

The Lived Experience of GNs with Multiple NCLEX-RN® Failures

Christina Silva, PhD, RN

Disclosures

- Learning objectives:
 - The learner will be able to identify potential plans for assisting the at-risk Graduate Nurse (GN).
 - The learner will be able to discuss the problems and benefits of implementing a standardized assessment package (STP) in an existing pre-licensure nursing program.
 - The learner will be able to understand the use of hermeneutical phenomenology as influenced by Heidegger.
- Conflict of interest- none
- Support or sponsorship- no commercial support given,

Introduction



- Graduate Nurses (GNs)
 - Lived experience
- NCLEX-RN® Pass Rates
 - ~17% first time fail rate in 2013_(NCSBN, 2013)
- Lag time and repeat attempts to pass _(Woo, Wendt, & Weiwei, 2009)
- Best time is the first time
- Current Literature- sparse

2013 Pass/Fail Rates

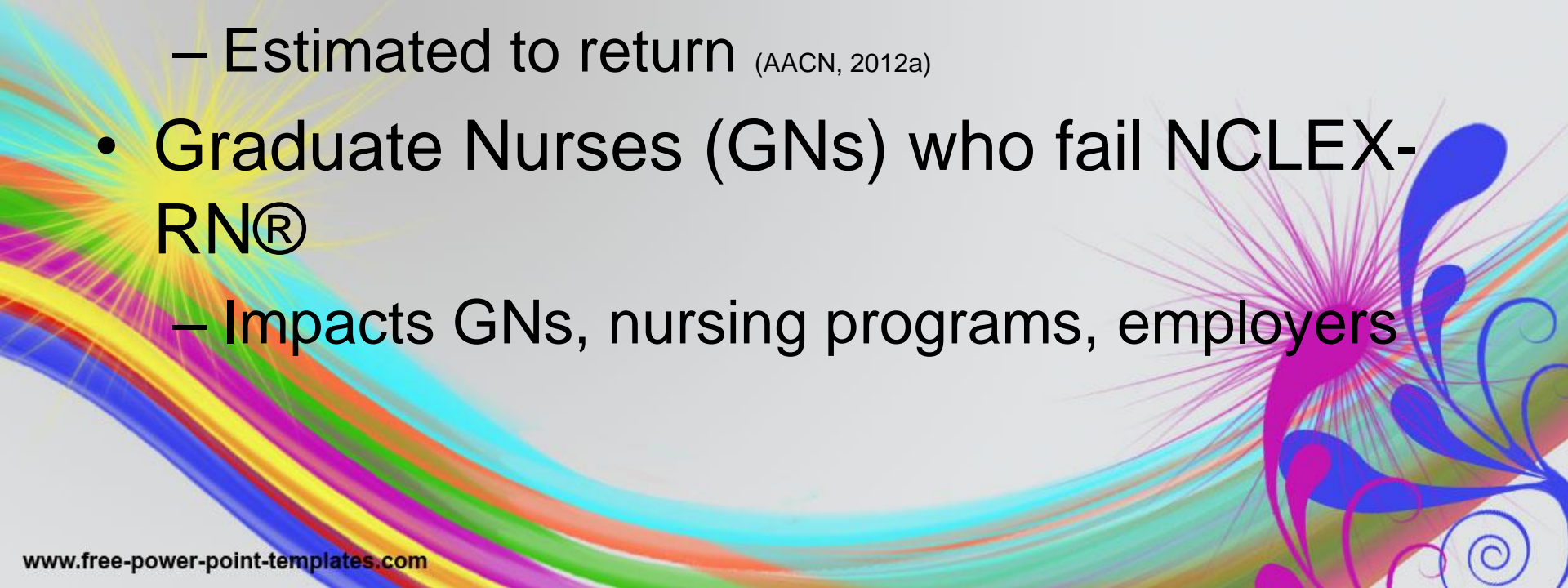
2013 Number of Candidates Taking the NCLEX Examination

Type of Candidate	2013 Year to Date Total Number of Candidates	Percentage of Candidates Who Passed	Number of Candidates Who Failed
RN First Time Candidate	155,098	83.04%	26,305
RN Repeat Candidate	35,126	47.42%	18,469

Background



- Aging population (Vincent & Velkoff, 2010)
- Nursing shortage
 - Currently shortage is resolving (Bauerhaus, Auerback, & Staiger, 2009)
 - Estimated to return (AACN, 2012a)
- Graduate Nurses (GNs) who fail NCLEX-RN®
 - Impacts GNs, nursing programs, employers



Methods



- Qualitative Research
 - Hermeneutical Phenomenology as influenced by Heidegger
- Hermeneutic Circle-
- Research question
 - What is the lived experience of GNs who have failed the NCLEX-RN more than once?
- Participants
 - 11 participants total, excluded 2 of these
 - Purposive snowball sampling

Data Analysis

- “The essence of things is put to work through the confrontation with beings in so far as we rise to the essence of things in this confrontation or are destroyed by it” (Heidegger, 1934/2010, p. 70).
- World’s truth
- GNs’ truth

Data Analysis

- 3 Themes
 - Blaming
 - Self-blame
 - Blaming of others
 - Nursing program
 - Nursing faculty
 - Being alone and Needing support
 - Questioning

Blaming

- Definition for this study:
- “a simple cause-and-effect logic that reasons backwards from outcomes and their consequences to agents and their responsibility.”(Tilly, 2010, p. 382)

Blaming: Self-blame

- Brooke-
- *“Mature-wise, I wasn’t ready. My priorities were to party. I wanted to pass, I wanted money, I wanted it all. I wanted to do whatever I wanted. So I do believe that the first couple of times were contributed towards that. The priorities of it all. How much should I study? How much can you retain if you’re having a couple cocktails and doing index cards?”*

Blaming: Self-blame

- Marion-
- *“I was devastated. I was in complete shock. I thought I knew most of it. And when we got the results back I was just devastated that I did that poorly. I thought ‘how could I have studied for this’ but in reality I didn’t study like I should have. I know I didn’t. I tried to work my first time. I took two weeks off to prepare. And you can’t just take two weeks off to prepare after not being in class for months and expect to pass your boards. And I really was completely destroyed over that.”*

Blaming: Self-blame

- Russell had started classes for his BSN. He allowed his course assignments to take priority.
- *“Yeah and I started my bachelor classes and the second time I took it I had a huge paper due the week before so I wasn’t studying as much and I kept looking back and thinking well if I didn’t have this paper I would have had all of these days and hours that I could have studied for the NCLEX”.*

Blaming- Addition of a STP

- STP- standardized testing package
- The blame was focused on the use of these packages, the inconsistent implementation, and lack of enforced consequences.
- Brooke-
- *They switched over and started using that STP program, which I hated. And then at the end of my senior year, we had to take the STP. The proctor part...the comp predictor. So I took the comp predictor. We had to get to level 2 to graduate. I could not get past level 1; I just couldn't do it. I took it three times. They still let me graduate, obviously.*

Blaming- Nursing program and faculty

- Genevieve-
- *“If I would have been tested for the NCLEX before hand and I would have had an at-risk group to be a part of that had an NCLEX program attached to it. but we were so busy because I did mine in the two-year program.... ours (the nursing policy in our school) was that you only had to be a level one (a benchmark to pass the STP assessment). You don't even really remediate much for them. But I do know that other school's is a whole lot higher because I have a bunch of friends that go to other nursing programs and they recently graduated and I feel like if I had to keep up with their (STP) scores, I would have had an easier time with (NCLEX-RN®) questions....”*

Being alone and needing support

- **Caring: Engendering of Community** (Diekelmann & Diekelmann, 2009)
- Broken relationships
- Need for support structures



Being alone and needing support

- Genevieve-
- *“I like having somebody telling me what to do. I like class, I like notes, I like people watching me. A lot of the issues I have with-- I worry a lot. I did a little bit in nursing school, but there’s so many people with the same situation around you, and there’s study groups. I’m somebody that has to work hard at school so there was always something there to do. But here it’s kind of by yourself. Nobody really gets it.”*

Being alone and needing support

- Marion-
- *“And there I was in panic mode the second time like ‘I’m not going to make this, I’m not going to do this’. And I thought...I just don’t think I was ready. I was afraid because I didn’t have any...you know, school wasn’t there. Everybody went together. We did everything together, we took all of our tests together and I was thinking ‘I have to go there all by myself and take this test’.”*

Questioning

- The GNs have completed their respective nursing programs but cannot pass the NCLEX-RN®. They question why....
- Molly –
- *“I was like, ‘I know I failed.’ I was beside myself. I had that gut feeling that I failed. A lot of the questions. I mean, did I even go to nursing school? I’m like, ‘Uh, okay, I don’t even know what that is!’”*

Discussion

- Blaming from GNs
 - Not prepared, want more NCLEX information
 - STPs not implemented well
 - Complaints may warrant change (Dewey, 2012)
- Blaming from faculty
 - Want students to do well
 - Blame themselves if students fail
 - Blaming provides comfort, need effective communication and active engagement to prevent blaming (Clark, 2008)

Discussion

- Being alone and needing support
 - Lack of support structures (personal, financial, academic), feeling alone, broken relationships
- Heidegger
 - *Ready-to-hand*
 - *'tends to withdraw from explicit view'*
 - *NCLEX-RN® was ready-to-hand* until after the GNs failed

Discussion

- Questioning
 - Why?
 - What if I fail again?
 - What to do next?
 - How will I pay my bills?
 - NCLEX-RN® is now apparent

Implications

- Pre-graduation assistance
 - Nurse faculty members and nursing program
 - Identify at-risk students
 - Fail those students as needed
 - Maintain consequences for not meeting all expectations even STPs

Implications

- Post-graduation assistance
 - Nurse managers, staff educators
 - Spending time and offering guidance
 - Assisting with time management
 - Study plan
 - Work hours

Conclusion

- More research on this phenomenon
 - Nursing programs, STP implementation and policies, anxiety and test anxiety,
- Nursing programs and faculty members need to provide support and identify at-risk students
- Nursing managers and staff educators need to provide support after failure to include time management
- References upon request