

I felt withdrawn, I can understand how someone struggling with schizophrenia would experience negative symptoms. It elicited difficulty concentrating while listening, that is honestly still bothering me as I type this because it was so overstimulating and distressing. It made me feel claustrophobic in a way, as if I was inside of something small or tight and like I had to hold my breath. I was able to accomplish the tasks, but not well. Which I think is important to note, that those with mental illness can still be “functional,” but not at their optimal level, which can make it easy to dismiss someone or to not recognize the struggles of people around you. I would not say it really changed my view. It did increase my empathy in a personal way. Someone I love developed schizophrenia in recent years, and we talk almost every day. Due to the nature of our relationship, sometimes I tease him like I did prior to his diagnosis, but it made me realize that I have to be more mindful of the way I talk to him. He is good humored, so I often interpreted his “are you talking about me?” or “don’t say that,” as him being silly. This exercise has an influence on my personal relationships, but also on my future practice. I feel like I gained skills in therapeutic communication, remembering to speak slowly, repeat myself, orient frequently, be gentle, as well as other skills like not laughing with other people in the room or providing alternative options for food. I would recommend this experience and I really enjoyed this simulation! Thank you for providing this experience for us today!