



Third Regional Nursing Seminar

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ENGLISH ONLY

POINTS FOR PARTICIPANTS,
HOW TO GET THE MOST OUT OF THE WORKSHOP

by

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1. Listen to other people

Sharing problems, experiences and ideas about how problems can be solved is the very meat of the meeting. To profit by this interchange, the participant must cultivate the art of active listening. Listening is a high form of cooperation and participation. It is particularly important to be non-judgmental in listening to the other person's ideas. Nothing threatens people so much as an overcritical judgment of an idea, value, or point of view, and valuable information can be withheld by people who feel threatened.

2. Let's not pretend

The purpose of the meeting is to propose solutions to real problems. The participant will be most helpful - and most helped - if he will share his real concerns with the group in an open and frank fashion. To

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withhold views because someone might disapprove is a real disservice to the group and frustrates the goals of the meeting. Expressing one's real feelings and ideas is not easy. Sometimes the inability to state a problem is related to the self-expectation that everything one states must be tied up in a bright neat package before it can be handed over to the group. Remember that some of the most valuable contributions come from speech which is halting, and from minds which are groping to give clarity to thought. That which is glib is usually not profound. And it is the function of the group to help the individual express what he is thinking, and contribute what the group may need most.

3. Don't let someone else do it all

The function of the participant is not only to contribute ideas. It is his responsibility to help develop the goals of the meeting, to set the limits of the discussion, to help inaugurate procedures which will be effective in problem-solving. If there is a way, for instance, that the discussion would profit by more illustrations, or a case history, it is the duty of the participant to make this suggestion. An effective group member plays whatever role he feels at the time will help the group.

4. Don't overvalue thinking alike

Meeting together helps people share different points of view. If we all thought alike there would be little need for discussion. Inability to reach solutions frequently comes from the fact that people do not feel free to state openly the issues about which they feel there is conflict.

In a productive group your ideas are bound to be challenged. One should expect this to be so. Moreover, one's habits of thought may receive some slight jolts, may even be disrupted. Often the process of working together in the solution of common problems means that the individual gives up some way of thinking which was precious to him.

5. You can change things

Since the workshop is organized to help you with problems of concern to you, it is your responsibility to see that there is evaluation of its objectives, methods and procedures. If you have failed to achieve things which you thought should be achieved, and you believe it was because things were not organized properly, you have the responsibility to say so. Groups have functioned better because someone who was dissatisfied performed the constructive role of initiating evaluation and change.

6. Remember where the ideas will be implemented

Whether the participant is working on a problem which is essentially his own, or whether he is working with a group on a problem of common interest, it is well for him to remember that the solution must be workable in the practical "home" situation. It is easy to indulge in fantasy, and sometimes the enthusiasm of the group may carry work far away from the world of reality. The participant needs to keep in mind that the ultimate test of ideas and solutions is whether or not they will work at home.

7. You can get help if you ask for it

In most workshops and institutes the resources of members and staff are such that the individual or the group can get help. But often help is dependent on the way we present our problems, on the openness or defensiveness of our attitudes. Getting help is a two-way communication process. We have to work hard in clarifying our own communication to get the help we need.