Connecting with Patients, Families, and Colleagues - The Role of Spiritual Care

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Objectives

- Define "connection"
- Identify the Five Levels of Conversation
- Understand how to create "Dynamic Experiences."
Connection: What Is It?

*Connection* is the process of showing people that you love them by being willing to get to know them and by allowing them to get to know you.
Connections are bonds that are most often formed via the use of:

1. presence
2. conversation
3. creativity
Creativity Example: Godly Play
Connection

Facilitating connections takes the proper balance of preparation and flexibility
Connection: Prep

1. Know your goal
2. Know your role
3. Know your souls
4. Know the 5 Levels of Conversation
Connection: Prep

My goal-

Create Dynamic Experiences
Connection: Prep

Dynamic Experiences are interactions – between spiritual and/or psychosocial palliative care providers and the people to whom they provide care – that rise to the level of sacred moments.
Connection: Prep

Dynamic Experiences (cont.)

Sacredness is often reflected in laughter, tears, warm smiles, shared activities (e.g. singing, story-telling, writing, drawing, etc.), ritual praxis, insightful proclamations, and much more. The point is, creating a dynamic experience is about opening space for a moment to occur by which those present are, in some way, deeply touched.
Connection: Prep

My role(s):

- Information gathering
- Assessment
- Recommendations
# Connection: Prep

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<th>Role</th>
<th>Deliverables</th>
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<tr>
<td>1. Information Gathering</td>
<td>1. Observations/Reports</td>
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<td>2. Psychosocial/Spiritual Assessment</td>
<td>2. What the observations suggest to us</td>
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<td>3. Engagement</td>
<td>3. Ways to intervene, knowing what we know now</td>
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<td>Recommendations</td>
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</table>
Connection: Prep

The souls:

- Patients
- Families
- Staff
Five Levels of Conversation

1. Chit Chat
2. Sharing of ideas
3. Expression of feelings/emotions
4. Exposing crisis concerns
5. Sacred Moment
Connection can happen at any level. **Chit Chat** is critical, though, because it sets the tone for the progression of the conversation.
Five Levels of Conversation: Chit Chat

- Family
- Interests
- Stories
Connection: Flexibility

The best laid plans of mice and men often go awry.

Be flexible
Connection: Flexibility

**Insights**
1. People often restate unaddressed issues.
2. People's journeys are often circuitous.
3. People, in some way, communicate what is or is not helpful.

**Response**
1. Listen for repeated themes.
2. Go with the flow (at least for a while).
3. Catch the clues/hints.
Dust + The Breath of God = A Living Soul
(Gen. 2:7, KJV)
Touching Souls

Nephesh (Hebrew) means *that which breathes* or *living being.*
Touching Souls

"...and all who win (laqach) souls (nephesh) are wise..."

(Proverbs 11:30, TLB)

Laqach = to take in the hand; to take and carry along
God has always used peculiar (special) people to touch the lives of those who are deemed "other," just as Jesus did.

(1 Peter 2:9-10)
Touching Souls

How?

1. Be earnestly curious.
2. If asked to, earnestly share.
3. Open space to "touch" and be "touched."
Questions?