

meanings have an equal effect on the outcome of purposeful relationships. The dynamic nature of the communication process requires nurses to evaluate their actions and reactions when working with clients. Without such awareness and evaluation, the professional will be less likely to experience the feeling of satisfaction associated with transmitting clear meanings and the validation that the message intended was the message received.

Validation of meanings is essential to achieving any therapeutic goals in helping relationships.

Functions and Types of Communication

Synthesizing from several communication models, Ceccio and Ceccio (1982) proposed four major purposes of communication: to inquire, to inform, to persuade, and to entertain. The nurse may attempt to achieve any of these purposes with clients, the health care delivery system, peers, other health care team members, and even him- or herself. In attempts to achieve one or more of these purposes, the nurse transmits messages.

Messages may be transmitted verbally and nonverbally. Implicit in all models of communication is the concept that communication has two interacting components: the content value of the message and the interactional or perceptual value of the message and its participants. The content value of the message, or its informational aspect, is expressed in verbal or nonverbal forms. The interactional or perceptual value of the message (referred to as) identifies how participants interpret content and how they perceive the interpersonal relationship. Metacommunication may be expressed in verbal and nonverbal forms.

consists of the spoken word and requires functional, physiologic, and cognitive mechanisms that produce, recognize, and receive speech. Although a major influence, specific words are not the *greatest* influences on communication. Language comprises an elaborate system of symbols. Words symbolize actual objects or concepts. Lack of congruence in language between the nurse and the client usually interferes with initiating relationships and creates obstacles to validation of meanings—the essential characteristic of an effective message.

Potential Problems in Communication

Nurses need to be aware of three possible types of problems associated with words being symbols of communication (Ceccio & Ceccio, 1982).

1. The technical problem: How accurately can one transmit the symbols of communication?

2. The semantic problem: How precise are the symbols in transmitting the intended