Shaping Ethically Competent and Resilient Nurse Leaders

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Key Term: Shaping or Formation

- The process of becoming a health professional changes us.
- We must give over to transformative forces and allow them to reshape us.
- We will constantly be reshaped over the course of our professional lives.
- We should know our core values in our professional and personal lives.

Key Term: Ethical Competence

All healthcare professionals engage in ethical decision making on a daily basis for routine and exceptional issues.

Entry level nurses should be able to recognize an ethical issue, use statements from professional associations to guide judgements, think critically and systematically through ethical problems using tools of ethical analysis, and provide reasoned, articulate judgements to those involved.

Key Term: Moral Resilience

Moral distress is pervasive in nursing.

Moral distress can result in frustration, anger and guilt. [1]

However, moral distress can be a catalyst for growth and development of better strategies and coping mechanisms.

Moral resilience has been defined as the capacity to sustain or restore integrity in response to moral distress. [2]

Individual Attributes for Interprofessional Collaboration

- Self-Awareness
- Competence
- Trust
- Flexibility
- Acceptance

Self-Awareness

- The ability to reflect on personal knowledge, skills and abilities.
- Requires examination of biases, motivations and emotions that have an impact on your personal and professional growth.

Competence

- Being secure or confident in your abilities in your own discipline.
- Includes the ability to successfully work with others.
- Competence and confidence allows for curiosity and a willingness to learn about the unknown.

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Trust

- The ability to trust originates from self-knowledge and competence.[3]
- Trust is a prerequisite to teamwork.
- Familiarity of the “other" is required.

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Flexibility

- The ability to maintain an open attitude, accommodate different personal values, and be receptive to the ideas of others.[4]
- Complex patients often require novel approaches which are more likely achieved by all of the members of the team.

Acceptance

- One must be accepting of differences among members of the healthcare team.
- Accept that healthcare professionals work in an interprofessional environment.
- We must move past parallel play and tolerance to acceptance and understanding. Patients' survival rates depend on it.

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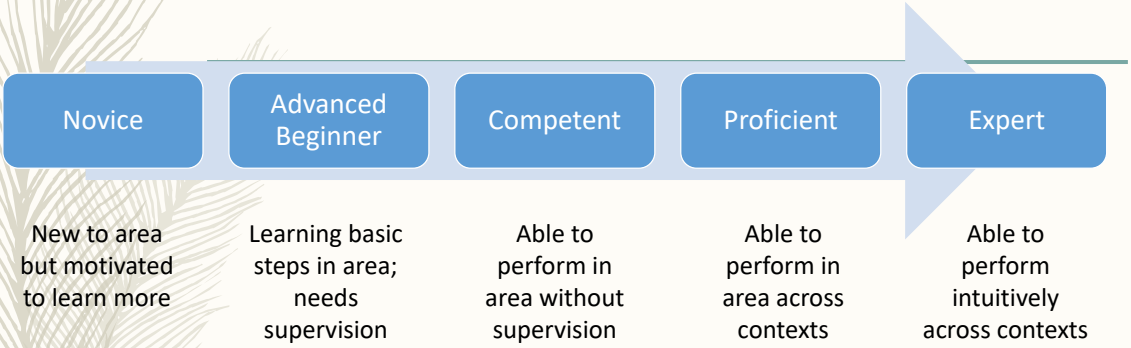
Shaping Ethical Competence



Novice	Advanced Beginner	Competent	Proficient	Expert
New to area but motivated to learn more	Learning basic steps in area; needs supervision	Able to perform in area without supervision	Able to perform in area across contexts	Able to perform intuitively across contexts

The Limits of Focus on the Individual Level

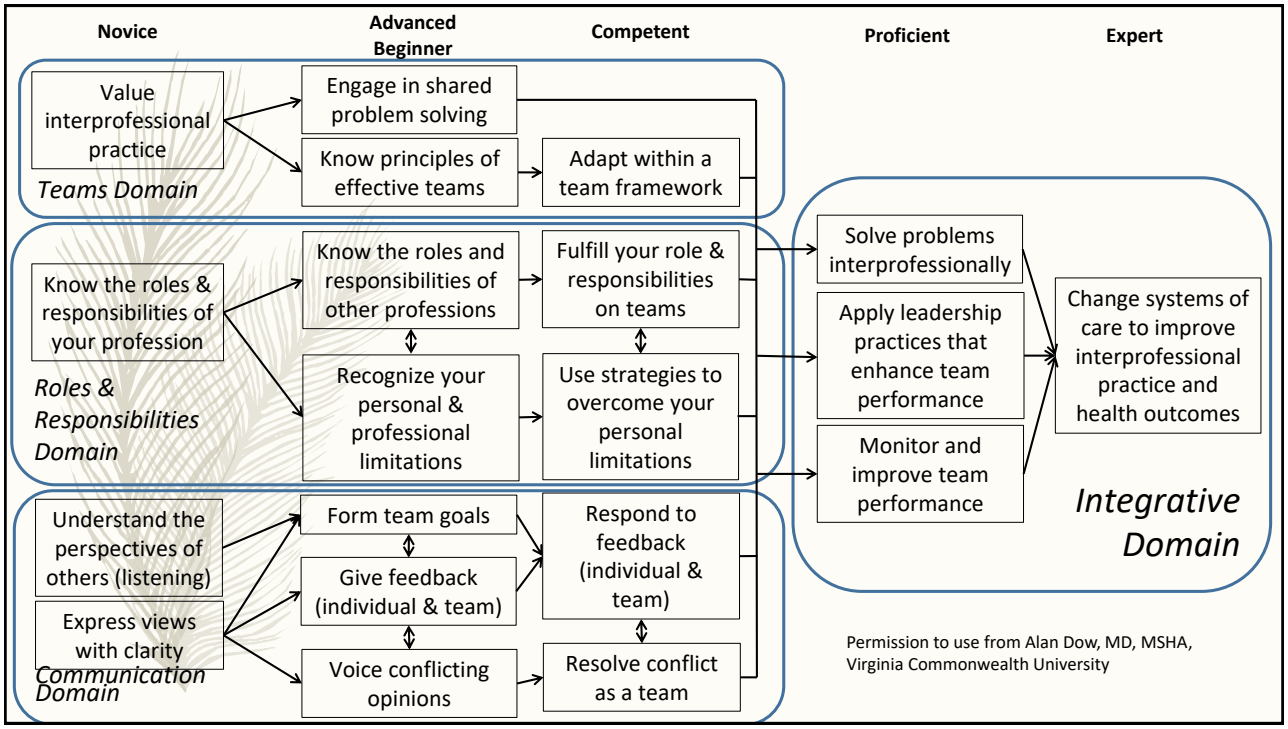
- Individual competence, expertise, and attitudes are an appropriate starting place
- Necessary but not sufficient
- Propose viewing ethical competence from an interprofessional collaborative perspective and resilience from an institutional perspective.

Team Skills for Interprofessional Collaboration

- A small group of **interdependent** people who collectively have the expertise, knowledge and skills needed for a task or ongoing work.[5]

Team Skills for Interprofessional Collaboration

- Mutual Respect – the IPEC Core Competencies refer to mutual respect as a requirement for working collaboratively; there must be a status-equal basis[6]
- Shared Planning and Decision-Making – reasoning from alternative approaches or angles should be part of the culture
- Distinguish Between Interdependence and Sharing Information



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Content in Ethics at the Baccalaureate Level

- Content that is essential
- Content that is at the heart of the discipline
- Content that is difficult to unpack
- Content that speaks to the skills/competencies that address essential content

Content in Ethics at the BSN Level

What are the three top ethical issues that nurses believe occur with the greatest frequency and cause the most moral distress?

1. Decisions regarding life-sustaining treatment particularly overly aggressive care.
2. Decisions regarding futile treatment at the end-of-life.
3. Abuse, verbal and physical, from patients and patients' family members.

Content in Ethics at the BSN Level

What are the top three ethical issues that young physicians do not feel prepared to handle? [7]

1. When to end a code.
2. Speaking up when something isn't right.
3. Harassment and hateful comments.

Designing Learning Experiences in Ethics – Sample Strategies

- The Difficulty Paper
  - Work through personal difficulty within case study
  - Share response with others in small groups (online/face2face)
  - Prioritize the difficulties and propose answers or resolutions for those that lend themselves to that within the time allotted
  - Outcomes – recognize individual approach to difficulties; appreciate that difficulties differ; learn to live with incomplete resolution

Designing Learning Experiences in Ethics – Sample Strategies

- Literature and Poetry
  - Use of unfamiliar genres creates tension
  - What is the poem or short story saying to you?
  - Does this have anything to do with ethics? Why?
  - Outcomes – opens up opportunities to discuss emotions, similar experiences in the clinical setting; allows richer and more complex insights from different perspectives; muddies the water[8]

Interprofessional Ethics Education

What do health professions students believe are the most effective ways to learn about interprofessional collaboration in ethics?

1. Social and educational opportunities.
2. Authentic methods of teaching such as interprofessional clinical rounds, simulations and service learning.
3. Opportunities to practice.

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Use teaching/learning suggestions from ASBH Education Guide for Ethics Consultation Competencies
http://asbh.org/publications/bioethics-humanities-publications

Addressing Moral Distress and Supporting Resiliency

- Recognize the symptoms of moral distress
- Reflect on ethical aspects of clinical situations
- Connect to your purpose for becoming/being a nurse
- Commit to your personal well-being
- Learn to listen to your intuition and somatic responses.
- Speak up about your ethical concerns[9]

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References

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