Dealing with a Negative Nursing Unit Culture - Show Notes

Working on nursing units can be amazingly rewarding with great teamwork, but can also be really challenging if you don’t fit right in or if the unit already has a negative culture. In this podcast episode, we discuss some tips on how to deal with this.

Observe the culture of the unit

- Try to feel out the people who are negative
- Observe what they’re passionate about and care about a lot (both negative and not)
- Pay attention to the informal leaders – what are they like as a person?

Mental self-inventory

- How do you communicate when things may not be right?
- Mental self-inventory
- How do you receive correction?
- Identify the feelings you may be experiencing, give the feelings a name (hurt, insecure, frustrated, scared, whatever), and try to step outside of them and observe the situation. Don’t make decisions or act out of emotions
- Emotional intelligence – takes time (link to emotional intelligence book)
- You can’t control the behaviors of others, but you can control yourself and how you respond to their emotions and your own

Empathize
- Empathize with one another, not just your patients
- Dr. Brene Brown’s 2:53 minute explanation of empathy vs. sympathy
  o https://youtu.be/1Evwgu369Jw

Tips to deal with negativity
- Be outside of the negativity, not within it
- Be silent when people are being negative/gossip – soon it’s not going to be fun to talk to you about negative stuff
- If you’re truly concerned about a new grad or another employee, bring it straight to the person directly or to the higher up (for example, a manager) rather than talking about them with others
- Counteracting negative points with positive ones
- Casually say, “Man, I wonder what people say about me when I’m not here…”
- Get to know negative people, and learn things about them that are not negative and engage in those topics with them
- This takes time, but is worth it
- Negative people / bullies may not realize that is how they are perceived
- Be unapologetic about being positive – don’t feel like you need to be a rain cloud to fit in

More reading on dealing with negative people
- [What's Next: The Smart Nurse’s Guide to Your Dream Job](#), chapter 8
- [10 Responses When Your Preceptor is a Bully](#) - NurseCode.com
- [How to Deal with Rude Co-Workers as a Nurse](#) - eHealthCareers
- [How to deal with negative nurses](#) - a really good thread on allnurses.com