



Building Children's Nursing for Africa conference 2019: 'Constructs of Care'

A participative conference for nurses who work with children, newborns to adolescents, and their families, to consider and celebrate their contribution to excellence in care

A summary of the presentation given by Bronson Hlatshwayo; written by Elijshca Crous (1st year MNCN student)

Bronson Hlatshwayo was invited to the 4th Building Children's Nursing for Africa: Constructs of Care Conference as a plenary speaker. He addressed the theme of 'better together' by postulating diversity as strength, and the audience was sold. Hook, line and sinker.

Bronson has a background in people-orientated services such as coaching, facilitation, consulting and as a former flight attendant. Better still is his passion and ability to inspire his audience by drawing together experiences, stories and scientific evidence with frameworks to prove that working together works. Bronson helped me believe that accepting differences and working together towards common organisational, or professional goals, bring about a happier and more productive environment: at work and in society at large. For nurses this often means working together within our profession, and actively including one another, but is spans beyond our profession to actively include all stakeholders: from mothers, to cleaners and doctors.

Being empowered by Bronson's words of wisdom comes with the responsibility of swimming upstream. He encouraged us that passive non-exclusion does not equal active inclusion and that the former contributes less significantly to a healthy organisational culture, and ultimately organisation.

As nurses, this statement challenges us to lead active inclusion with all the stakeholders involved in the child's wellbeing: not only our nursing colleagues, but also the child's family, the doctor, the admin clerk and everyone in between.

Imagine an organisation where you cannot wait to get to work, to make a difference and contribute to care in a significant manner. Where your voice, as a nurse, is heard and valued as much as the doctor's instruction; and where you understand the mother's importance in the child's wellbeing and empower her to contribute to care and more importantly to decisions surrounding her child. What a happy place that would be when we all feel welcome and valued.

It's time to be the bigger person and take the first step to make the unheard heard and to value the ones often overlooked. It's time to challenge the status quo in thought, emotion and action.

If you are up for a happy and healthy working culture where you, your colleagues and the child's parents display discretionary energy (that 'extra mile' attitude), then I challenge you to practice active inclusion: It starts with you.

