

Chapter 3: Supporting Life Transitions and Spirituality in the Elderly

Multiple Choice

Identify the choice that best completes the statement or answers the question.

- ____ 1. All of the following are true of life transitions *except*
 - a. Challenging experiences that accompany aging may require life transitions
 - b. A person usually experiences only one transition in a lifetime
 - c. Sometimes there is more than one transition occurring at the same time
 - d. Each loss or change requires transitional effort from the person experiencing it
- ____ 2. Maria Hernandez, 76 years old, recently sustained a left hip fracture and dislocation while gardening in her yard. She underwent left total hip replacement surgery and is recovering on the orthopedic unit. Maria tells the nurse she is upset and does not feel at peace because she has been unable to attend church as a result of the injury. What is the best response by the nurse?
 - a. Encourage her to read a book, magazine, or newspaper
 - b. Suggest that she watch television to keep her mind distracted
 - c. Offer to call the hospital's chaplain or clergyman to come pray with her
 - d. Tell her to sleep so that her body can heal and return to a state of peacefulness
- ____ 3. Examples of transitional events include all of the following *except*
 - a. Marriage
 - b. Losing a job
 - c. Moving to a new home
 - d. Visiting an amusement park
- ____ 4. Researchers have determined four common features to transitions. Which of the following is *not* one of the four features?
 - a. A stage of denial
 - b. An altered time perspective
 - c. Disturbances in bodily function
 - d. A phase of turmoil
- ____ 5. Which developmental growth objective is essential in reaching gerotranscendence?
 - a. Formal operational stage
 - b. Integrity vs. Despair stage
 - c. Concrete operational stage
 - d. Initiative vs. Guilt stage
- ____ 6. Mr. Smith, 79 years old, refuses to take any medications offered by the nurse. The nurse respects Mr. Smith's decision and right to refuse treatment and returns at a later time to offer the medication. Which of the following factors influencing transitional outcomes applies to Mr. Smith's situation?
 - a. Mr. Smith's perception of change
 - b. Mr. Smith's extent or degree of change
 - c. Mr. Smith's degree of choice
 - d. Mr. Smith's preparation for the change
- ____ 7. The degree of change for an older person preparing to move can be minimized by all of the following considerations *except*
 - a. Ensuring the new home is located near a senior citizen's center
 - b. Finding a home with a nearby grocery store within walking distance
 - c. Selecting a home that meets the physical needs of the person

d. Choosing a smaller apartment so the person has fewer items to move

- _____ 8. Preparation is a key factor in managing future transitions. Which of the following is *not* an appropriate choice in helping patients prepare for transitions?
- Avoid discussing difficult topics with patients
 - Talking to patients and residents about changes to be anticipated
 - Repeating all necessary information about the transition
 - Involving family members when discussing future transitions
- _____ 9. The characteristics of an individual are important components to consider for transitions. Which of the following characteristics should be considered when a person is transitioning?
- The person's height and weight
 - The person's past experiences
 - The sex of the person
 - The person's vital signs
- _____ 10. What aspects of the environment in a hospital room would most likely allow for smooth transitioning?
- Cheerfulness and relaxation
 - Clean and colorful
 - Restrictive and demanding
 - Warm and dark
- _____ 11. Which of the following is *not* a common transition for an older adult?
- Family role changes
 - Marriage
 - Job changes and retirement
 - Health changes
- _____ 12. Harriet Powell, age 68, has just been admitted to the oncology unit with a new diagnosis of lung cancer. This is Mrs. Powell's first time being admitted in the hospital, and she knows very little about her diagnosis. Which of the following is the best action that the nurse can take to make Mrs. Powell's transition easier?
- Leave a printout about lung cancer at her bedside
 - Administer an antianxiety agent to keep her calm
 - Tell her a physician will be in to explain what is going on
 - Talk with her about her fears, questions, or concerns
- _____ 13. Spirituality is defined as
- The organized practice of one's belief in a higher power
 - Formal worship involving prescribed actions or practices
 - A feeling from within that communicates a higher power at work
 - The service and worship of God or the supernatural
- _____ 14. All of the following are ways to assess a patient's spiritual needs *except*
- Identifying the patient's religious preference from their chart
 - Observing for identifying jewelry or artifacts in the patient's personal belongings
 - Looking for any religious books in the patient's room
 - Asking the patient's neighbor if he or she has heard the patient praying
- _____ 15. George Wilbur, age 73, is a patient recovering from coronary artery bypass surgery. The nurse notices that he seems depressed, and he is continuously asking, "Why is God doing this to me?" The best response by the nurse is
- Call for a psychiatric consultation to screen Mr. Wilbur for depression
 - Ask Mr. Wilbur if he has any specific spiritual needs to be addressed

- c. Reassure Mr. Wilbur that he did nothing wrong and everything is okay
- d. Tell Mr. Wilbur that sadness usually occurs after undergoing heart surgery

- _____ 16. Mrs. Jones is in spiritual distress and is requesting that the nurse accompany her in a word of prayer. The nurse does not usually pray but wants to assist Mrs. Jones in any way possible. All of the following are ways the nurse can help *except*
- a. Hold Mrs. Jones hands while she prays
 - b. Sit near Mrs. Jones and be reverent during the prayer
 - c. Tell Mrs. Jones to find someone else who will pray with her
 - d. Find a coworker who would be willing to pray with Mrs. Jones
- _____ 17. Achieving gerotranscendence allows for an older person to
- a. Live life without regret and die well
 - b. Reach a state of wealth and superfluous social interaction
 - c. Withdraw and disengage from life's many hardships
 - d. Become more involved with the self rather than others
- _____ 18. All of the following are reasons to perform a life review *except*
- a. To assist older people to review their lives and appreciate them
 - b. To reflect on all the great accomplishments of one's life
 - c. To help older people prepare for life insurance and funeral expenses
 - d. To identify strengths that can assist with current transitions
- _____ 19. One of the purposes of a creating a life story is to
- a. Keep the patient busy for long periods of time
 - b. Publish it as a book and sell for profit
 - c. Share the life story with children and grandchildren
 - d. Ensure the patient's memory is intact
- _____ 20. When working with older people, it is important for the nurse to employ holistic nursing care by embracing the body, mind, and spirit of the patient. Which of the following does *not* represent embracing the body, mind, or spirit?
- a. Delivering a mechanistic form of care
 - b. Following the medical plan of care
 - c. Addressing transitional stress needs
 - d. Meeting spiritual needs

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Answer Section

MULTIPLE CHOICE

1. ANS: B

People experience multiple transitions in their lifetime, not just one, so response B is incorrect. Responses A, C, and D all are true statements regarding life transitions.

PTS: 1

KEY: Nursing Process Step: Not applicable | Patient Care Area: Emotional

2. ANS: C

Calling the hospital's chaplain or clergyman to pray with her would help meet Maria's spiritual needs and aid in her recovery and healing. Responses A and B are distractions and do not resolve the patient's underlying spiritual need. Sleep is an important component of recovery, but it does not replace the power of spirituality, so response D is incorrect.

PTS: 1

KEY: Nursing Process Step: Implementation | Patient Care Area: Spirituality

3. ANS: D

Responses A, B, and C all are events that mark beginnings and endings or new phases of life. Response D would not be considered a transition and is incorrect.

PTS: 1

KEY: Nursing Process Step: Not applicable | Patient Care Area: Emotional

4. ANS: A

Responses B, C, and D, and mood and cognitive changes are the four common features to transitions. A stage of denial is not a common feature of transitions, so response A is incorrect.

PTS: 1

KEY: Nursing Process Step: Not applicable | Patient Care Area: Emotional

5. ANS: B

Achieving Erik Erikson's stage of Integrity vs. Despair is essential for gerotranscendence to occur. Response D is incorrect because the Initiative vs. Guilt stage of Erikson's developmental theory applies to younger childhood, not late adulthood. Responses A and C are stages of Piaget's developmental theory, not Erikson's theory, and they are unrelated to gerotranscendence.

PTS: 1

KEY: Nursing Process Step: Not applicable | Patient Care Area: Emotional/Spiritual

6. ANS: C

People who believe they have chosen the transition are more likely to embrace the transition, and this represents degree of choice. Responses A, B, and D all are factors influencing transitional outcomes but do not represent Mr. Smith's refusing medication.

PTS: 1

KEY: Nursing Process Step: Not applicable | Patient Care Area: Emotional

7. ANS: D

Responses A, B, and C represent humanistic caring and would make the transition of moving into a new home easier. Response D is a mechanistic approach to caring. It is incorrect because it would require the person to discard items that he or she may wish to keep, making the transition more difficult.

PTS: 1

KEY: Nursing Process Step: Not applicable | Patient Care Area: Emotional

8. ANS: A

Avoiding the discussion of difficult topics fails to prepare others for future transitions, so response A is incorrect. Responses B, C, and D all are appropriate techniques in preparing for future transitions.

- PTS: 1 KEY: Nursing Process Step: Implementation | Patient Care Area: Emotional
9. ANS: B
A person's personality, past experiences, and coping skills all are important factors to consider for transitioning. Responses A, C, and D all are objective findings about the person and do not characterize the person's ability to transition.
- PTS: 1 KEY: Nursing Process Step: Assessment | Patient Care Area: Emotional
10. ANS: A
Environments that are cheerful, relaxed, nurturing, and respectful allow for proper healing. Response B can play a role in healing but is not as important as ensuring happiness and relaxation. Responses C and D are inappropriate and may hinder transitioning.
- PTS: 1 KEY: Nursing Process Step: Not applicable | Patient Care Area: Emotional
11. ANS: B
Although marriage is considered to be a transition, it is most often seen in early to middle adulthood. Responses A, C, and D all are common transitions for an older adult because of the frequency of their occurrence during the aging process.
- PTS: 1 KEY: Nursing Process Step: Not applicable | Patient Care Area: Emotional
12. ANS: D
Talking with Mrs. Powell about her fears and concerns is a critical aspect of giving caring and holistic nursing care. Responses A and C may provide supplemental information for Mrs. Powell about her condition, but they do not replace the role of the nurse to listen to and address the patient's concerns. Response B can be helpful in keeping the patient calm but does not resolve her underlying concerns.
- PTS: 1 KEY: Nursing Process Step: Implementation | Patient Care Area: Emotional
13. ANS: C
Spirituality is a feeling from within. Responses A, B, and D all are concepts that define religion, not spirituality.
- PTS: 1 KEY: Nursing Process Step: Not applicable | Patient Care Area: Spirituality
14. ANS: D
Involving the patient's neighbor may be a violation of the patient's right to privacy. Responses A, B, or C all are ways the nurse can assess for a patient's spiritual needs.
- PTS: 1 KEY: Nursing Process Step: Assessment | Patient Care Area: Spirituality
15. ANS: B
Feelings of sadness or depression and comments of despair are expressions of unmet spiritual needs or spiritual distress. Response A might be considered after the nurse addresses any unmet spiritual needs. Responses C and D are incorrect.
- PTS: 1 KEY: Nursing Process Step: Assessment | Patient Care Area: Spirituality
16. ANS: C
It is the nurse's role to support a person with unmet spiritual needs so the patient can achieve management of the illness or problems being faced. Response C does not attempt to meet such needs. Responses A, B, and D all are appropriate means of supporting and respecting the patient's spirituality.
- PTS: 1 KEY: Nursing Process Step: Implementation | Patient Care Area: Spirituality
17. ANS: A

Gerotranscendence allows an older person to have no regrets and die well. Responses B, C, and D, all incorrect, are in opposition of gerotranscendence.

PTS: 1

KEY: Nursing Process Step: Not applicable | Patient Care Area: Emotional/Spirituality

18. ANS: C

A life review allows for older people to appreciate their life and to resolve items that have been unmet. Response C is an inappropriate reason for life review. Responses A, B, and D all are appropriate reasons for performing a life review.

PTS: 1

KEY: Nursing Process Step: Not applicable | Patient Care Area: Emotional/Spirituality

19. ANS: C

A copy of a life story could be shared with children, grandchildren, friends, family members, and staff members so that they could get to know the patient better. Responses A, B, and D are incorrect.

PTS: 1

KEY: Nursing Process Step: Not applicable | Patient Care Area: Emotional/Spirituality

20. ANS: A

Holistic nursing care involves a humanistic approach, not simply mechanistic, so response A is the correct answer to the question. Response B represents embracing the body, response C represents embracing the mind, and response D represents embracing the spirit.

PTS: 1

KEY: Nursing Process Step: Not applicable | Patient Care Area: Emotional/Spirituality