

DEVIANCE AND EDUCATION FOR LEADERSHIP: A RESPONSE

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The following points in response to the article "Deviance and Education for Leadership" were raised in discussing this paper with members of the staff of the Montreal Children's Hospital.

1) Nursing managers as well as nursing educators are concerned with the process of delivery of nursing care which has useful outcomes for clients. At the Montreal Children's Hospital we are attempting to shift our energies from a concentration on pathology and weakness to finding ways to help families recognize, utilize and develop their strengths. In terms of directions for nursing, we are excited by the emphasis on health and health-producing behaviors being studied in the Research Unit of McGill University's School of Nursing.

2) We have spent considerable time this past year observing nursing as practiced by recently-graduated baccalaureate nurses. In addition, we have developed a number of approaches to assist these young nurses to consolidate their learning in the course of providing service to the client. We now have unit-based, university-educated teachers who are assisting staff to develop their skills in the nursing of children. As well, an increased number of baccalaureate nurses has been hired in the past two years.

Bi-weekly meetings of our nursing teachers and our education consultant, an associate professor of nursing at McGill, are being held. We feel that these encounters, carried out in a spirit of enquiry, will promote the acquisition of skill in staff development. Our education consultant also teaches the final nursing course in McGill's B.Sc.N. program. She assists students to diagnose the factors influencing the patient situation and to select priorities based on patient's needs, time, energy, system resources and predictability of outcomes. Students in her course explore concepts such as decision-making and accountability as they care for a group of patients in a hospital ward. We have found that the communication between this university teacher and our agency staff development personnel allows for the exchange of information which frequently influences future encounters with their respective groups.

3) As managers and educators, we must question the assumptions upon which we operate. It is necessary to gather evidence in a systematic and continuous way in order to ensure that we are

cognizant of the "reality" in various situations. It appears that student nurses as well as staff nurses and others experience periods of feeling "good" and "not-so-good" about their ability to intervene effectively with individuals requiring nursing care. We have recently employed two nurses with research skills, for senior management positions. It is our intention to carry out research into nursing situations in order to understand better the constellation of variables which operate to produce useful outcomes for patients. Such outcomes do not necessarily occur only when a university-prepared nurse is in the picture.

4) Our deliberations around the concepts of leadership and innovative behaviors and how to develop these vital commodities force us to conclude that these concepts remain poorly understood. Perhaps future research into right and left brain function will help us understand the variables which operate to produce innovation. Should these variables be capable of manipulation and development, we might focus more productively on educating specifically for leadership which will produce change.

5) Those of us who studied the author's proposals felt that focusing on the development and refining of problem-solving skills with all nurses in our setting would be a more effective way to influence the development of leaders than would educating for deviance. We find that our energies are frequently dissipated by emphasising our differences (degree vs. diploma preparation, unionized vs. management nurses) rather than exploring ways to work cooperatively for the patient's benefit. As evidence of increased cooperation, the faculty of the School of Nursing at McGill and selected nurses from five university-affiliated hospitals are currently developing a system of joint appointments to both hospital and university settings. One can hope that innovation will result from these new relationships.

The author's paper provided my staff and me a welcome opportunity to explore the many issues she has raised.

Education vers le leadership: Une question de déviance?

Face à de profonds changements, la profession d'infirmière se doit de chercher dans ses rangs mêmes de nouvelles orientations et significations afin de choisir sa propre voie parmi d'innombrables possibilités. Tout changement appelle des déviants ou des innovateurs. Une réaction déviante force autrui à faire quelque chose, c'est-à-dire à relever le défi. Dans l'article, la déviance consiste en une attitude génératrice de souplesse, de capacité d'adaptation, d'innovation constante et de non conformité novatrice. Le fait de créer est déjà une

forme de déviance car toute création s'écarte de la norme. Les infirmières fraîchement émoulues de l'Université se perçoivent souvent comme déviantes, ce qui entraîne conflits et frustrations. Les professeurs de sciences infirmières peuvent préparer leurs étudiantes à cette éventualité grâce à une orientation par anticipation. Ils peuvent utiliser une approche éducative de "soutien" comprenant l'éloge, la stimulation et l'apprentissage par l'expérience pour aider leurs étudiantes à faire face positivement et à régler leurs conflits, la nouvelle diplômée se sentira plus unifiée intérieurement et donc mieux protégée pour exercer son rôle déviant.

Réponse de Myrtle Crawford. L'auteur aurait tout intérêt à développer son argumentation. En effet, comment l'infirmière qui dévie de la norme peut-elle en diriger d'autres efficacement? Qu'arrive-t-il quand un professeur parle de comportement déviant tout en se conformant lui-même à la norme établie? Les enseignants permettent-ils réellement aux étudiants de bouleverser le système durant leurs études?

Réponse de Evelyn Malowany. En tant que directrice du service de soins infirmiers d'un grand hôpital, l'auteur croit que pour former des leaders, le fait d'apprendre à toutes les infirmières à résoudre des problèmes est de beaucoup supérieur à celui d'encourager la déviance. L'auteur décrit certaines innovations ayant été mises en oeuvre à l'Hôpital de Montréal pour les enfants.