

The Ghost

Luz Gomez is the nurse responsible for Clara Runninghorse's care. Mrs. Runninghorse is a 29-year-old Cheyenne Indian who is being treated for alcoholism. One of the student nurses, Tina Williams, reported to Ms. Gomez that Mrs. Runninghorse was carrying on an animated conversation, but there appeared to be no one else in the room, nor was there a telephone. Tina had been instrumental in finally getting this patient to cooperate with the staff, so she had a strong motivation to do whatever she could to speed Mrs. Runninghorse's recovery.

Ms. Gomez reminded Tina that this patient had been institutionalized because of a four-week drinking bout, with attempted violence, six months after the death of her favorite brother, Jim.

"Give Mrs. Runninghorse an opportunity to talk to you about Jim," counseled Ms. Gomez, adding, "I think you will find that she will tell you that she had a good visit with her brother today and feels much better because he told her everything will be okay."

Tina was surprised to see that Ms. Gomez seemed pleased, not upset about this development. She made a mental note to ask one of the more experienced staff members for more information. If you were the one she asked, what would you tell her?

Possible Explanations

- (1) "Any attempt to converse with someone, even a hallucinating person, is an improvement over being withdrawn and noncommunicative. That is why Ms. Gomez wants you to encourage Mrs. Runninghorse's behavior."
(Turn to page 118.)
- (2) "Ms. Gomez is simply testing your willingness to use your own good sense. You should have challenged the advice offered to you."
(Turn to page 104.)
- (3) "It would be unwise for me to get between you and your supervisor. I would suggest that you pursue the matter directly with Ms. Gomez."
(Turn to page 99.)
- (4) "Seeing and interacting with the ghost of a dead relative, especially a beloved and recently deceased one, is normal and proper behavior among the Cheyenne (and some other Native Americans). Presumably, Ms. Gomez thinks that you should show Mrs. Runninghorse that you understand this custom so you can reinforce Mrs. Runninghorse's return to normal Cheyenne ways and also supply a milieu for this grieving sister to ventilate and work out her sorrow and anger."
(Turn to page 131.)

For The Ghost, you chose Answer No. 1

"Any attempt to converse with someone, even a hallucinating person, is an improvement over being withdrawn and noncommunicative. That is why Ms. Gomez wants you to encourage Mrs. Runninghorse's behavior."

Encouraging a patient to become more extroverted is often a good therapeutic technique. However, there is a better explanation. Return to page 61 and try again.

For The Ghost, you chose Answer No. 2

"Ms. Gomez is simply testing your willingness to use your own good sense. You should have challenged the advice offered to you."

It is very unlikely that Ms. Gomez wants to encourage Tina to question her orders. Go back to page 61 and try again.

For The Ghost, you chose Answer No. 3

"It would be unwise for me to get between you and your supervisor. I would suggest that you pursue the matter directly with Ms. Gomez."

A staff member would be well advised to avoid interfering between a supervisor and a subordinate, but there is a better choice. Go back to page 61 and try again.

For The Ghost, you chose Answer No. 4

"Seeing and interacting with the ghost of a dead relative, especially a beloved and recently deceased one, is normal and proper behavior among the Cheyenne (and some other Native Americans). Presumably, Ms. Gomez thinks that you should show Mrs. Runninghorse that you understand this custom so you can reinforce Mrs. Runninghorse's return to normal Cheyenne ways and also supply a milieu for this grieving sister to ventilate and work out her sorrow and anger."