Lighting the Way: Rediscovering Holistic Leadership

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Rediscovery

- Florence Nightingale – first nurse leader
- Nightingale tradition of feminine (but not domestic) service (Widerquist, 1992)
  - “every woman is a nurse” (Nightingale, 1860)
  - Charge of someone’s health
- Call to service was deeply rooted in her spirituality (Widerquist, 1992)
- What does this mean in the context of holistic leadership?

The Leader

- What is leadership
  - Many definitions
  - Descriptions
    - Inspire
    - Vision
    - May not have a formal position of authority
    - Influence
    - Guide
    - Motivate
    - Have willing followers
    - Share rewards – credit where credit is due
- What is nurse leadership?

What is expected?

- What do our patient’s expect?
- What does our healthcare team expect?
- What does the system expect?
- What does the American Holistic Nurses Association expect?
- What do you expect of yourself?

Holistic Leadership

- Examples
  - Transformational leadership
  - Servant leadership
  - The leader is a person, not a performer of tasks (Barnum, 1994)
  - Assumption = people really are multidimensional...they really are more than just body more than just mind more than just spirit
Servant leadership

- Greenleaf (1977)
  - Servant first or leader first
    - Posits that to be a good leader one must be a servant first, as a servant first places the other’s highest priority needs first
  - “…Nursing pays us to place the needs of others before our own…” (Belcher, 2004, p.13)

Can we be servants and still be professionals?

- How do we/can we reconcile the “call to serve” (associated with a spiritual orientation (religious or humanistic)) and vocational perspective as described by Florence Nightingale with contemporary professional practice and leadership?
  - Vocation from Latin word meaning voice...is this so different from contemporary professional term advocacy

Servant leadership

- Spears (2003, p. 16-19)
  - 10 characteristics of servant leader
    - Empathy
    - Listening
    - Healing
    - Awareness
    - Persuasion
    - Conceptualization
    - Foresight
    - Stewardship
    - Commitment to growth of people
    - Building community

Servant Leadership Model

Transformational Leadership

- Mobilize and grow together
  - A leader needs loyal and willing followers
  - Fluid...as the process changes so do the actions
  - Intuition
  - Vision
  - Collaboration vs. hierarchy
  - May not have formal “title”
    - i.e. manager ≠ leader

Emotional Intelligence

- What kind of person are you?
- What qualities define your character?
- Are you a leader?
- Do you expect more from your leaders than you do from yourself?
Use of Self

- Therapeutic use of self
  - Lending (Clemence, 1996) – competent, technical, distanced from the existential needs of the patient
  - Nurse is emotionally "safer" but risks opportunity for full personal growth or fulfillment (Cumbie, 2001)
- Vs.
- Giving (Clemence, 1996) – full participation in caring-healing relationship, giving of self for another
  - Nurse may suffer given the close relationship but full engagement may lead to feeling of transcendence, of spiritual connection, and personal growth (Cumbie, 2001)

The System

- Who are the leaders?
- What is the organizational structure?
- Where is the power (empower?) really?

So...what will you do?

- What change is required?
- With whom will you collaborate?
- Where will you turn for support (physical, financial, emotion, spiritual, etc.)?
- How will you manage conflict?

So...what would Ms. Nightingale do?

- Research
- Advocate
- Consider the system
- Collaborate
- Inspire
- Breathe (fresh air of course)
- Light the way

References