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Personal Health Assessment and Health Promotion Plan

Abstract

The author was compelled to examine their own personal beliefs regarding their ideas of health. With the assistance of the Health Beliefs Survey, the author discovered that their own health beliefs are self-centered. This is interpreted as each person controls one’s own health to an extent. Upon realizing this, it compelled the author to examine their own coping mechanisms. After recently having a life changing move, the author discovered that their coping mechanisms were not as effective as one would want. Upon further examination, the author came up with a plan to promote coping and time management with the help of the nursing process. The author was able to assess the present situation, give a nursing diagnosis related to the situation, plan appropriate measures to promote coping, implement such measures and then evaluate the effects on their present coping mechanisms.

Personal Health Assessment and Health Promotion Plan

In a chaotic environment, such as the world today, stress is unavoidable. With economic hard-ships, trying to balance family and work life, a person may feel overwhelmed at times. In order to manage such stress, one must have adequate coping skills. Coping skills do not develop all at once, but grow as one matures and progresses through life. With each different life experience, many are able to gather knowledge and build upon their coping mechanisms. Some, unfortunately, do not have that same opportunity. It may be due to a difficult childhood, a traumatic life event or an unknown cause in which they do not develop as others. This results in poor management of stressful situations. Or, some may have had suitable coping mechanisms leading up to a traumatic event, but once the event has occurred they seem to lose control and hope. It is important for a person to objectively examine themselves and their coping mechanisms to promote optimal functioning.

Before beginning to examine one’s coping mechanisms, it is important for a person to assess their overall health beliefs. One such way is with the Health Belief’s Survey (see Appendix A). This survey helps identify a person’s individual beliefs regarding health issues and how family, self, and medical professionals impact one’s health. The author of this paper preformed this survey and found that much of their individual beliefs are self-centered. More specifically, health is mostly impacted on one’s own actions. This can be related to coping, meaning one’s coping mechanisms are largely controlled by such individual.

The author has recently relocated from a rural community located in the Upper Peninsula of Michigan to Milwaukee, Wisconsin. This move has been relatively challenging, subsequently, coping mechanisms have been initiated. The move was singular, resulting in the closest support-system being five hours away. Initially, the author struggled with being lonesome and not having a support system near-by. The author realized the coping mechanisms were not helping sufficiently. With use of several assessments, the author was able to develop a plan to promote increased coping and adjustment to the life-changing relocation.

During the authors move, the journey can be related to the Transtheoretical Model (Pender, Murdaugh, & Parsons, 2011). According to the Transtheoretical Model a person that wants to make a change, goes through a five step process. The first step, precontemplation, occurs prior to any notion of wanting to make a change. This is exemplified when the author moved to a new city and was going on with day to day activities. The second step, contemplation, occurs when the subject is seriously thinking about making a change within the next six months. The author had these thoughts when feelings of loneliness and isolation developed. This occurred especially when family activities were taking place back at home. The third step, planning or preparation, involves reviewing the change that is wished to be made and planning interventions that will take place within the next six months. Some changes may occur sporadically. This phase was demonstrated after the author conducted the Health Belief Survey. When reaching the conclusion that their beliefs evolve from self-actions, the author realized that changes needed to be made in order to adequately cope. With the second to the last step, action, the author made changes to help establish a better coping regimen. By joining a gym and developing a schedule, the author was able to prioritize and implement better time management skills. The final step, maintenance, will have to be further assessed post-six months of the changes (Pender, Murdaugh, & Parsons, 2011).

Previously, the author used running and exercise as a way to cope and sort through problems. With the added stress of moving, increased class work, a new job, and a lack of near-by support, the author felt burdened. As school work increased and swing shifts began for the new job, the author struggled with knowing if the move was the right decision and being lonesome. With the help of school assignments pushing for self-examining of coping and health patterns, the author was able to identify a lapse in such skills. Realizing the ultimate deficit was time-management; the author realized a realistic schedule needed to be made incorporating work, sleep, school time, and free time. With the help of *Exercise Time Finder* the author was able to draw up a schedule similar to the *Time Finder* delegating time to each activity with some flexibility for increase assignments and late work shift [see Appendix C] (American College of Sports Medicine, 2006).

Implementing the nursing process, the author was able to compose a wellness diagnosis and construct a plan of care to promote better coping. The diagnosis of readiness for enhanced coping related to moving to a new location and lack of coping skills as evidence by developing feelings of depression and isolation is the basis of such plan of care. The author developed interventions which include joining a gym. The gym the author chose is less than one mile away from the author’s residence. It has many amenities including swimming pools, complementary exercise classes, and a great amount of exercise equipment. The author also designated Sunday as the day a schedule is to be developed for the rest of the week. When composing the schedule, the author will examine the assignments that are due during that particular week, the author’s work schedule, and other leisure activities. Adequate time will be devoted to sleeping, homework, exercise and leisure time. After completion of each week, the author with examine the structure of the schedule, along with compliance. If stress levels are high related to work and homework, adjustments will have to be made accordingly. Some adjustments may include, devoting more time to homework and less time to leisure activities. Rewards will also be in place for completing homework assignments in a timely manner.

After following the schedule for just one week, the author has noted a significant improvement in stress levels. With the incorporation of exercise, the author can notice more self-confidence and compliance with the schedule. The schedule provides the author structure in which certain time is delegated to particular activities. It has greatly helped time management skills and organization. The author is able to plan ahead for assignments and feels that more thought and critical thinking are going into each assignment. The schedule can be varied to meet the author’s needs, which is reassuring. By being compelled to examine personal health beliefs and coping mechanisms, the author was able to be made aware of the present situation and lack of coping skills. This allowed for action to be made prior to any negative effects in the author’s life. Overall, the promotion of time management and implementation of a schedule has greatly improved the author’s work and school performance.

References

American College of Sports Medicine. (2006). *Exercise time finder*. Retrieved from http://www.myexerciseplan.com/assessment/ExerciseTimeFinder.pdf

Everly, G. (2007, April 13). *Coping skills self-assessment*. Retrieved from <http://www.southalabama.edu/counseling/assessment.html>

Pender, N., Murdaugh, C., Parsons, M. (2011). *Health promotion in nursing practice* (6th ed.). Upper Saddle River, NJ: Pearson Education Inc.

Appendix A

**Health Beliefs Survey**

The questionnaire is designed to determine the way in which different people view certain important health-related issues. Each item is a belief statement, with which you may agree or disagree. Beside each statement is a scale that ranges from strongly disagree (1) to strongly agree (6). For each item, choose the number that represents the extent to which you disagree or agree. This is a measure of your personal beliefs; obviously, there are no right or wrong answers.

Please answer these items carefully, but do not spend too much time on any one item. As much as you can, try to respond to each item independently. When making your choice, do not be influenced by your previous choices. It is important that you respond according to your actual beliefs and not according to how you feel you should believe or how you think we want you to believe.

1 - Strongly Disagree; 2 - Moderately Disagree; 3 - Slightly Disagree; 4 - Slightly Agree; 5 - Moderately Agree; 6 - Strongly Agree

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
|  | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 |
| 1. If I get sick, it is my own behavior that determines how soon I will get well again. |  |  |  | x |  |  |
| 1. No matter what I do, if I am going to get sick, I'll get sick. |  |  | x |  |  |  |
| 1. Having regular contact with my physician is the best way for me avoid illness. |  | x |  |  |  |  |
| 1. Most things that affect my health happen to me by accident. |  |  | x |  |  |  |
| 1. Whenever I don't feel well, I should consult a medically trained professional. | x |  |  |  |  |  |
| 1. I am in control of my health. |  |  |  |  | x |  |
| 1. My family has a lot to do with my becoming sick or staying healthy. |  | x |  |  |  |  |
| 1. When I get sick, I am to blame. |  |  | x |  |  |  |
| 1. Luck plays a big part in determining how soon I will recover from an illness. | x |  |  |  |  |  |
| 1. Health professionals control my health. | x |  |  |  |  |  |
| 1. My good health is largely a matter of good fortune. |  | x |  |  |  |  |
| 1. The main thing that affects my health is what I myself do. |  |  |  | x |  |  |
| 1. If I take care of myself, I can avoid illness. |  |  |  |  | x |  |
| 1. When I recover from illness, it's usually because other people have been taking good care of me. (doctor, nurses, family) |  | x |  |  |  |  |
| 1. No matter what I do, I'm likely to get sick. | x |  |  |  |  |  |
| 1. If it's meant to be, I will stay healthy. |  |  | x |  |  |  |
| 1. If I take the right actions, I can stay healthy. |  |  |  |  | x |  |
| 1. Regarding my health, I can only do what my doctor tells me to do. | x |  |  |  |  |  |

 These three subscales, and the items included in each, are as follows:

* Internal Items: 1, 6, 8, 12, 13, 17
* Chance Items: 2, 4, 9, 11, 15, 16
* Powerful-others items: 3, 5, 7, 10, 14, 18

 The score on each subscale is the sum of the values for each item in that subscale multiplied by 2. Scores within each subscale can range from 12 to 72. The higher the score on the internal subscale, the more personal control clients believe that they exercise over their own health. The higher the scores on the chance subscale and power-others subscale, the higher the beliefs in the importance of chance and others respectively in controlling personal health. Normative means for adults on each subscale are as follows:

Internal, 50.4

Chance, 31.0

Powerful-others, 40.9

Appendix B

Coping Skills Self-Assessment

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| http://www.southalabama.edu/counseling/girlthinking300.jpg | **Stress is inevitable.**  **How do you manage it?**  **Take a few  minutes to identify your constructive  and/or  destructive methods of  coping  with stress**. |

  Follow the instructions for each item below.  When you have completed all the items, total your points.

+ \_\_x\_\_1.

Give yourself 10 points if you feel you have supportive family around you.

+ \_\_\_\_2.

Give yourself 10 points if you actively pursue a hobby.

+ \_\_\_\_3.

Give yourself 10 points if you belong to a social or activity group in which you participate more than once a month.

+ \_x\_\_\_4.

Give yourself 15 points if you are within 10 pounds of your "ideal" bodyweight, considering your height and bone structure.

+ \_\_\_\_5.

Give yourself 15 points if you practice some form of "deep relaxation" at least five times a week.  Deep relaxation includes meditation, progressive muscle relaxation, imagery, and yoga.

+\_\_\_\_6.

Give yourself 5 points for each time you exercise for 30 minutes or longer during an average week.

+\_\_\_x\_7.

 Give yourself 5 points for each nutritionally balanced and wholesome meal you eat during an average day. A nutritionally balanced meal is low in fat and high in vegetables, fruits, and whole-grain products.

+\_\_\_\_8.

Give yourself 5 points if you do something you really enjoy and which is "just for you" during an average week.

+\_\_x\_\_9.

Give yourself 10 points if you have a place in your home to which you can go to relax or be by yourself.

+\_\_\_\_10.

Give yourself 10 points if you practice time management techniques daily.

+\_\_\_\_11.

Subtract 10 points for each pack of cigarettes you smoke during an average day.

+\_\_\_\_12.

Subtract 5 points for each evening during an average week that you use any form of medication or chemical substance, including alcohol, to help you sleep.

+\_\_\_\_13.

Subtract 10 points for each day during an average week that you consume form of medication or chemical substance, including alcohol, to reduce anxiety or just to calm down.

+\_\_\_\_14.

Subtract 5 points for each evening during an average week that you bring work home - work meant to be done at your place of employment.  = \_\_\_40\_\_ Calculate your total score.  A "perfect" score is 115.  If you scored in the 50-60 range, you probably have adequate coping skills for most common stress.  However, keep in mind that the higher your score, the greater your ability to cope with stress in an effective, healthy manner.

\*This stress assessment was adapted from Dr. George Everly Jr. of the University of Maryland.  It is reprinted from a U.S. Public Health Service pamphlet, *What Do You Know About Stress* (DHHS Publication No. PHS79-50097) and is in the public domain.

Appendix C

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
|  | 5-6 | 6-7 | 7-8 | 8-9 | 9-10 | 10-11 | 11-12 | 12-1 | 1-2 | 2-3 | 3-4 | 4-5 | 5-6 | 6-7 | 7-8 | 8-9 | 9-10 | 10-11 | 11-12 |
| Mon  7/4 | S | S | S | S | H | H | H | L | L | L | L | L | L | L | L | H | S | S | S |
| Tues  7/5 | S | W | W | W | W | W | W | W | W | W | W | W | H | H | E | L | S | S | S |
| Wed  7/6 | S | W | W | W | W | W | W | W | W | W | W | W | L | H | H | H | H | S | S |
| Thur  7/7 | E | W | W | W | W | W | W | W | W | W | W | W | H | H | H | L | L | L | S |
| Fri  7/8 | S | S | E | H | H | W | W | W | W | W | W | W | W | W | L | L | L | L | S |
| Sat  7/9 | S | S | S | S | S | H | H | L | L | L | L | L | L | H | H | L | L | L | S |
| Sun  7/10 | S | W | W | W | W | W | W | W | W | W | L | H | H | H | L | L | L | L | S |

Guide:

W- Work

HW- Homework

L- Leisure/Free time

E- Exercise

S- Sleep