

Reckoning With Racism in Nursing

Joseph de Veyra Transcript

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We're addressing racism in nursing

My name is Joseph De Veyra.

My pronouns

are he, him,

and his

and with regard to race and ethnicity,

I am a first generation Filipino immigrant.

I migrated here

around years ago,

and I'm also the first person in my family

to complete graduate school and complete my doctorate.

So the interesting thing about me

is, is nursing is actually a second career for me.

I started out as a journalist.

However, I made a career

when I realized

that there was not a lot of selfactualization

involved in my prior occupation.

And you will

seldom find a career more rewarding

than caring for marginalized populations.

And that is really what inspired me.

And of course,

being an agent of change at the macro level as well.

I started as a caregiver and CNA,

I started just this journey around years ago,

and I was very lucky

because when I was a CNA, I achieved full scholarship from L.A.

Unified School District for an LPN program

From there,

I worked as a hospice nurse and also worked in case management.

After that, I got into an accelerated master's program

in nursing from California State University.

Upon upon graduation, I worked as a medical management

program manager for a managed care plan

wherein I learned about utilization management

and a high level concepts.

However,

I knew it was pertinent for me to achieve or achieve or get
frontline nursing experience.

And so I thankfully, I was accepted

in VA,

Long Beach Medical Center and their residency program,

wherein I started as a cardiac nurse.

After around a year, I was promoted to being clinical nurse

leader for the Gerald Psych Unit.

And

and then after that I was recruited

to be a

clinical project manager

for the Medicare Quality

Improvement Organization for California.

And during this time, I was working full time

during all my degrees as well.

I want to point out that I worked full time as a student

in leadership roles.

And I think that is

one reality that I want to unpack

as an immigrant wherein you don't have a lot of support.

I transitioned to being the associate

chief nursing officer for Professional Development

and nursing excellence

quality and analytics for Harborview Medical Center,

which is not part of the University of Washington

health care system.

I feel that my experience in nursing is all about service

serving marginalized populations

and serving diverse populations. In the process as well.

And my specialty would probably include

gero psych, cardiac.

But but aside from those clinical specialties,

I believe my key

specialty is

leveraging evidence

based practice to create change in the health care system.

And improve patient outcomes.

I do want to unpack that,

that that particular weakness

that I went through as an immigrant

is with English being my second language.

And sometimes

when I am speaking to a fellow health care professionals,

I realize that I would actually need to pause before

espousing my thoughts just because I needed to ensure accuracy

and that I am forthcoming in the information

that I will present. Because at the end we are saving lives.

However, sometimes

it's often misconstrued or misinterpreted

as a lack of enthusiasm

or lack of attention due to those pauses. And as we all know,

the English language is very fast paced in nature.

And I believe that is the expectation

once you are in a leadership position. And so I really

I really needed to make sure to increase the speed by which

I process my thoughts as a leader

and as a health care

professional

in order to assimilate in the health care and clinical settings

I immigrated here to be the sole provider for my mom,

who was at the brink of losing our home

and in order to save our house I had to really secure

the first opportunity

that was available to me as an immigrant,

which is being a caregiver in nursing.

So not only is nursing

a very fulfilling career,

but it is a gateway for economic mobility as well.

When I first migrated

here and I started as a caregiver,

I felt that I sometimes experienced microaggression.

And probably

when I tried to research about this phenomenon, I realized that

being a freshly,

freshly arrived immigrant

that is sometimes looked down upon

and I really needed to work twice as hard to ensure that I,

I belong and assimilate in the nursing practice.

So and of course

I am a little bit young for the positions

that I've held as well.

So I felt that

as a consequence of that,

I did experience some microaggression, but nothing

nothing blatant or malicious.

I think what supports me right now as a leader

is the close connection to the mission of my organization,

Harborview Medical Center.

In in this organization, we are a level one trauma center

that does

not say no to anyone, regardless of race, ethnicity

or ability to pay.

And sometimes that close connection

to the mission is all

you need in order to fight through

and have the ability to serve amidst stress.

And it really inspires the resilience in me,

knowing that the people I am serving is is my community.

So that close connection to the mission and community is

my catalyst for success.

My specific advice to

to nurses of color is to find your community, find mentors

in your community

who will be more than happy to support you and guide you

because the nursing profession, there's a lot of nuances in it

in terms of education, from choosing the right nursing program,

getting the right prerequisite

or even choosing your first first job.

So

it's very important for us to really foster, foster

a community and a culture of learning in these communities.

And and also one more advice that I'll give them is to really

open your eyes

to the possibilities of nursing,

because the beauty of nursing is,

is that

there are so many avenues aside from bedside care,

you can be a nurse researcher in either case manager.

Nursing is really not just a profession, but a journey into

your career.

Change is not something

you can execute with a stroke of a pen, right?

It's an evidence based practice exercise

by which you need to align

with all of the interdisciplinary forces to your side.

So my suggestion is to really be educated about antiracist

best practices,

leveraging evidence based practice

in order to improve diversity and inclusion.

Another

another key thing that I'd like to emphasize

is that try to really

reflect on what their culture is like.

And for me,

culture is basically the worst behavior that you will tolerate.

So when you need really need to conduct active surveillance

meaning that

if there was an inappropriate joke or an inappropriate comment,

you really need to

you really need to unpack it and address it because

especially as a leader, everything you do is public record.

And if you demonstrate the behavior of active surveillance

and trying to foster diversity inclusion,

everyone else will follow.

You need to have active surveillance,

not only of who's in the room, but who's not in the room.

So you really need to strategize and be, be cognizant of

who are the missing voices

and once there once each, once the marginalized,

marginalized groups are in the room,

you need to provide them with a safe space

to speak and share their feedback regarding their projects

and initiatives.

And by having that sense of neutrality

and fostering that safe space for discussion,

that is how you improve diversity and inclusion.

Based on my experience,

an important component to

this is we need to invest in diversity, and inclusion

When it comes to diversity and inclusion.

You really need to have everyone there

because in the end

we will not succeed because we believe in ourselves.

We will succeed because we believe in each other.