

The Nurse's Temper Flew

The late Zig Ziglar, author and internationally known motivational speaker, told of a drama that played out in a major medical center.

A new head nurse was starting her first assignment. She was in charge of all the nurses on the operating room team. She had full responsibility for all the duties nurses perform.

When the first surgery for her in this medical center was complete, the surgeon said, "OK, it's time to close the incision. I need the sutures."

The new head nurse responded, "Doctor, you used 12 sponges; we've only removed 11."

The surgeon assured her that all of the sponges had been removed and he was ready to suture. She replied, "Doctor, you used 12 sponges; only 11 have been removed."

With a bit of irritation in his voice, the doctor said, "I will accept full responsibility."

At that point, the nurse's temper flew and she stomped her foot and said, "Doctor, think of the patient!"

When she said that, the doctor smiled, lifted his foot, and revealed the 12th sponge.

He looked at the nurse and said, "You'll do." Her integrity had been tested; she passed with flying colors.

The question is: How many of us, under similar circumstances, would have risked offending the surgeon, remembering that there was a possibility we had miscounted?

This nurse felt the patient's life and health were at stake and she, without hesitation, did the right thing. Over the long haul, that's the best way to get to the top and stay there.



The lesson is applicable to the work we are called to do in Life Care and in Century Park. We must function as a team. No one person, regardless of how brilliant and talented he or she may be, can fulfill all the needs of a patient or resident and the family.

As each has received a gift, use it to serve one another, as good stewards of God's varied grace (1 Peter 4:10 ESV).

– Beecher Hunter