

Dossey's Integral Nursing Model: How Mentoring Leads to Internal and External Thriving in the Workplace

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Application of Dossey's Theories of Integral Nursing and Integrative Nurse Coaching can strengthen effective communication capacity in the mentoring relationship across a broad band of the professional workplace, as it has in the nursing profession. Use of Dossey's Integral Model Quadrants and the Five Components of Nurse Coaching helps identify individual and collective perspective in the process of communication, enhancing mentoring efficiency and efficacy, and commitment to organizational goals and a just culture. Due to staffing challenges, budgetary constraints and other challenges in the organizational culture in multiple industries, too frequently, employees are not thriving as people or as professionals. One possible solution to this need is to integrate meaningful mentoring relationships to support and encourage nurses and other professionals, toward internal and external thriving in the workplace. Today's organizations are fast paced and often unforgiving for those who are still growing and developing their professional skills. Fairness in opportunities and support can make a meaningful impact on thriving. Mentoring is a possible solution to increase effectiveness and wellbeing for employees, colleagues and leaders. Dossey's theories can apply to any work setting, helping with internal and external thriving in the workplace.

Keywords: Mentoring, coaching, workplace, holistic, Dossey, nursing.

Introduction

Due to staffing challenges, budgetary constraints and other challenges in the organizational culture in multiple industries, too frequently employees are not thriving as people or as professionals. One possible solution to this need is to integrate meaningful mentoring relationships to support and encourage nurses and other professionals, toward internal and external thriving in the workplace. The application of Dr. Barbara Dossey's Theories of Integral Nursing (2008) and Integrative Nurse Coaching Theory (Dossey & Hess, 2013) can strengthen effective communication capacity in the Mentoring relationship across a broad band of the professional workplace, as it has in Nursing. Use of Dossey's Integral Model Quadrants and the Five Components of Nurse Coaching help identify individual and collective perspective in the process of communication, enhancing mentoring efficiency and efficacy, and commitment to organizational goals and a just culture (Dossey, 2008; Dossey et al., 2018). The Theory of Integral Nursing provides an integrative, holistic framework which places the emphasis on mentoring as a relationship between the mentor and mentee. Within that framework, the five components of the Integrative Nurse Coaching (TINC) model provide a structure of "how-to" steps within a holistic perspective. The

applicable tools for mentoring available within the Theory of Integral Nursing (TIN) model include worksheets for increased awareness of self-development, listening, and verbal and non-verbal communication skills (Dossey & Hess, 2013). Today's organizations are fast paced and often unforgiving for those who are still growing and developing their professional skills. Fairness in opportunities and support can make a meaningful impact on thriving. Mentoring is a possible solution to increase effectiveness and wellbeing for employees, colleagues and leaders.

Literature Review

Effective mentoring can bridge the gap between internal (intrinsic) and external (extrinsic) motivation for the rewards available to an employee within an organization. External rewards based in human need can include pay, pay raises, bonus pay, flexible work scheduling, recognition, and promotion. Internal rewards include a growing sense of mastery and competency, which leads to self-efficacy. Leveraged harmony between human need and internal and external rewards is a motivator which can provide benefit to an organizational culture. Improved employee performance, engagement and commitment to organizational values and goals can contribute significantly to a positive work culture (Beheshti, 2019). The key

is the level of harmony between the needs of the employee and the rewards offered within the organization.

Addressing and meeting employee needs in the midst of high-level, competing, organizational priorities can be significantly challenging. Intentions may be positive, but without a ground-level system, employee needs and rewards available within the system may not be in sync. Mentoring is a system which can increase employee retention, productivity, and commitment to organizational goals. Mentoring is not to be confused with the type of preceptorship associated with onboarding orientation in healthcare settings (Health and Care Professions Council, 2023).

Historically, mentoring and coaching were conceptualized as tutoring, or training for strengthened performance and increased capacity for achieving organizational goals (Koopman, et al., 2021; Jacobi, 1991). Mentoring and coaching are sometimes viewed as a similar role and process. Though projected outcomes for mentoring and coaching may be similar, it is important to identify the differences in role and process. Viera (2021) points to the task orientation of the coaching process to improve a specific aspect of performance, and the broader process of mentoring, which is more recently viewed as occurring for general personal and professional growth. In the academic environment, mentoring has become an accepted aspect of academic life and work (Foster et al., 2015; Santora et al., 2013). A publication by Hill et al. (2022) discusses the need and challenges of identifying an effective mentoring relationship for improved outcomes in academic and health care settings. In a systematic review of one-hundred and six (106) published studies, Nuis et al. (2023) sought to find a common conceptual meaning of mentoring, and defined tools for measurement. A summative content analysis identified a proposed holistic concept of mentoring, evidence-based mentoring practices, and measurement practices and tools which align with the proposed mentoring concept (Nuis et al., 2023). The resulting holistic concept is stated as the following.

Mentoring is a formalized process based on a developmental relationship between two persons in which one person is more experienced (mentor) than the other (mentee). The mentor provides support, more specifically career, emotional, psychosocial, psychological, and academic support, to promote and facilitate student success, competence development, and career development (Nuis et al., 2023, p. 7).

Model

A publication by the Health and Care Professions Council (2023) points to the individualized flexibility and situational adaptability of the mentoring process in comparison to the more structured process of a preceptorship, which

is time-limited and assigned for a specific transition period of learning acquisition. The nature of the preceptorship process has similarity to that of coaching. Coaching is viewed as a supportive process assigned to enhance skill and performance in certain areas, more individualized and with some flexibility but still structured around a goal (Milner & Milner, 2018; Health and Care Professions Council, 2023). Clarity regarding the nature, role, and process of preceptorship, coaching, and mentoring is needed for the purposes of this paper as it will propose use of Dossey's Theory of Integral Nursing (2008) and Dossey and Hess's Integrative Nurse Coaching Theory (2013) to an interprofessional, holistic mentoring relationship. Though mentoring may be a formalized process, there is flexibility of the process, goals, and timeframe to allow for development of a relationship (Beheshti, 2019; Koopman, et al., 2021). The relationship within the mentoring process is a key point in the interprofessional application of both coaching and mentoring.

Dossey's Theory of Integral Nursing (2008) and Dossey and Hess's Theory of Integrative Coaching (2013), holistic in nature and relationship oriented, have broad interprofessional application toward positive organizational culture and workplace dynamics. Both theories recognize and emphasize the phenomenology of human experience from the whole person view of body, mind, and spirit, within the interactive influence of the environment. In that context, mentoring as a relationship, adapted to the individual, provides a rich ground for growth in skill and performance, as well as professional and personal self-development. The challenge is in the quality of the mentor and the effectiveness of the match between the mentor and mentee. Overall essential qualities identified by Hill et al., (2022) for the mentor role are making oneself available and approachable, being trustworthy, possessing the capacity to serve as a role model, and having the necessary experience, knowledge, and skill to be an effective match for the mentee. Multiple sources cite mentoring as a crucial element in employee and organizational success (Hill et al., 2022; Dossey, 2008). Building employee self-efficacy and competence through mentoring and coaching yields significant positive impact potential for the organization as well as individual thriving - there is no "downside" (Hill et al., 2022; Koopman et al., 2021; Nuis et al., 2023). Mentoring and coaching can promote organizational engagement, commitment, and confidence through focused support, feedback, self- and other-awareness, and interpersonal skill building. Milner & Milner (2018) and Koopman et al. (2021) include coaching, discuss the variability of activities which pass for coaching, and advocate for training programs for those in the coach role. Top skills cited for effective coaching are active listening and giving feedback, providing structure, taking a strengths-based approach, guiding solution development while encouraging

the one being coached to find their own solution (Koopman et al, 2021).

The Theory of Integral Nursing (TIN; Dossey, 2008) is rooted in complexity science and comprehensively organizes the reality of human experience across four domains of wellbeing: the individual interior (personal/intentional), individual exterior (physiology/behavioral), collective interior (shared/cultural), and collective exterior (systems/structures). The individual interior domain of the human experience is concerned with, "Who am I?" and encompasses the inner world of subjective self, thoughts, feelings, values and meaning (Dossey, 2008). The focus of the individual exterior domain is objective, "What do I do?" This aspect of human experience is the observable, measurable capacity for external actions and one's biology (Dossey, 2008). The collective interior domain is the relational self, that part of self which extends oneself into capacity for relationships with others, and which asks, "Who are we together?" The collective exterior domain, the worldly self, is concerned with what we can create and become together. Dossey's (2008) four domains applied to mentorship provide a structured means to address the holistic and relational nature of mentoring as a relationship, and not a linear task to be accomplished. The Theory of Integrative Nurse Coaching (TINC; Dossey & Hess, 2013), expands the four domains of the Theory of Integral Nursing into five deeper areas or components, and provides an organized structure for implementation of coaching activities. The five components are: "1) Nurse Coach Self-Development; 2) Integral Perspectives and Change; 3) Integrative Lifestyle Health and Wellbeing (ILHWB); 4) Awareness and Choice; and 5) Listening with HEART®" (Dossey et al., 2018, para. 5). Worksheets and questions to stimulate self-reflection and curiosity are included for engagement and dialogue with each of the five components. Both theories are not content with a canned, one-size-fits-all mentor program. The Theory of Integral Nursing (Dossey, 2008) lays the holistic foundation for a comprehensive view of the mentoring process, based in relational engagement, dialogue, and role modeling. The Theory of Integrative Nurse Coaching (Dossey et al., 2018) adds the interlocking tools for self-development and holistic health building for both the mentor and the mentee. The Theory of Integral Nursing (Dossey, 2008; Dossey, 2020) and the Theory of Integrative Nurse Coaching (Dossey et al., 2018) promote the qualities needed for an effective mentoring relationship, qualities of authenticity for trust building and engagement, with an individualized approach which focuses on strengths, and encourages mentee self-efficacy. In workplace mentoring, using this framework, the focus should be on employee growth including personal insight and self-reflection, leading to a higher level of professional performance and professional behavior.

Outcomes and Discussion

Building on Dossey's (2008) Theory of Integral Nursing (TIN) as well as Nurse Coaching (Dossey et al., 2018), mentors in a variety of industries may benefit from applying these concepts in coaching and mentoring relationships. Because these theories leverage personal reflection and a relational approach that is flexible, these concepts can apply in any work setting, benefitting the organization as well as the individuals involved, leading to a healthier workplace and thriving people.

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