



## A Biblical Fable on Our Origins

In the beginning, God created nursing.  
He (or She) said, I will take a solid, simple,  
significant system of education and an adequate  
applicable base of clinical research, and  
On these rocks, will I build My greatest gift  
to Mankind—nursing practice.  
On the seventh day, He—threw up His hands.

And has left it up to us.

Margretta M. Syules



## Why Ethics Matters in Nursing Practice

The Power Of One  
2008 TNA Annual Convention  
October 24, 2008



## Why are you here? A Calling

- Voice
  - Hearing voices?
- Something more than job
  - It is a life
- Connections
  - Relationships
- Teaching and learning
  - Self, others both young and different
- Touching, reinforcing our humanity
  - Seeing other as an extension of self



## Objectives

- Identify fundamental ethical commitments in nursing practice.
- Describe the importance of human dignity in the ethics of nursing.
- Examine the role of nursing as part of the common good in society.
- Identify one thing you can do to increase your ethics IQ.



## Ethical Issues Involve

- Conflict
  - With self
  - With situation
- Ethics process
  - ID areas of conflict
  - ID resources
  - Provide support, understanding
  - Help move toward resolution



## Ethical Dilemmas

- Conflict between two 'rights'
- Principles, decision making frameworks, or tools (e.g. medical directives) help clarify what is important
- Goal/hope: a 3rd way forward
  - Something besides the two extremes



## Ethics, Morals, Manners

- Ethics
  - Ethos: Greek meaning custom, usage, character
  - Science of the ideal human character
- Moral
  - Mos, moris: Latin meaning manner, custom, habit, way of life, conduct
  - What is good
- Manners
  - Cannons of good taste
  - Social behavior
    - Rude people can be ethical
    - Unethical people can be really nice.



## Ethics is about:

- Meaning and value
- Making choices
  - Along with rules, laws, a code of ethics, a set of principles
- Doing right or doing the right thing
  - Focused on the welfare of others
- Active work
  - Reflect on what is important meaningful or valuable
  - Make choices that support value(s), make those values more real and more meaningful



## Ethics Lessons Learned

- Elemental work is to protect ... from harm(s)
- Social safeguard for potential harm(s)
- Issues relate to difference
- Emotional, psychological, communication
- Awareness of values in play, conflicts of interest
- Ethical theories help clarify, strengthen understanding
- Ethics is a group activity, levels the playing field
- Individual decisions in the context of relationships



## Common Issues

- |  |  |
|--|--|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Clinical: Patient and family issues               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Patient rights</li> <li>● Advance directives</li> <li>● Surrogate decision making</li> <li>● Goals of care</li> <li>● Code status</li> <li>● End of life</li> <li>● Culture and Religion</li> <li>● Mediation</li> </ul> </li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Organizational: Hospital and system health               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Allocation of resources</li> <li>● Conflict resolution</li> <li>● Conflicts of interest</li> <li>● Confidentiality</li> <li>● Research</li> <li>● Public actions</li> </ul> </li> </ul> |
|--|--|



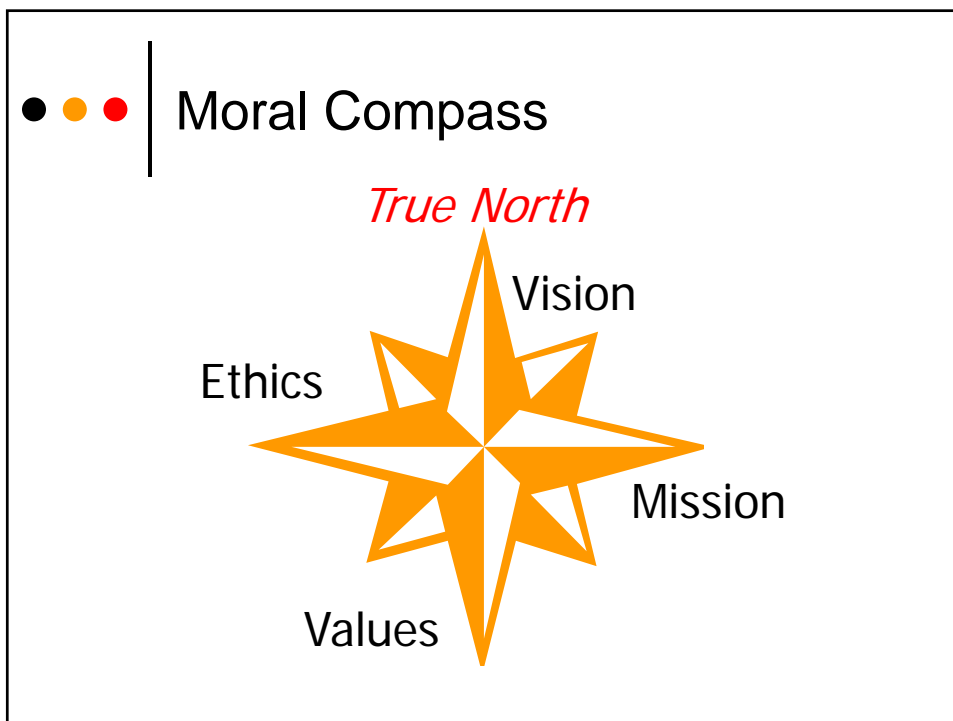
## Specific Supports for Ethics

- Mission, Vision, Values
- Ethics Committee
- Ethics Consultation
  - Clinical and organization issues, policy, education, case review, and consultation
- Institutional Review Board (IRB)
  - Ethical conduct of research
- Compliance
  - Ethical conduct of business, HIPAA



## ...ethics supports continued

- Pastoral Care
- Palliative Care
- Employee Assistance Program
- Quality Center
- Outcomes/Utilization Management
- Risk Management
  - Legal liability focus
  - Complaint management, patient rights issues
  - Patient safety



- ● ● | ANA Code of Ethics for Nurses
- “A fundamental principle that underlies all nursing practice is respect for the inherent worth, dignity, and human rights of every individual.”
    - Code of Ethics for Nurses with Interpretive Statements, 1.1



## Mission/Purpose

- Human beings are valuable
  - Ends unto themselves
  - Because they are created by God
- Mission is purpose
  - It makes us who we are
  - *"True North"*
- Excellent care, excellence in our work
  - Where mission finds form and expression



## Virtues & Values

- Cardinal virtues
  - Prudence, courage, temperance and justice
- Modern virtues
  - Unconditional positive regard, charity, compassion, trustworthiness, vigilance and agility
- Other
  - Dedication, loyalty, honesty, creativity, faith, family, care of the poor



## Nursing Virtues & Values

- Competence
- Compassionate caring
- Subordination of self-interest to patient care
- Self-effacement
- Trustworthiness
- Conscientiousness
- intelligence
- Practical wisdom
- Humility
- Courage
- Integrity



## Healthcare: A Moral Enterprise

- Roots of the caring professions
- Promotion of ideal for patient care
- Patient focused caring
- Importance of codes of ethics for professional development
  - Respect for persons
  - Conduct by advocacy



## The Common Good

- Actions or outcomes that have some definable benefit beyond individual gain
  - Generally societal good
  - Determination as to what good is
  - Good for all
  - In all human dimensions



## Common Good and Nursing

- Education, development, mentorship
  - Advanced practice is itself a result of and part of the this good
  - Must establish quality, value
- Scope of practice
  - Supervision
  - Delegation
- Evidence based practice
  - Unique contributions of nursing



## Ethics is Practice Based

- Relationship between professionals and patients.
  - Understanding
  - Agreement
  - Nature
  - Context
  - Focus is on human value



## Understand the Patient

- How do they make sense of life?
  - Role in the family
  - Employment
  - Social factors
  - Cultural factors
  - Spiritual factors
  - Special populations
    - Elderly
    - Children
    - Cognitive impairments





## Who Makes Decisions?

- Is there paperwork?
  - Power of attorney
  - Court appointed decision maker
  - Living Will
  - POLST or POST
- Determine validity of any documents
  - Reasonable person determination
  - Reconcile conflicts
- Examine the relationships
  - Who is closest, who cares, who knows?



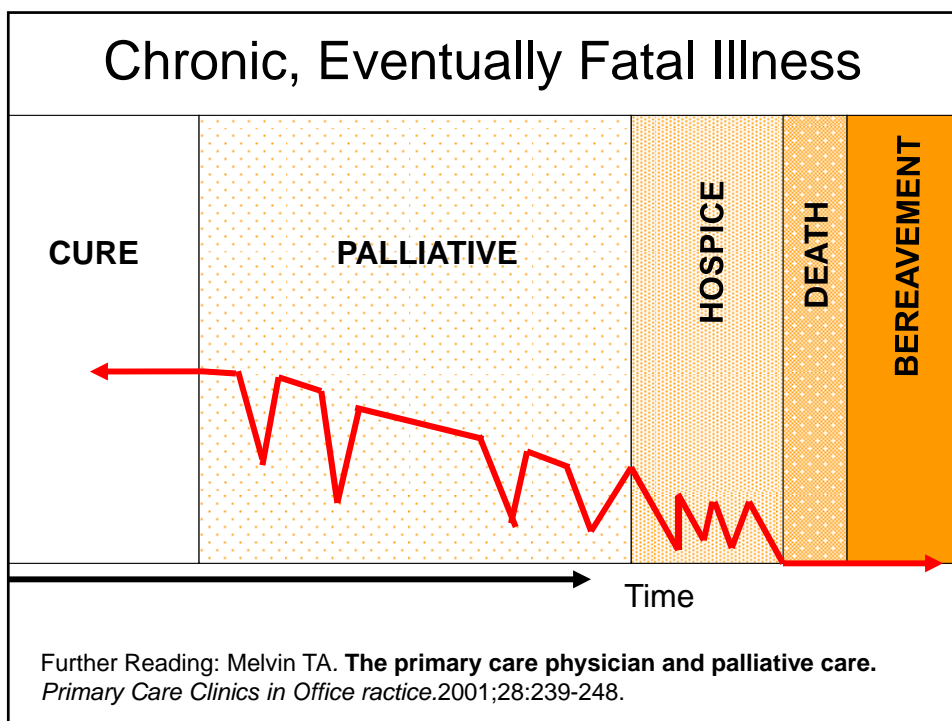
## Understand the Disease

- Natural course of the disease
  - Symptoms
  - Chronic
  - Acute
- Spiritual dis-ease
  - Fear
  - Isolation
  - Guilt
  - Grief
  - Trust



## Pain and Suffering

- Physical: “pain” in all its forms
  - Delirium, dyspnea, agitation, constipation, etc.
  - Any physical symptom
- Psychological/emotional
  - Fear, anxiety, grief, guilt, confusion
- Social
  - Isolation, abandonment
- Spiritual
  - Questions of meaning, relationship to God, challenges to personhood





## Integrated Palliative Care

- Symptom management
  - Pain in all its forms, in all realms
  - Comfortable enough to be functional
- Communication management
  - Information flow
  - Anticipatory planning
- Environmental management
  - Adaptive and therapeutic
- Resource management and referral
  - Social services, pastoral care, financial counseling, meals on wheels



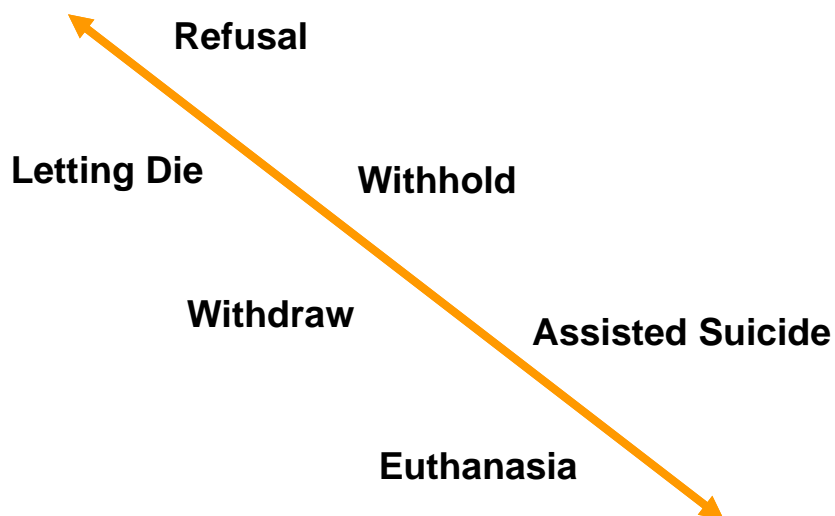
## Understand the System

- Cure orientation
  - High tech
  - Uncertainty
  - Fragmented
  - Organ based
- Lack capacity
  - Surrogates probably don't know
- Economics
- Illness and death are bad, not normal



## Issues in Care of the Dying

- Tension between two extremes
  - Use of (possibly) burdensome technology
  - Withdrawal of technology (possibly) intending death
    - Killing vs. letting die
- Care even when cure is impossible
- Effective management of pain in all its forms
  - Management of suffering
    - Physical
    - Psycho-emotional
    - Social
    - Spiritual

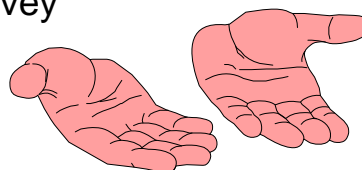




## Understand Yourself

- Seek first to understand, then to be understood

~Covey

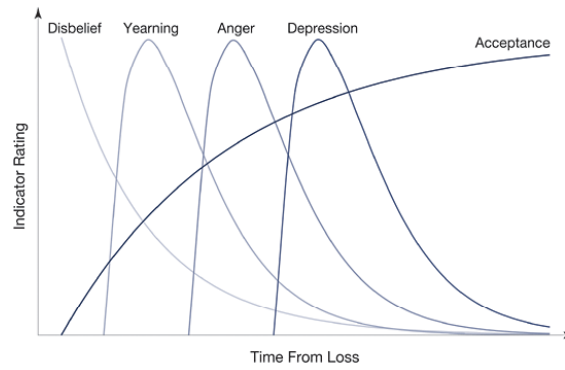


## Impact of Unexamined Feelings

- Patient care
  - Poor quality care
  - Increased complications
  - Unclear goals
  - Inappropriate use of LST
- Caregiver
  - Cynical
  - Loss of meaning
  - Burnout
  - Depression
  - Substance abuse
  - Mental health
  - Fear of death
- Risks
  - Personal relationship
  - Anger either way
  - Too many caregivers
  - Unclear Plan
  - Substance abuse
  - Mental health
- Behavior
  - Relationship problems
  - Mistrust
  - Avoidance
  - Power struggles
  - Signs of stress
  - Guilt, grief, shame, anger, ambivalence, victimization

Further Reading: Meier DE et al. The inner life of physicians and care of the seriously ill. *JAMA*.2001;286:3007-3014.

### Hypothesized Stage Theory of Grief

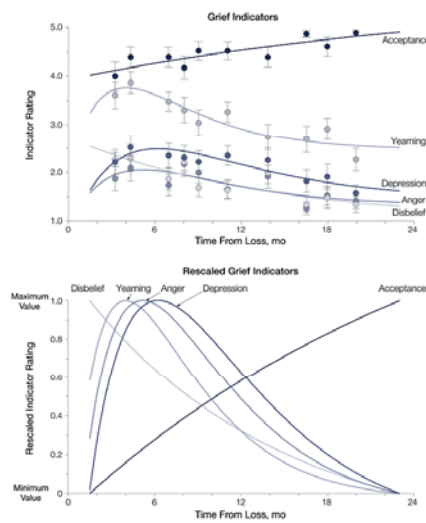


Maciejewski, P. K. et al. JAMA 2007;297:716-723.

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JAMA

### Empirical and Rescaled Models for Grief Indicators as Functions of Time



Maciejewski, P. K. et al. JAMA 2007;297:716-723.

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## Emotions in Grief

- Abnormal eating patterns
  - Can't eat; can't stop eating
- Anger
- Confusion
- Dazed feeling
- Denial
- Depression
- Despair
- Fear
- Guilt
- Isolation
- Relief
  - Guilt for feeling it, too
- Sadness
- Sleep disturbances
  - Can't sleep; fear of sleeping

**Cost control,  
safety, infection control,  
facility, others**

**Organizational awareness,  
performance improvement,  
information management**

**Customer service, patient rights,  
communication, and teamwork**

**Professionalism/self-development/respect and  
rational decision making**

**Accountability, self-control, and resilience**

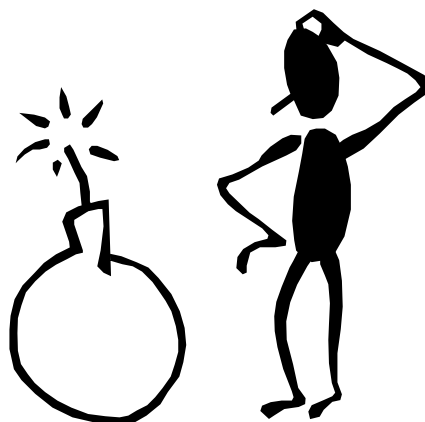
**Self esteem/self confidence**

Decker, Hospital Topics, 1999



## Hidden competencies

- Accountability
- Professionalism
- Emotional self-control
- Self-esteem



## Contact Information

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