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POSTER

CHALLENGES AND OPPORTUNITIES OF RELATIONSHIP CENTRED CARE IN HEALTH CARE SETTINGS. MY JOURNEY AND THE EVOLUTION OF MY APPROACH

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Understanding the complexities of relating in a health care context invites practitioners to anticipate and identify challenges and opportunities as they arise in their practice. This experiential paper will attempt to explore and illustrate some of the complexities of adopting a relationship centred approach in healthcare settings, from the perspective of one practitioner.

This paper will consider how the organisational culture can impact on the practitioner's ability to interact with patients. In this context the influence of the organisational culture with its emphasis on task, diagnosis and treatment of disease, functioned to undermine this practitioner's capacity to relate and take up a relationship centred approach.

This paper, with reference to clinical material, will highlight the tension that exists between task and relationship in healthcare settings. Special reference will be made to how in some situations the wish to relate interrupted the task-focused work, causing confusion and great challenge for the practitioner. The invitation to adopt relationship centred practice, while still attending to the task in hand restored the practitioner's belief in the medical consultation's potential to create a receptive, responsive and relationship centred space.

Finally, this paper will conclude by considering how to navigate this complex context and to achieve a balance which includes relationship centred care using these opportunities as they arise to ensure optimum health care outcomes for both practitioner and patients. ■