

LEARNING ABOUT CONFLICT AND CONFLICT MANAGEMENT THROUGH DRAMA IN NURSING EDUCATION

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TAKE HOME MESSAGE:

DRAMA PROVIDES AN EFFECTIVE WAY FOR NURSING STUDENTS TO GAIN AN EMBODIED KNOWLEDGE ABOUT CONFLICT AND CONFLICT MANAGEMENT AND DEVELOP PRACTICAL WISDOM IN NURSING PRACTICE

Background

Nurses working in the increasingly stressful work environments of the health care system of today will inevitably come in contact with, and be involved in conflict situations.

The ability to manage conflict is therefore necessary for nursing students to learn during their education, but previous studies show that nursing students lack in preparation to face and manage conflicts.

It is therefore important that nurse educators provide the students with a learning environment that empower them to manage conflicts.

Aim

The aim of the study was to illuminate nursing students experiences related to learning about conflict and conflict management through drama.

Method

The study was conducted at a university in western Sweden. A mandatory one day drama workshop, focusing on conflict management related to experiences of care situations in the context of clinical practice, was conducted in the fifth of a six semester long nursing education program.

The workshop consisted of warm up exercises and scenarios depicting conflict situations to explore the escalation and de-escalation of conflicts through Forum Play.

Two weeks after attending the drama workshop, a mandatory written group assignment was handed in by the students. In the assignment they reflected on their own learning related to the conflict situations that were dramatized during the Forum Play workshop.

A qualitative analysis of 43 written group assignments, consisting of students reflections on learning about conflict and conflict management through drama, was undertaken using a qualitative content analysis approach.

Results

Category	Sub-category	Overall theme
To approach and integrate with the theoretical content	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Understand the concept of conflict Get familiar with conflict-styles 	To learn by oscillating between closeness and distance
To step back and get an overview	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Broaden the perspective of self and others Broaden the perspective of conflicts 	
To concretize and practice	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Predict and prevent Use strategies and tools 	

Conclusions

Learning about conflict and conflict management through drama can provide nursing students with new theoretical as well as practical knowledge.

Through drama nursing students can come closer and form a personal understanding of theoretical concepts of conflict and conflict management, as well as a readiness on how to approach and manage future conflicts.

Drama can support nursing students in the process of developing nursing knowledge and practical wisdom in nursing practice.

Drama provides an effective way to form new knowledge by oscillating between closeness and distance, to engage in both the fictional and real world at the same time. This gives the opportunity for invaluable learning and insight.

