

Question: My most memorable client or experience: Describe a situation in which your nursing care made a difference.

As I ponder over the question at hand, I am reminded of an experience that just recently occurred within my home department, the cardiovascular laboratory. The day started in a normal fashion when suddenly our pagers went off and the emergency department was calling to report that they had a patient who was suffering from an acute myocardial infarction. Our team was activated, the room was prepped for an anticipated percutaneous coronary intervention (PCI) and I departed to emergency to assist in transport. Upon arrival to emergency the patient fit the “normal” appearance of our PCI population with remarkable ST elevation noted on the monitor. I introduced myself and we transferred to the cath lab. The procedure was moving along when suddenly the patient went into ventricular fibrillation which required us (the team) to initiate the appropriate measures including defibrillation, a wide variety of medications, and the initiation of CPR. After a few stressful minutes, the patient converted to a normal sinus rhythm and was appropriately responsive. We could all breathe a sigh of relief and feel comforted to know that we had worked effectively as a team to save this patient's life. At this point, the interventionalist was able to restore blood flow to his blocked vessel and the procedure was complete.

While discussing the events that had occurred with the patient and family after the procedure, both the mother and patient broke down into tears thanking us for “the work that we had done” and for “saving his life”. Those are the moments that really drive my career and I truly know that I have made a difference. Many of times I find myself shedding tears with my patients both out of happiness and sometimes out of sorrow. After being a nurse for a number of years, I feared that I may become “hard” and/or unaffected by the crisis's that my patients' encounter. I can honestly say, absolutely not! Human compassion is a strong motivator and I view every patient as if they were family. “Compassion, says, Stephen Smith, is difficult to define. It is more

than dignity, more than empathy. It is about the relationship that we have with someone. It is something to which we respond, human to human” (Trueland, 2009). Every patient affects who I am as both an individual and a nurse. I feel so fortunate to be given the opportunity to be a nurse. I am rewarded on a daily bases and have a sense of comfort when I arrive home at night. Honestly, this is what life is all about, if I can bring a smile to a person who has not smiled yet in the day then good enough. We live in such a hostile and evil world it is so comforting to shed a tear, provide a hug, or simply hold the hand of someone who is hurting.

#### References

Trueland, J. (2009). Compassion through human connection. *Nursing Standard*, 23(48), 19-21.  
Retrieved from CINAHL database.