

THERAPEUTIC COMMUNICATION ANSWERS

1. **D**

Responding to the feelings expressed by a patient is an effective therapeutic communication technique. The correct option is an example of the use of restating. The remaining options block communication because they minimize the patient's experience and do not facilitate exploration of the patient's expressed feelings. In addition, use of the word "why" is nontherapeutic.

2. **C** "You're having difficulty sleeping?"

The correct option uses the therapeutic communication technique of restatement. Although restatement is a technique that has a prompting component to it, it repeats the patient's major theme, which assists the nurse to obtain a more specific perception of the problem from the patient. The remaining options are not therapeutic responses since none encourage the patient to expand on the problem. Offering personal experiences moves the focus away from the patient and onto the nurse.

3. **A**

4. **A**

Denial is refusal to admit to a painful reality, which is treated as if it does not exist. In projection, a person unconsciously rejects emotionally unacceptable features and attributes them to other persons, objects, or situations. Regression allows the patient to return to an earlier, more comforting, although less mature, way of behaving. Rationalization is justifying illogical or unreasonable ideas, actions, or feelings by developing acceptable explanations that satisfy the teller and the listener.

5. **C**

Restating is a therapeutic communication technique in which the nurse repeats what the patient says to show understanding and to review what was said. While it is appropriate for the nurse to attempt to assess the patient's ability to discuss feelings openly with family members, it does not help the patient discuss the feelings causing the anger. The nurse's attempt to focus on the central issue of

anger is premature. The nurse would never make a judgment regarding the reason for the patient's feeling, this is non-therapeutic in the one-to-one relationship.

6. D

In general, patients seek voluntary admission. If a patient seeks voluntary admission, the most likely expectation is the patient will participate in the treatment program since they are actively seeking help. The remaining options are not characteristics of this type of admission. Fearfulness, anger, and aggressiveness are more characteristic of an involuntary admission. Voluntary admission does not guarantee a patient's understanding of their illness, only of their desire for help.

7. A

The nurse is required to maintain confidentiality regarding the patient and the patient's care. Confidentiality is basic to the therapeutic relationship and is a patient's right. The most appropriate response to the neighbor is the statement of that responsibility in a direct, but polite manner. A blunt statement that does not acknowledge why the nurse cannot reveal patient information may be taken as disrespectful and uncaring. The remaining options identify statements that do not maintain patient confidentiality.

8. C

The nurse needs to respect and have concern for the patient; this is vital to protecting the patient's rights. While it is true the autonomy is a basic client right, there are other rights that must also be both respected and facilitated. State and federal laws do protect a patient's rights, but it is sensitivity to those rights that will ensure that the nurse secures these rights for the patient. It is a fact that safeguarding a patient's rights are a nursing responsibility, but stating that fact does not show understanding or respect for the concept.

9. D

The nurse is using the therapeutic communication technique of making observations when noting that the client smiles when talking about physical

violence. The technique of making observations encourages the client to compare personal perceptions with those of the nurse.

10. **A**

The nurse is using the therapeutic communication technique of restatement. Restatement involves repeating the main idea of what the client has said. The nurse uses this technique to communicate that the client's statement has been heard and understood.

11. **C**

The nurse's statement, "Yes, I see. Go on." is an example of the therapeutic communication technique of a general lead. Offering a general lead encourages the client to continue sharing information.

12. **D**

The nurse's statement, "Things will look better tomorrow after a good night's sleep." is an example of the nontherapeutic technique of giving false reassurance. Giving false reassurance indicates to the client that there is no cause for anxiety, thereby devaluing the client's feelings.

13. **B**

The nurse's statement, "What would you like to talk about?" is an example of the therapeutic communication technique of giving broad openings. Using a broad opening allows the client to take the initiative in introducing the topic and emphasizes the importance of the client's role in the interaction.

14. **A**

The nurse is making an observation when stating, "You appear to be talking to someone I do not see." Making observations involves verbalizing what is observed or perceived. This encourages the client to recognize specific behaviors and make comparisons with the nurse's perceptions.

15. **D**

The nurse is providing appropriate feedback when stating, "During group, you raised your voice, yelled at a peer, left, and slammed the door." Giving appropriate feedback involves helping the client consider a modification of

behavior. Feedback should give information to the client about how he or she is perceived by others. Feedback should not be evaluative in nature or be used to give advice.

16. **C**

The most appropriate response by the nurse is, "Let's discuss and explore all of your options." In this example, the nurse is encouraging the client to formulate ideas and decide independently the appropriate course of action.

17. **C**

When interviewing a client, the nurse should employ the nonverbal behavior of sitting squarely, facing the client. Facilitative skills for active listening can be identified by the acronym SOLER. SOLER includes sitting squarely facing the client (S), open posture when interacting with a client (O), leaning forward toward the client (L), establishing eye contact (E), and relaxing (R).

18. **B**

The best response by the nurse is, "You're experiencing feelings of guilt because you weren't able to save your children." This response utilizes the therapeutic communication technique of reflection which identifies a client's emotional response and reflects these feelings back to the client so that they may be recognized and accepted.

19. **D**

The most appropriate statement by the nurse is, "Let's figure out a way for you to attend unit activities and still wash your hands." This statement reflects the therapeutic communication technique of formulating a plan of action. The nurse attempts to work with the client to develop a plan without damaging the therapeutic relationship or increasing the client's anxiety.

20. **A**

This is an example of the therapeutic communication technique of formulating a plan of action. By the use of this technique, the nurse can help the client plan in advance to deal with a stressful situation which may prevent anger and/or anxiety from escalating to an unmanageable level.

21. **D**

This is an example of the therapeutic communication technique of restatement. Restatement is the repeating of the main idea that the client has verbalized. This lets the client know whether or not an expressed statement has been understood and gives him or her the chance to continue, or clarify if necessary.

22. **C**

This is an example of the therapeutic communication technique of giving recognition. Giving recognition acknowledges and indicates awareness. This technique is more appropriate than complimenting the client which reflects the nurse's judgment.

23. **A**

This is an example of the therapeutic communication technique of verbalizing the implied. Verbalizing the implied puts into words what the client has only implied or said indirectly.

24. **B**

Giving advice tells the client what to do or how to behave. It implies that the nurse knows what is best and that the client is incapable of any self-direction. It discourages independent thinking.

25. **D**

This is an example of the therapeutic communication technique of focusing. Focusing takes notice of a single idea or even a single word and works especially well with a client who is moving rapidly from one thought to another.

26. **B**

This is an example of the appropriate use of feedback. Feedback should be directed toward behavior that the client has the capacity to modify.

27. **A**

This nursing statement is an example of the nontherapeutic communication block of belittling feelings. Belittling feelings occur when the nurse misjudges the degree of the client's discomfort, thus a lack of empathy and understanding may be conveyed.

28. **C**

This nursing statement is an example of the therapeutic communication technique of reflection. When reflection is used, questions and feelings are referred back to the client so that they may be recognized and accepted.

29. **A**

This nursing statement is an example of the nontherapeutic communication block of requesting an explanation. Requesting an explanation is when the client is asked to provide the reason for thoughts, feelings, behaviors, and events. Asking "why" a client did something or feels a certain way can be very intimidating and implies that the client must defend his or her behavior or feelings.

30. **D**

This is an example of the therapeutic communication technique of exploring. The purpose of using exploring is to delve further into the subject, idea, experience, or relationship. This technique is especially helpful with clients who tend to remain on a superficial level of communication.

31. **B**

This is an example of the therapeutic communication technique of presenting reality. Presenting reality is when the client has a misperception of the environment. The nurse defines reality or indicates his or her perception of the situation for the client.

32. **B**

This is an example of the therapeutic communication technique of offering self. Offering self makes the nurse available on an unconditional basis, increasing client's feelings of self-worth. Professional boundaries must be maintained when using the technique of offering self.

33. **A**

1. "You shouldn't talk like that. You're not a failure." Telling clients how they should or should not feel invalidates their feelings and is nontherapeutic.
2. "Once the antidepressants start working you will feel better about yourself." The client's depressive symptomatology should improve with antidepressants.

However, this response is not the most therapeutic at this time.

3. "Things could be worse. You should be grateful for what you have." This response minimizes the client's feelings and can be perceived as punitive.

4. "You've been feeling like a failure your entire life?" This response restates what the client said and in doing so encourages the client to continue talking.

34. **B**

1. "Yes, I know just how you feel." This response shifts the focus from the client to the nurse, which is nontherapeutic.

2. "I understand this is difficult for you to talk about, but I have to complete the admission assessment." The nurse's need to complete the admission assessment does not take precedence over the client's feelings.

3. "I know some of these questions are difficult for you." This statement is empathic and acknowledges the client's feelings.

4. "I am a professional nurse and I know what I am doing." This statement negates the client's feelings and is nontherapeutic.

35. **C**

The use of "why" questions may cause defensiveness in the patient and hinder communication. The other options promote communication by encouraging the patient to communicate.

