

Chapter 7

Reflections of Curriculum Narratives

ABSTRACT

This narrative represents the foundation for the PAGES program and shares examples from physical therapy patients, high school students, and people coping with life changes during the recent pandemic. PAGES serves as an acronym for practice patience, accept the present, gather information, encourage, and self-care. The strategies can apply to a variety of settings, and anyone wishing to implement change may use all parts of the acronym collectively or choose useful individual components of the advice.

DESIGNING PAGES

PAGES, the program described in this narrative, happened because of a large foundation of writing. Rarely does any single piece of writing happen in isolation. Program development and new learning opportunities occur because of the outcomes of previous writing and research. Often different pieces of writing fit together like puzzle pieces to form a larger picture. Heard (1995) confirms, “the obstacles I face – lack of time, too many projects at once – as well as the obstacles all writers face – rejection, criticism, doubts and insecurities, unfinished poems and stories – are impossible to avoid and can be valuable teachers” (pp. 38-39). Writers consistently overcome obstacles to develop new ideas. I, as an English teacher and health coach, completed extensive writing and research with Eric Wanner, a physical therapist and research consultant, which provided a foundation upon which to scaffold this new idea. Family involvement becomes the heart and soul of PAGES. While physical therapists, health coaches, and other medical professionals can offer support to a hospital patient, when the patient goes home from the hospital, the relay baton of care gets passed to the family member caregiver. Similarly, while teachers, academic advisors, and other education professionals can offer support to a student, when the student goes home from the school, the relay baton of care gets passed to the family member caregiver. Recently, when dealing with life during a pandemic, people may use the foundation of PAGES to take care of themselves and others.

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This narrative provides a foundation for the PAGES program. While the program was originally designed for the families of hospital patients, the same strategy was later adapted to help the families of high school students. It may also be adapted to other fields that you as the reader view appropriate. PAGES is an acronym that serves as a reminder for families of hospital patients to reflect on what they need to do to help their loved ones recover after surgery. It also serves as a reminder for families of students to reflect on what they need to do to help their loved ones achieve success in school. The designers used expertise in health coaching, curriculum design, teaching, writing, and research in a physical therapy clinic to create the PAGES program with the intent it will make a difference to people who apply the strategy to their lives.

THE PAGES FAMILY COACHING PROGRAM

Helping patients turn new pages and write new chapters in their healing journeys

To help your loved one who is a patient:

Practice patience: Healing is a journey. No one can wave a magic wand and provide an immediate cure.

Celebrate progress, no matter how small.

Accept the present: Feelings of guilt, anger, and frustration are normal, but are not helpful when coaching. No matter what happened in the past, this is where you are now. Worrying about the future only causes additional stress. Try your best to remain in the present moment. Consider writing in a journal to sort through your feelings.

Gather information: The medical professionals such as doctors, physical therapists, occupational therapists, nurses, and speech therapists are here to help you. Ask questions, and listen to their instructions.

Consider bringing a notebook with you to write down information so you don't have to remember it.

Encourage: During the healing journey, patients need cheerleaders. You are a source of hope and light during this process and a little support can make a large difference.

Self-Care: In order to take care of your loved one, take care of yourself too. You can better help someone else when your own needs, such as hunger and sleep, are met too.

PAGES CURRICULUM

In 2015, I completed a health coaching internship at a hospital, where I served as a member of the inpatient physical therapy team and helped patients with the emotional side of healing. When we both worked at the hospital, Eric and I designed a family coaching program called PAGES. Due to the changing needs of programs at the hospital, the program never reached the implementation stage. In a serendipitous moment, I joined the advisory committee at the high school where I teach with the goal of designing mentoring strategies to enhance the lives of high school students. The PAGES program, which incorporates strategies from a variety of relationship based leadership curricula, can easily adapt to fit the needs of high school students.

Practice patience: As high school students continue their journeys through life, they need supportive adults as role models. Often, the most significant goals cannot happen overnight. Empower students

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