

Section II: Personal Philosophy Statement

Brief Essay - Your Personal Developmental Care Philosophy Statement

In this brief essay (250-300 words) describe your personal philosophy about developmental care. Writing from the "first person" is preferred. Reviewers are looking for how you have integrated the philosophy of Developmental Care into your approaches, thoughts, judgments and practice.

(A sample appears below. The reviewers will be looking for evidence of the integration of knowledge and clinical practice).

Maximum point value **25**; minimum point value required is **10**.

Sample Personal Philosophy Statement

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Personal Philosophy of Developmental Care

The philosophy developmentally supportive care in the Neonatal Intensive Care Unit (NICU) has been discussed in the literature for well over a decade. Developmentally Supportive Care should not be considered a separate philosophy from Family-Centered Care.

The biological and evolutionary expectation is that the trajectory of development occurs 1) before birth; in the mother's womb, 2) after birth; in close proximity to the mother's breast and parents' bodies and 3) throughout life; within the family social group. The practices that support infants and families as they move along the trajectory of development are strongly based on the Synactive Theory of Development described by Dr. Heidelese Als in 1982. The Synactive Theory provides us with a framework within which caregiving is provided to infants and their families. According to Als, infants demonstrate behaviors in four subsystems; autonomic, motor, state organization and attention/interaction systems. Systems organization is an interplay between the four sub-systems. Stability in one system promotes stability in other systems; conversely, instability in one system produces instability in other systems. Als cataloged and defined stability and instability within each sub-system as observable behaviors. Paying attention to the infant's behaviorally based cues we are able to develop a relationship with the infant and provide and relationship-based care.

Truly providing family-centered developmental care that matches this philosophy requires an ideology as well as specific practices. My personal ideology is one of empowerment; helping families understand the ongoing development of their vulnerable newborn and giving them the tools to become the most important people in the infant's life. My goal as a family supportive and developmentally minded caregiver is to support this process in whatever way that I am able.