

Instructor's Toolkit for George Palo's Monologue

George's introductory monologues can be used in a number of different ways. Here are a few to consider:

- Large class discussion
- Small group discussion during class or clinical
- Reflective journaling assignment
- Web-based assignment: Listen to the audio and/or read the script then discuss and summarize the group's conclusions.

Questions to Stimulate Discussion

1. What issues do you hear in the monologue that may be related to early cognitive concerns?
2. What are George's strengths?
3. What are your concerns for George?
4. What other information would you like to have?
5. How do the recent losses George has experienced complicate his ability to manage his health care needs?

Some of these questions were adapted from the following publication: Benner, P., Sutphen, M., Leonard, V., Day, L., & Shulman, L. (2010). Paradigm case: Lisa Day, classroom and clinical instructor. In Educating nurses: A call for radical transformation (p. 133). San Francisco: Jossey-Bass.

Possible Answers

1. Issues: George talks about his difficulties with losing his wife and also the recent move to an apartment – loss of independence with aging and developmental milestones at risk. He catches himself repeating comments and suggests that his daughter Maggie acknowledges that he repeats himself – possible concerns related to early cognitive changes with Alzheimer's.
2. Strengths: Georges is resourceful, active, and successful living alone independently. He has good support from his children with one child living close by. He has some support from friends. His living environment has helpful health promotion activities. He has good medical benefits as part of his retirement benefits.
3. Concerns: The possibility of loneliness with recent life changes; providing enough support to maintain his health and independence.

4. Other information: What additional resources does George have? Do the recent appearance of early memory lapses and repeating himself warrant evaluation? What support does the family need?
5. Complications related to recent losses: Medication administration safety – remembering to take blood pressure meds; increasing loneliness accompanied by changes in daily routines such as dietary management, exercise, sleep.

Other Ideas

Have students listen to the monologue and respond to a set of questions before coming to class. We encourage you to be creative and add to the monologues or create new ones that match the content in your curriculum. You might consider expanding the case until you have monologues and simulation scenarios that can be used throughout the entire curriculum.

You may wish to make the following points with students:

- Psychological and sociologic factors affect quality of life with aging individuals. Perception of health and coping skills are determining factors in successful aging.
- Dementia is a general term for a decline in mental ability severe enough to interfere with daily life. Memory loss is an example.
- Dementia is not a specific disease. It's an overall term that describes a wide range of symptoms.
- Alzheimer's is a type of dementia that causes problems with memory, thinking, and behavior.
- Many people have memory loss issues; this does not mean they have Alzheimer's or another dementia. There are many different causes of memory problems.

Resources

Alzheimer's Association
<http://www.alz.org/what-is-dementia.asp>

Loneliness, Depression and Sociability in Old Age
<http://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC3016701/>