

Care without Judgement – *The HeART of Nursing*: Casey's Story – Embracing Whole Person Care

[VIDEO TRANSCRIPT]

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You know I'm passionate about nursing and what I do and passionate about wanting to create a change and wanting to see some things done differently, the biggest one that we treat each other with more respect. Seeing the beauty every day and bringing it home every day. I work for the Sequoias, it's a CCRC community which is a caring community rehab facility. I am the director of nursing for skilled nursing and how skilled nursing is used here at the Sequoias is an independent person in the apartment, let's say they take a fall and they break a hip, and they go to the hospital and now they need rehab, so they come back to our skilled nursing facility, they're there receiving physical therapy, occupational therapy, speech therapy. I got into nursing way back in the 70s, it was always that we were going to do total care, holistic care, we were going to treat the whole person, it wasn't going to be the cardiac person in 203. So fast forward 40 some years later, the only two places that I see we treat the whole person are Hospice and a CCRC. The most important thing for me, when I'm looking at hiring a new nurse, is do you have the ability to start a conversation with somebody and get their trust in five minutes because really that's the job. You know we made a real mistake in this country when we took schools out of hospitals. So it used to be that the schools were tied into the hospitals and you worked as a CNA through nursing school. You know you stayed there in a dormitory and you worked as you went

through so that you got to see what you were really getting into. As opposed today where you can get your RN, BSN and masters in one fell swoop if you have another degree and you'll come out and you will never have run a code, hung an IV, given somebody blood, been assaulted, have any of the things that happen to you in your career. I started nurse talk when I was listening to a show of Car Talk and laughing my head off and I thought wow this format would really work with nurses and give us a platform from which to speak and also hopefully make a difference in people's lives. Welcome to nurse talk, I'm Casey Hobbs along with my co-host Shane Mason. Good to have you back in the booth Shane and we are two of the thousands of nurses on duty today. Hi Casey, as always we have a great show today. One of our most poignant interviews over the years was the story of Dr. Grace Damon. Grace, so wonderful to have you here with us. I'm glad to be here. So Grace, you know we're nurses and so we're interested in knowing a little bit about what part nurses played in your career as a physician and also what part they played in your recovery. That's a really great question. I mean I've got to say, when I was a patient in the hospital my first, my rule of thumb was I would pull the covers up any time I felt somebody come into my room who was depressed, that included nurses. So my first rule of thumb is you've got to be happy to be at work, you've got to enjoy what you do and unfortunately nurses are way overworked so often they don't communicate that or they don't actually feel it. The thing that I see is, I see students that are not prepared for the complexities of the healthcare system and don't really know what that's all about. A lot of times I'll have students, why do you know, why did you get into nursing? I want to help people. Well there's lots of ways that you can help people. Make sure that you understand what nursing is and that that's what you want to be doing. The big problem I see too in students is they're so young and then they go into this healthcare system that is complex and they don't get a chance to develop how they feel because you're supposed to learn

you know, a new a EHR, and you know all the nursing stuff, and then you're gonna watch someone die for the first time in your life. A nurse who had a photographic memory and he was brilliant and I could name a drug and he could literally read me the PDR about that drug. Okay fast forward several months he's in the job, I walk into a room, he's standing frozen on a spot, the patient is not breathing and I looked at him and I said is he a code and he's just frozen and I hit the code button and I screamed code blue and I dropped the bed down and I started doing compressions and he's so frozen on the spot that when the code team comes in, they physically have to move him out of the way because he was so frozen. He passed every test I'm sure with flying colors. His ability to function as a nurse, not as much. That's so important to nursing and when you talk about nursing, art versus science. This is the art. I think that nursing is more art than science. I stand on science, I stand on all those things that I know that happened physiologically in the body. But my real mission is the art of it, is when to have those conversations and I encourage people, don't run from that move towards it because it's a high space and it feeds your soul more than anything else. On Election Day 2016, I went into surgery for what I was absolutely convinced was not cancer and yet everything about it said that it was cancer. And I did like so many people I see, look away, don't read about it, don't know about it. Let's just pretend it's not cancer. I decided I would have chemo and it was really hard to be on the other side, what I call the other side of the divide, the patient divide. Being on the other side of the divide humbled me, made me so happy to be a nurse because that's who supported and helped me through that process and it was really nice to then be on both sides of that picture. The experience made the experience of Nursing deeper and richer. The experience of my co-workers deeper and richer and just gave me an appreciation for life. I always used to say the people that I saw who had the most passion for life are those people who had had some life-threatening illness

because they get it. You get what's important, it doesn't matter how much money you make, it doesn't matter what kind of car you drive. To be a nurse is, I'm grateful, I'm grateful that that's what I was called for and I'm grateful that I answered the call. I just encourage people, I just don't think there's a better profession out there. I say to people all the time there's no higher calling for me than to be a nurse then to make your occupation about bringing comfort to people, about meeting them where they are without judgement. The most rewarding thing about what I do is that I get to touch people in a profound way every single day and that to me feeds my soul and it's you know, it makes me cry because it's what I love about my profession and I don't know of another profession that lets you have that many experiences every single day.

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