

# Poverty Simulation

This assignment was a real eye opener for me of how blessed I really am. I have never had a problem saving money because I have been on my own, but in this activity, I had a child. Kids are expensive, and you do not really have a choice in saving money if it is an emergency. I struggled with this because I have always bought myself name brand things, and in this activity, I had to choose between giving that to my child or not. During the activity I would rather spend money on my child, or other people than spend money on something for myself even if I desperately needed whatever it was. I ended up making it through the month with \$400 left over but it was difficult, especially when I was faced with expenses that affected my overall health. It made me sad and stomped on my toes quite a bit because there are many people that are forced to live in these conditions and made me appreciate what I do have.

In my opinion the Making Tough Choices simulation was much easier than the Spent activity primarily because I had a second income from my partner. It made it easier to not only put my family first, but also still take care of myself while also making ends meet. This kind of reminded me of my childhood. We were not rich or even close to being rich, but my parents knew how to manage their money well and were still able to provide a great life for my three siblings and me.

The small article about poverty was a very interesting read because it showed me that poverty does not just affect your nutritional health, it affects your entire body! I never understood what challenges the people living in these conditions had to face every single day. I am very grateful that there are many organizations that can help these families, but after completing this assignment I believe they need to be advertised more. I was only aware of programs like WICC and SNAP, and as a nurse I believe I can make a difference by each time I have an encounter with a family living in these conditions I can show them these organizations to help them out.

I really enjoyed the ACE quiz activity. I find it very interesting that the rougher your childhood, the higher your score and the higher the risk for later health problems. It was mind blowing to see that cancer, heart disease, obesity, and stroke were on the list of possible health problems caused by ACEs. My score after taking the quiz was a six, and after watching the TED video I remember Nadine mentioning that a person with an ACE score of four or more their risk for COPD was two and a half times higher than someone with a score of zero. My childhood was rougher than most of my close friends and in the moment, it was hard to push through to see the light at the end of the tunnel, but I ended up moving out of my house at the age of seventeen and decided I was not going to let my past define me. I had a great support system from friends, teachers, and coworkers and I truly believe that made such a huge impact in helping me get out of my current situation at the time. One day I want to be this for one of my patients especially if I end up working on a pediatric floor because I have such a huge heart for this specific population.

I really enjoyed all the videos within this assignment and learned some very valuable information from each one that I can carry into my nursing practice. The TED talk video was by far my favorite out of all of them. It was interesting that the children Nadine was being referred to were labeled with ADHD when, they were dealing with severe childhood trauma. Nadine did an excellent job in explaining how repeated exposure to an ACE affects the brain's and body's stress response system. My favorite part was when she began to explain that our fight or flight response is supposed to be an adaptive/life-saving response, but when living with childhood trauma it turns into maladaptive/health damaging which affects our overall health. I learned childhood trauma makes such a dramatic impact on every system within our body.

After completing all the activities, I learned that I am going to be that light or help to patients in need. Once I become a nurse, I want to get involved in these types of programs to help people in need because coming from experience, I know that sometimes just one caring person is all that someone may

need for them to keep on fighting. In my opinion, I believe that many people stay stuck in their situation because they are either embarrassed to ask for help, or they simply do not even know where to begin in getting help. I want to be that help for my patients and my community.