Winter Conference
Thursday, February 9, 2023
9:00am-10:00am

GS2: The Power of Connections

Presented by:

Carla Cheatham, MA, MDiv, PhD, TRT, Principal and Lead Trainer, Carla Cheatham Consulting Group, LLC
Assist. Professor, MS in Palliative Care, University of Maryland

Thank you to our event Sponsor:
The previous few years have been even more difficult than usual for those in professional caregiving. As we process what we've been through and seek to revitalize ourselves and our industry that is stressed by staffing shortages and more, we need each other, more than ever. To improve our own satisfaction, effectiveness, and both clinical outcomes and satisfaction for patients and families, we can practice greater attunement and deep listening that need not require more time, just more mindful connection. This presentation will briefly discuss the above, then engage participants in activity to practice strengthening our ability to be present, with ourselves first, then each other, as well as for those whom we seek to serve.
Objectives

Explore the literature related to attachment, attunement, and interpersonal neurobiology

Analyze practical techniques to improve our skills in attuning to others in a healing and productive way

Develop a plan of care to incorporate these techniques into our personal and professional practices to enhance the caring relationship for all involved

And once the storm is over, you won’t remember how you made it through, how you managed to survive. You won’t even be sure whether the storm is really over.

But one thing is certain.

When you come out of the storm, you won’t be the same person who walked in.

That’s what the storm’s all about.

~ Haruki Murakami
Suffering:
- anxiety
- confusion
- conflict
- fear
- uncertainty
- anger
- grief
- trauma

Loss of:
- control
- personhood
- autonomy/dignity
- meaning
- hope
- value and worth

They deserve nothing less than our open-hearted, grounded, non-anxious presence.
Resilience
Perceptions & Meaning-Making
Internalized Locus of Control
Connection & Community
Adaptability, Flexibility, Coping
Self-Care
Gratitude & Hope

Emotional Intelligence
Self awareness
Managing disruptive emotions
Empathy
Handling relationships

Post-Traumatic Growth
Acknowledge and accept existential threats
Find meaning and purpose
Re-story
Access support

Our Best Hope…
1) Mindful Awareness
2) Action
3) Support
Attachment
Harlow, 1930s

Attachment  Parent-child attachment, Security and Loss
(Bowlby, 1980 & 1982)
Attachment & Attunement

The Still-Face Paradigm (SFP)
Tronick, Als, Adamson, Wise, & Brazelton (1978)
Attunement

Importance of Therapeutic Alliance

Interpersonal neurobiology (Siegel, 2006)

Physiologic correlates of perceived therapist empathy (Marci, et al, 2007)

Polyvagal Theory & Impact of Positive Regard on ANS
   (Geller & Porges, 2014)

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Attunement

Social Engagement System & Inhibiting Defense Systems

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Warmth</th>
<th>Trust</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Kind eyes</td>
<td>Openness</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Vocal inflection</td>
<td>Safety</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Settled energy</td>
<td>Repair old states</td>
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Natural Cycle of Relationship

Attunement  Attunement
Repair       Repair
Rupture     Rupture

Rupture isn’t the problem; speed and quality of repair is paramount

Connections on Teams

Building relationships and networks

Different generations

Bridging the gap

Connection as our power and strength
You can enter the pain of another
only at the level
you can enter your own

~John S. Savage

Brush past, skim over,
shut down, divert, laugh
off, minimize, logicalize,
thelogize, send
underground…

Abandon them
Some things in life cannot be fixed. They can only be carried.

~Megan Devine
refugeingrief.com

Communication & Behavior Theories

Health Belief Model (1950s US Public Health Service)

Social Cognitive Theory (Miller & Dollard 1940s, Bandura 1960s-)

Elaboration Likelihood Model (Petty & Cacioppo, 1979)

Transtheoretical Model; Stages of Change (DiClemente & Prochaska, 1970s-1980s)
Communication & Health Outcomes

Perceived: threat self-efficacy support = Better outcomes

Comfort, trust, and connection

When we feel safe, we make better decisions
When we trust, we communicate more openly and adhere to rules better
When we feel seen and cared for, our satisfaction is greater (perception is critical)

What gets in the way?

Discomfort with:
suffering, attachment, silence, out of control

Improper boundaries:
feel need to fix, flood w/words, verbal band aids, avoidance, etc.

Lack of time:
caseloads too high, understaffed, cramming in too much
What is your greatest barrier to presence?

- Fear not knowing what to say or saying the wrong thing
- Feeling the need to fix it
- Discomfort with suffering
- Discomfort with silence
- Discomfort with anger
- Other ________?

Satisfaction isn’t the difference between what they want and what we do.

It is the difference between what they want and what they perceive that we do!

~ Ellen Martin, PhD, RN, CPHQ
Communication is:

7% Words we say
38% How we say them
55% Body language

Incongruence → signals threat → anxiety and distrust

There is a silence that matches our best possibilities when we have learned to listen to others. We can master the art of being quiet in order to be able to hear clearly what others are saying. . . . We need to cut off the garbled static of our own preoccupations to give to people who want our quiet attention.

~Eugene Kennedy
Be where your butt is.

~Anne Lamott

Exercises to do...

“You can have many great ideas in your head, but what makes the difference is the action. Without action upon an idea, there will be no manifestation, no results, and no reward”

(Ruiz, 1997)
Perhaps the most important thing we bring to another person is the silence in us. Not the sort of silence that is filled with unspoken criticism or hard withdrawal. The sort of silence that is a place of refuge, of rest, of acceptance of someone as they are. We are all hungry for this other silence. It is hard to find. In its presence we can remember something beyond the moment, a strength on which to build a life. Silence is a place of great power and healing. Silence is God's lap.
Many things grow the silence in us, among them simply growing older. We may then become more a refuge than a rescuer, a witness to the process of life and the wisdom of acceptance.

A highly skilled AIDS doctor once told me that she keeps a picture of her grandmother in her home and sits before it for a few minutes every day before she leaves for work. Her grandmother was an Italian-born woman who held her family close. Her wisdom was of the earth.

Once when Louisa was very small, her kitten was killed in an accident. It was her first experience of death and she had been devastated. Her parents had encouraged her not to be sad, telling her that the kitten was in heaven now with God.

Despite these assurances, she had not been comforted. She had prayed to God, asking Him to give her kitten back. But God did not respond.

In her anguish she had turned to her grandmother and asked, "Why?" Her grandmother had not told her that her kitten was in heaven as so many of the other adults had.
Instead, she had simply held her and reminded her of the time when her grandfather had died. She, too, had prayed to God, but God had not brought Grandpa back. She did not know why. Louisa had turned into the soft warmth of her grandmother's shoulder then and sobbed. When finally she was able to look up, she saw that her grandmother was crying, too.

Although her grandmother could not answer her question, a great loneliness had gone and she felt able to go on.

All the assurances that Peaches was in heaven had not given her this strength or peace.

"My grandmother was a lap, Rachel," she told me, "a place of refuge. I know a great deal about AIDS, but what I really want to be for my patients is a lap. A place from which they can face what they have to face and not be alone."

Taking refuge does not mean hiding from life. It means finding a place of strength, the capacity to live the life we have been given with greater courage and sometimes even with gratitude. (A Place of Refuge by Dr. Rachel Naomi Remen)
Thank you for your presence

Contact:
Carla Cheatham, MA, MDiv, PhD, TRT
Principal and Lead Trainer, Carla Cheatham Consulting Group, LLC
carla@carlacheatham.com
512-527-4455
www.carlacheatham.com
www.hospicewhispers.com

References


