

## **Instructor's Toolkit for Ertha Williams Monologue**

Ertha's introductory monologue can be used in a number of different ways. Here are a few to consider:

- Large class discussion
- Small group discussion during class or clinical
- Reflective journaling assignment
- Web-based assignment: Listen to the audio and/or read the script then discuss and summarize the group's conclusions.

### **Here are some questions which might be used to stimulate discussion:**

1. What issues do you hear in the monologue that may be related to early cognitive concerns?
2. What are Ertha's strengths?
3. What are your concerns for Ertha?
4. What other information would you like to have?
5. How do the recent life changes Ertha has experienced complicate her ability to manage her health care needs?

*Some of these questions were adapted from the following publication: Benner, P., Sutphen, M., Leonard, V., Day, L., & Shulman, L. (2010). Paradigm case: Lisa Day, classroom and clinical instructor. In Educating nurses: A call for radical transformation (p. 133). San Francisco: Jossey-Bass.*

### **Possible answers**

1. Issues: Ertha is somewhat aware of her increasing confusion and memory loss. She has had several recent transitions: moving in with her daughter-in-law, while Henry was hospitalized, then moving out of her home and into an assisted living facility. She catches herself repeating comments and becomes frustrated.
2. Strengths: Ertha has good support from her husband Henry and her daughter-in-law and grandson. She has been active in church and a ladies group in the past. Her new living environment has supports to maintain independence.
3. Concerns: The possibility of loneliness with recent life changes; providing enough support to maintain her health and independence.

4. Other information: What additional resources does Ertha have? What support does the family need?
5. Complications related to recent losses: Is she taking her medications safely? She may experience loneliness because she is not participating in social activities. The new environment may require changes in daily routines, dietary management, exercise, and sleep. We encourage you to be creative and add to the monologues or create new monologues that match the content in your curriculum.

You might consider expanding the case until you have monologues and simulation scenarios that can be used throughout the entire curriculum. You may wish to make the following points with students:

- Psychological and sociologic factors impact quality of life with aging individuals. Perception of health and coping skills determine impact successful aging.
- Dementia is a general term for a decline in mental ability severe enough to interfere with daily life.
- Memory loss is an example. Dementia is not a normal part of aging.
- Dementia is not a specific disease. It's an overall term that describes a wide range of symptoms.
- Alzheimer's is a type of dementia that causes problems with memory, thinking and behavior.
- Many people have memory loss issues. This does not mean they have Alzheimer's or another dementia. There are many different causes of memory problems.

Review the material in the [Teaching Strategies](#) section for other ideas.