PSYC 1111-01 Introduction to Health Psychology

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This paper explores how common gender stereotypes can negatively affect patients in healthcare settings. In psychology, it is assumed that everyone has some biases. By considering my own biases, I will examine how they could potentially affect my treatment of others and what strategies could be used to counteract these biases.

**Personal Biases**

Reflecting on my own biases, I realize that I tend to believe that elderly people have a lower threshold for anger. This bias could affect how I interact with older patients. For instance, I might approach conversations with elderly patients more cautiously, anticipating anger or frustration. This preconception could lead to overgeneralizing their responses and not addressing their concerns with the same level of attentiveness as I would with younger patients.

**Strategies to Counteract Biases**

1. Self-Awareness

The first step to counteracting biases is to develop self-awareness. Regularly reflecting on and acknowledging my own biases can help me recognize when they might be influencing my behavior. By being mindful of these biases, I can make a conscious effort to set them aside and approach each patient as an individual.

2. Patient-Centered Approach

Adopting a patient-centered approach ensures that each patient's unique needs and concerns are prioritized. Listening actively and empathetically to patients helps build trust and rapport. For example, when interacting with male patients, I can encourage open communication about their emotional well-being by asking open-ended questions and creating a supportive environment.

3. Respect for Diverse Perspectives

Engaging with people from various backgrounds and perspectives can help challenge and broaden my understanding of different experiences. This can be achieved through collaborative teamwork with colleagues from diverse backgrounds or participating in community activities that promote diversity and inclusion.

4. Education and Training

Participating in education and training programs focused on cultural competence and bias reduction can be beneficial. These programs provide tools and techniques to identify and mitigate unconscious biases. For example, training on how to effectively communicate with patients from diverse backgrounds can improve my interactions and reduce the impact of stereotypes.

By recognizing and addressing these biases, I can provide more equitable and effective care to all patients.

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