



## "This Panel Changed My Mind."

A Theory-Based Approach to Transform BSN Student Perceptions of Families with Children with Disabilities.

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*"We must all be aware of the complexity and significant pragmatics of caregiving inherent in families of children with disabilities. These issues must be acknowledged, and ongoing caring encouragement given."*

*Dennis J. Baumgardner, MD  
Parent of a child with disability*



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*“Transformative Learning is a process of examining, questioning, validating, and revising our perspectives.”*

Cranton, 2016, P.18

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## Main Components of the Transformative Learning Process



### Experiences

The learner's assumptions and beliefs form the learner's perspective.

*The Collaborative Panel served as a disorienting dilemma.*



### Critical Reflection

Critical self-examination of the beliefs and leads to perspective transformation.

*New information challenges or validates previously held perceptions.*



### Reflective Discourse

Learner weigh evidence for and against new assumptions to arrive at a "best judgement"

*Begins the reflective discourse. Seeking deeper understanding.*



### Action

Learner takes immediate action, delayed action, or reaffirms an existing pattern of action.

*Commits to future action as an immediate action. Initiating a continued perspective transformation.*

Mezirow, 2012

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## Course Description

- NURS 4210: Child and Family Health: Theoretical Foundations
- This course addresses holistic care of children and families with emphasis on health promotion, disease management and injury prevention through therapeutic nursing assessment and intervention across environments.

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## Course Objectives

1. Evaluate the psychosocial impact of chronic illness, developmental disorders, and terminal illness on children, adolescents and multigenerational families.
2. Analyze the impact of healthcare policy on issues of access, affordability, and social justice as it relates to the health of children and families.
3. Identify how family functioning and definitions of health and illness influence healthcare practices.

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## Methods/Procedures

- Create a space for interaction with families of children with a chronic illness and/or disabilities.
- Encourage nursing students to compare their previously held perceptions with the stories of families.
- Enhance compassionate and empathetic care for children with chronic illness and/or disabilities.

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## Learning Activity – Panel Participants

- Invited Panel Participants: Parents, Siblings, Healthcare Providers.
  - Parents are coping.
  - Adult child and siblings discuss their experience as a child.
  - Nurses, NP, Physicians, Allied Health, Former Nursing Students.
  - Potential questions given to the participants - Faculty moderates.

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## Students' Reflection

1. Describe one story, example, or issue that you heard during the panel today. How did it change your mind about what children with chronic illness and their family's experience?
2. How will the information that you heard from the parent panel presentation influence your nursing care in the future?

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## Course Evaluations

"The collaborative panel at the end of the course was definitely an eye opener to the impact we can make on the lives of our patients and their families."

"This information is irreplaceable! Every nursing student and nurse should sit through a collaborative panel."

"I love that she has the collaborative panel to wrap up the end of the semester and it really puts a perspective on pediatric nursing which is what I want to do."

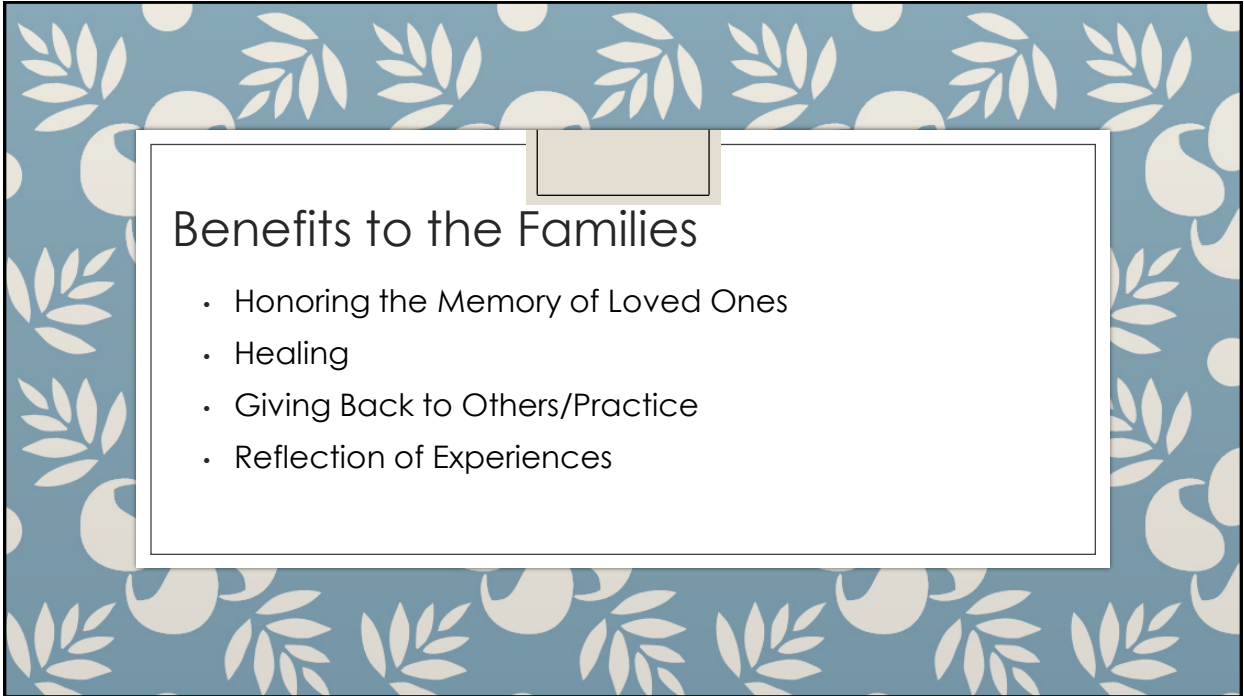
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## Reflection Excerpts

- "I have a lot more respect for families going through life altering illnesses."
- "Hearing the families speak about their circumstances with chronic illness it has made me more aware of that point of view."
- "I will try to give more family focused care, one of the families discussed how when they are admitted to the hospital their entire routine is disrupted."

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## Benefits to the Families

- Honoring the Memory of Loved Ones
- Healing
- Giving Back to Others/Practice
- Reflection of Experiences

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## Conclusions

- Transformative learning approach can lead to change or validation of student perspectives.
- Nursing Students reported they valued the collaborative panel experience.
- Nursing students reported ways that their care for children with chronic illness and/or disabilities would change.
- This strategy may be useful when seeking to introduce new perspectives to healthcare students.

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## References

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Mezirow, J. (2012). Learning to think like an adult: Core concepts of transformation theory. In E. W. Taylor & P. Cranton (Eds.), *The handbook of transformative learning: Theory, research, and practice* (pp. 73–95) Jossey-Bass.

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