

Running Head: EXAM 1

Exam 1: McGraw and Peters

Exam Question #1:

Identify and discuss what you consider to be the 10 most effective life strategies that you will use to optimize your personal and professional career. Draw from McGraw and any other useful sources.

**1.) Biblical principles of honesty and integrity in all aspects of life**

The most important life strategy that I use on a daily basis is following the Biblical principles of honesty and integrity. Romans 12:17 (KJV) states, “Provide things honest in the sight of all men.” My parents, church, and Christian school teachers always taught me that to be honest was to be “real” and “genuine,” and that by expressing honesty in daily living expressed both self-respect and respect for others. Honesty and integrity, together, are the key components of developing trust and establishing credibility in relationships. As a registered nurse (and future pediatric nurse practitioner), I hope that my patients and their families see me as someone whom they can trust to provide them with honest answers about their health concerns and health-promotion activities. I also hope that they look at me as an individual of integrity...that I believe and follow the same health behaviors that I advise my patients and families to follow. Together, the principles of honesty and integrity are the most important life strategy that impacts my personal and professional career.

**2.) Always follow the Golden Rule (or the new/improved Platinum Rule).**

The second effective life strategy that I believe is very important is something called the Golden Rule. This moral principle states, “Do unto others as you would have them do unto you.” The University of Michigan Health System has taken this a step further and calls it the Platinum Rule. This version states, “Do unto others as they would like to be treated.” I truly believe in the platinum rule, as a life principle of consistency that can be applied in all

aspects of life. To apply this rule to practice, we need knowledge and imagination...knowledge to understand what effects our actions have on others, and imagination to view ourselves “in their shoes,” or on the receiving end of the actions. As an advanced practice nurse, I plan to be aware of the influence I will have on my patients regarding health behaviors, and will strive to convey these beliefs and treat my patients in culturally-acceptable ways...ways in which they desire to be treated.

### **3.) You create your own experience (Phil McGraw).**

Dr. McGraw discusses that we need to be actively engaged in our lives and accept accountability for what happens, whether it is good or bad. He stresses that we need to find what characteristics about ourselves provide our peak performance and capitalize on these behaviors in order to be successful in life. In the Bible, in Romans 14:12 (KJV), it states, “every one of us shall give [an] account of himself to God.” I understand that I am personally responsible for my actions, but it is often hard to accept those things which I do, or things that happen to me, that bring negative consequences into my life as something that I allowed to happen. By applying this strategy to my personal life, I learn that no matter what happens to me, I am the one who is ultimately responsible. I am the one that let the experience happen, or the individual hurt me, and I am the one who chose to have particular feelings, whether positive or negative, about the experience. Dr. McGraw implies that it is my job to discover my strengths and weaknesses and capitalize on them in order to live my life to the fullest. When my life is over, and I give an account of my life before God, I truly hope that I take full responsibility for all my actions, both personally and professionally, and be proud of the life that I have lived.

**4.) Life rewards action (Phil McGraw).**

This principle makes some referral to my strategy #1 about living a life filled with integrity. Dr. McGraw discusses the importance of doing what we say we will do (and also doing what we encourage others to do). It is important to think before we act (and speak) and make careful decisions about what things we will do and what we will not do. This is my opportunity to take charge of my own life. I know what I want out of life and how to get it, so I am going to take charge and fulfill my desires. Every since I was 7 years old, I knew that I wanted a college degree from the University of Michigan with something to do with pediatrics and the medical field. That was my goal, and I took many small steps in the past several years in order to finally achieve that goal. This past year, I quit an excellent nursing job where I was very happy and comfortable, moved out of my parents' home and away from all my friends and family, found another great nursing job at the University of Michigan's Mott Children's Hospital, and started taking classes with the goal of becoming a pediatric nurse practitioner, and I do not regret my decision one bit. I knew what I wanted, how to get it, and now I am fulfilling my dream of having a world-renowned degree from the University of Michigan. I have learned that life truly does reward action! ☺

**5.) Always give 110% and go above and beyond the call of duty.**

Another valuable life strategy that I have learned is to always give 110% in everything I do. It is not acceptable to just "do my job and go home"...I must do my best at my job (and every aspect of my life) and take initiative to make the experience even better. Everyday when I am at work, I try to go above and beyond for my patients, spending as much time with the families as I can. Being in the hospital is never fun, whether you are the patient or the family member, and when you are (or have) a sick child, the experience is that much worse. By taking the time to fully answer the family's questions, explaining something

the physician said that just didn't make sense to them, advocating for something the child desperately needs (i.e. adequate pain control), helping the child get out of bed and up to the playroom, or bringing the child who is in isolation special toys and activities to occupy their time, I feel that I give 110% to my patients and families every day, helping to make their hospital experience as pleasant as it can be.

**6.) Own, rather than complain about things (Phil McGraw).**

This next life strategy is very similar to the above strategy in that my perceptions are my own, and I choose to make them what they are. If I do not particularly care for the way something is being done, I have no right to complain about it. I must look at ways to improve the situation and make it better. I was recently involved in a difficult situation at work with a family who was very used to being on our floor at the hospital (for 12 years). As the nurse who was new to the hospital, I had not cared for this patient before and was not aware of the particular ways the mother wanted the child's care performed. Rather than complain, because no one told me about this family and that the mom wasn't happy and was yelling at me, I chose to make the situation a positive learning experience and take action so it wouldn't happen again (to anyone). I started "frequent flyer" cards about the patients we chronically see to help those of us who are new know about the child's extensive history and the way they like their care. These cards will be very beneficial to all of us on the floor, and I'm glad that I was able to help make our work environment better for both us and our patients.

**7.) Be flexible and open to new ideas and new ways of doing things (Phil McGraw).**

When I was beginning my nursing program, I struggled with the concept of flexibility. I liked things done in particular ways, and it stressed me out when things were done differently, even if the same outcome resulted. Thanks to many of my clinical

instructors, and my excellent undergraduate education, I have learned that a nurse must be flexible, because not everything happens the way you had it planned out to occur. I have grown an incredible amount in this area in the last 5-6 years and feel that I have become a much better and stronger person because of it. The various theory courses we were taught helped me to look at particular concepts in different ways and has helped me to become more open to change and new ideas. It has also helped me to be willing to openly and honestly critique myself and be more culturally sensitive to my patients and families.

#### **8.) Be accepting of others' ideas and beliefs.**

This strategy is very similar to #7, but I think it takes it a step further. I am a very motivated and determined individual who knows what I believe and why I believe it. It was very frustrating to me in my undergraduate education when certain professors would teach things that they would expect us to learn and adopt as our own beliefs. I have since learned that being open to new thoughts and ideas can make me a better individual and a better nurse, because I can learn new ways of doing things that may work better for certain individuals or population groups. I also learned that I don't necessarily have to adopt their ideas and make them my own, but I can listen to them and learn from them. As a pediatric nurse practitioner, I hope to actively listen to my patients and families about what aspects of certain health behaviors they are not willing to accept and why. I hope to educate them on both the pros and the cons of the various behaviors and show them acceptance as individuals whether or not they choose to adopt the behavior as their own.

#### **9.) Active listening is key (Phil McGraw).**

Active listening is truly listening to what others are saying and not tainting their viewpoints with our own perceptions. By listening to our patients and families, we can learn ways of doing things that are less time-consuming, safer, more comfortable, or more

economically feasible than we had previously thought of. We can also learn to capitalize on their beliefs and learn to incorporate bits and pieces into our own personal and professional lives. It can also make us more aware of the obstacles some of our patients struggle with on a daily basis, and we can use our education and experience to find ways of helping to lessen the stress. By using the power of language (whether spoken or not), we can also reduce the barriers that impede our progress forward as advanced practice nurses and open the line of communication with our patients, their families, our colleagues, and society.

**10.) There is power in forgiveness (Phil McGraw).**

For my final life strategy for this paper, I chose Dr. McGraw's strategy of power in forgiveness. Though we may not be aware of it, we may offend someone, personally or professionally, just as they may do to us. Rather than "sweat the small stuff," even if we were really hurt, we must learn to forgive and ask forgiveness. We must own, rather than complain about things or hold grudges against people. I really appreciated the way that Dr. McGraw talks about the other party not even needing to be present, nor sorry, for us to forgive them and free ourselves. This is such a valuable lesson to learn, and the younger we are when we learn the lesson, the more beneficial it will be.

The experience of writing this paper and choosing my own 10 life strategies has proven to be very beneficial to both my personal and professional lives, and I am very grateful for this experience. I have discovered what truly matters to me and thought of multiple ways to apply these principles to my patients and their families. By incorporating these 10 strategies into my personal and professional life, I strive to be the best possible individual and pediatric nurse practitioner that I can be.

Exam Question #2:

Identify and apply to APN practice the top 10 ideas from Top Peters that have the greatest potential to advance your specialty (in hierarchical order; most important 1<sup>st</sup>). Be sure to stress the why and how of each idea.

**1.) “Revel in the mess...because the mess has a message!”**

Mr. Peters discusses in the first part of the book about how messy life is and how everyone tries to create order in an un-orderly society. Healthcare is not an orderly society. There are constant loop-holes and battles that need to be fought with insurance companies over re-imbursement. There is constant chaos with patients wanting to be seen in the clinic and wanting an appointment “yesterday.” Medications and procedures are always changing. It is extremely difficult to keep up with the latest and most innovative treatments. As graduate nursing students and new advanced practice nurses, this can be very intimidating to us. Mr. Peters stresses the idea that we need not be afraid of failing, but rather learn from any mistakes that we make, and become better individuals because of our mistakes. We must pursue failure or else become stagnate and worthless. We must challenge the status quo. If we never try a new medication with a patient, how will we know whether it works or not? It may be the one medication that finally works for someone. We must go out on a limb, go beyond our comfort zones, and try new things. Mr. Peters states, “it is failure, not success, that makes the world go around,” so why are we so concerned about making mistakes (p. 27)? Peters wants us to reward failure and punish mediocrity. So, we need to go out there and “revel in the mess...because the mess has a message!”



## **2.) Embrace change and diversity, because change is coming fast and coming now.**

Mr. Peters discusses the idea of us being change-agents; flexible and willing to accept new ideas, policies, and ways of practice. As advanced practice nurses, and the wave of healthcare's future, we must be visionaries and catalysts for change. Healthcare is constantly changing, and consumers are becoming more and more educated. Media influences abound in today's society, encouraging people to travel to all parts of the globe for cheaper, better healthcare. Advanced practice nurses must be the wave of the future. We must educate society that we provide better, holistic, cost-effective care to our clients than anyone else. We must strive to look at new theories, new ways of practicing, in order to keep up with the many changes we will face in the next 20-30 years of our practice.

## **3.) Personal commitment to total excellence**

As individuals, and advanced practice nurses, we must commit to total excellence in everything we do and not settle for anything less. Patients' lives are at stake, and if we are not totally committed/engaged, mistakes can happen and people can die. Mr. Peters talks about "one minute excellence" and personal commitment. He states that we need "a 'simple' but determined commitment that one will never again, under any circumstances, do anything that is less than totally excellent" (p.82). By being totally present with our clients and seeking to give them the best care and treatment options that are available, they will see that we truly care about their well-being and are totally committed to them and our profession, thus helping to advance the future of advanced practice nurses along the way.

## **4.) Create an "experience" vs. a service**

As advanced practice nurses, we are in a service industry of providing care and treatment to our clients, but Tom Peters takes this a step further and discusses the idea of creating an "experience" versus merely providing the service. Services are *transactions*, Peters

argues, and experiences are *events, adventures, or “spirit-lifting ‘phenomenon’”* that leave “an indelible memory” and have a beginning, middle, and an end (p. 114). In each encounter we have with a patient, we must be totally engaged and active listeners, for it may be our 20<sup>th</sup> client for the day, but it is the client’s only time to see you that day. We must make it count and make a huge impact on him/her. Offices must be designed with the client in mind. I remember going to a pediatric orthodontist as a child that had a train that went in and out of the rooms up near the ceiling. I’ve also seen guided imagery tiles in the ceiling at various hospitals. These things, though little, make huge steps forward toward creating an experience for the client that they will remember versus merely providing the service. We must make every day and every interaction count as a step in the right direction.

### **5.) Play hard and have a vision**

Peters discusses throughout the text about how the world is changing and everything will be completely re-invented within the next 25 years. As advanced practice nurses, and the wave of the future of healthcare, we must have a vision of where we want to go with our profession and “play hard” to get there. We need to keep pressing forward, not worry about failing, and challenge the current system. We must be innovative leaders and let others know what it is about advanced practice nurses that is so unique and special. We must have a vision to develop talent in others and encourage them to discover what’s good about them and what they bring to the profession. It is no longer acceptable to be a good primary care provider; we must give 110% and go above-and-beyond to make ourselves a distinct profession that society respects and desires to utilize. Peters also talks about the bare bones beginning and that we are actually selling 2 products to our clients--our service and ourselves, and that is just the beginning of what APN’s can offer. We must take risks, responsibilities, and be optimists.

## **6.) Be an “integrated solution”**

Nurse practitioners as integrated solutions to primary care is a topic that we discussed in class regarding Tom Peters' comments about customer success requiring the supply-and-demand chain working together to meet a common goal: financial success and positive public relations. There are many providers now who are providing the same “services” (primary care) to the general population. So how does the consumer even choose a provider? Each provider has his/her own advantages/disadvantages, but advanced practice nurses incorporate all the advantages into one role: a holistic provider with a unique approach to health and life. We must work with our colleagues to not bash any one profession, and we all need to band together to promote the advanced practice nursing role (i.e. with insurance companies and law-makers). Advanced practice nurses are truly integrated solutions to primary care, and we must convey this to society.

## **7.) Effective communication is the key to effective leadership**

We are always hearing about heroic individuals through the media, because it is these leaders who can convey an effective story. Every day, clients enter practitioner's offices wanting the latest prescription drug on the market, because they heard that it works “miracles,” thanks to the media. Tom Peters discusses the idea of marketing and that to be an effective leader, we do not have to be on an Oprah show or be the most famous person in the world on television. As was discussed above, with every client encounter, we sell our service (primary care), along with ourselves. Therefore, in each patient interaction, we must sell “ourselves.” We market our points of view, our worth, our profession, etc. to society. We need to prove to our clients that holistic care is the best way, and advanced practice nurses do it best. Advanced practice nurses can make a difference. We have the power to impact many people's lives, and we need to effectively communicate that to the public.

### **8.) Leaders nurture other leaders**

Peters discusses how we are only spending about 6 minutes a day working on improvement, which is very pathetic. We must increase our skills and knowledge in what we currently do, but we must also learn to collaborate with other healthcare providers in an effort to foster family-centered care and make healthcare better for everyone. We must work on continual improvement or we become stagnate and are of no benefit to society. Peters talks a lot about breaking down barriers and weaving webs of inclusion among disciplines to work together for one common good: the health and well-being of the patient and family. As a future pediatric nurse practitioner, my goal is not just to keep the kids I see in the clinic healthy, but to help them feel empowered as individuals and encourage them to discover new things and become leaders themselves. I really like Peters' quote that states, "Leaders don't create followers! They create energized, autonomous leaders" (p. 330). As advanced practice nurses, we are leaders (by default), and we have a high goal that has been set for us to achieve. Let us embrace this goal and continue to be patient advocates, resources, educators, role models, and leaders.

### **9.) Believe that work matters and create "WOW" projects**

Peters has a great quote by Bob Stone that states, "Some people look for things that went wrong and try to fix them. I look for things that went right and try to build on them" (p. 217). As advanced practice nurses, we are what is right with healthcare. What can we capitalize on that we do an awesome job at and do it better? Holistic nursing care with a patient and family focus! We need to be more passionate about family-centered care and new ideas, procedures, medications, etc. that can really make a difference in the lives of our patients, and then we need to get on the media and legislative "band wagons" and start promoting these "WOW" ideas. The more "WOW" projects we create, the quicker the

profession is advanced. If we all work together to try to build on what is right with nursing and advanced practice, we can make a tremendous positive impact on healthcare and the way healthcare dollars are spent.

#### **10.) The heart of branding: passion and vision**

Branding is about passion and vision. Peters also discusses the concept of “mission control.” Why are we going into advanced practice nursing? Where do we want our careers to take us? How are we unique as primary care providers? We all know the answers to these questions...we care about people and are passionate about their health. We must envision progress and create opportunities for our clients to become healthier individuals. Peters calls branding the “ultimate value proposition.” It’s about integrity and goes straight to the heart. It’s not about what’s on the outside, but what’s on the inside that truly matters. When we are interacting with our clients, we must convey to them that we are more than just primary care providers. We are holistic, family-centered, and health-focused and provide the best quality care of any primary care provider today.

Tom Peters has an excellent text on taking a step back from reality to think about where we are and where we want to be. He discusses several great ideas that have awesome potential to advance the profession of advanced practice nurses into the wave of the future. By following the above 10 conceptual ideas in our unique specialty practices as advanced practice nurses, we can have a tremendous impact on the future of healthcare and transform it into something far better than we have today.

### References

- Peters, T. (2003). Re-Imagine! Business Excellence in a Disruptive Age DK Books, New York.
- McGraw, P. (1999). Life strategies: doing what works, doing what matters. Hyperion, New York.