** Smt.Nagarathnamma college of nursing **

Soladevanahalli, Bangalore -90

**What is Anxiety?**

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**Definition:**

* Is a subjective, individual experience characterized by a feeling of apprehension, uneasiness, uncertainty, or dread.
* It occurs as a result of threats that may be actual or imagined, misperceived or misinterpreted, or from a threat to identity or self-esteem.
* It often precedes new experiences.

**Types of Anxiety:**

* **Normal** - A healthy type of anxiety that mobilizes a person to action.
* **Acute** - Precipitated by imminent loss or change that threatens the sense of security.
* **Chronic** - Anxiety that the individual has lived with for a long time.

**Levels of Anxiety:**

1. **Mild/ Alertness Level (+1)**
* This is the type of anxiety associated with the normal tension of everyday life.
* The individual is alert
* Perceptual field is increased
* Produce growth and creativity, as it increases learning
* The person uses adaptive coping mechanisms to solve problems and alleviate anxiety.

***Nursing Interventions:***

* Recognize the anxiety by statements such as “I notice you being restless today”.
* Explore causes of anxiety and ways to solve problems that cause anxiety by statements such as “Let’s discuss ways to…”
1. **Moderate/ Apprehension Level (+2)**
	* The response of the body to immediate danger and focus is directed to immediate concerns.
	* Narrows the perceptual field to pay attention to particular details.
	* Selective inattentiveness occurs
	* The increased tension makes this the optimal time for learning
	* The person uses palliative coping mechanisms.

***Nursing Interventions:***

* Provide outlets for anxiety such as crying or talking.
* Tell client “It’s all right to cry”.
* Encourage in motor activity to reduce tension.
* Make client be aware of his behavior and feelings by statements such as “ I know you feel scare…”
* Encourage client to move from affecting (feeling) to cognitive mode (thinking).
* Refocus attention
* Encourage the client to talk about felings and concerns.
* Help the client identify thoughts and feelings that occurred prior to the onset of anxiety.
* Provide anti-anxiety oral medications.

3. **Severe/ Free-floating Level (+3)**

* Creates a feeling that something bad is about to happen, or feeling of an impending doom.
* Fight and flight response sets in
* Narrow perceptual field occurs and focus is on specific details or scaterred details so that learning and problem-solving is not possible.
* All behaviors are directed at alternative the anxiety
* The individual needs direction to focus
* Dilated pupils, fixed vision
* The person uses maladaptive coping mechanisms.

***Nursing Interventions:***

* Do not focus on coping mechanisms
* Stay calm and stay with the client
* Give short and explicit direction
* Modify the environment by setting limits or seclusion, limit interaction with others, and reduce environmental stimuli to calm client.
* Provide IM antianxiety medications.

4. **Panic Level (+4)**

* Feelings of helplessness and terror
* The personality and behavior is disorganized
* The individual lessens perception of the environment to protect the ego from awareness and anxiety causing distorted perceptions and loss of rational thoughts.
* Is unable to communicate or function effectively
* Inability to concentrate
* If prolonged, panic can lead to exhaustion and death
* The person uses dysfunctional coping mechanisms.

***Nursing Interventions:***

* Guide patient step by step to action
* Restrain if necessary.

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