past several hundred thousand years were more likely to survive than those who did not.

• Dean Ornish, *Love and Survival*, p. 12
Relationship-based Care

• Three important elements:
  • Care-provider’s relationship with patients and families
  • Care-provider’s relationship with self
  • Care-provider’s relationship with colleagues
Relationship-based Mentoring

- Mentor/mentee relationship – identifying needs
- Relationship with selves – changes over time
- Relationship with friends, family, and colleagues – fitting the mentoring relationship into busy lives
In much the same way as Dorothy asked the rusty Tin Man,

*Where do you want to be oiled first?*,

We hope that nursing will focus more on strategies for “oiling” the growth of nurses to help them realize the heart, courage, and intelligence that characterizes nursing. In the process, mentoring can contribute to our own growth as professionals.
Questions?
References

