Self-affirmation: the antidote for lateral violence in nursing

Poster Presentation Summary and Discussion:

I first took interest in the topic of lateral violence in nursing after hearing about the subject in my nursing research class sophomore year. I was always puzzled by the idea that nurses, people who are expected to care and love others, could bully other nurses. After experiencing my various clinical rotations, I quickly learned that lateral violence does exist in nursing, and it is a problem that needs to be discussed more openly in our society. In my Fall 2016 semester, I took the opportunity to hold a Lateral Violence Workshop with the URI Multicultural Student Nurses Association. This workshop was intended to jumpstart a conversation about what lateral violence is and how members of our group have been personally affected by it. I knew by the end of our one-hour session that there was much more to be said. I continued the conversation by talking to my peers. I spoke with friends in my clinical group, classmates, and other faculty members. I asked them about instances when they had been bullied by another nurse and how it made them feel. I reflected on my own personal experiences and realized that I felt the same way as they had – lost, embarrassed, and discouraged.

My rationale and intention for this project was to learn more about the topic of lateral violence in nursing in hopes of creating more dialogue about the issue and encouraging fellow nurses to gain the confidence they need to overcome these situations and become leaders of change in their facilities. My personal goal was to use self-affirmation as a means to build my own confidence as I enter the world of professional nursing. In the future, I aspire to be a leader in the field of nursing by mentoring new nurses in a way that challenges yet never intimidates them. I will give praise to student and novice nurses when it is deserved, but I will also offer constructive criticism to help them grow professionally. My kind words of recognition can help new-to-practice nurses build their own confidence as they grow into competent caregivers. Realizing one’s worthiness and ability can propel all nurses to engage in the necessary dialogue to promote a culture of change and acceptance within the nursing profession.