

## Mental Health Case: Linda Waterfall

### Guided Reflection Questions

#### Opening Questions

How did the simulated experience of Linda Waterfall's case make you feel?

Helpless, I felt like no matter what I said to try to relax her. She had made the decision before she got there that day that she was not going to have surgery. I also felt lost because she kept saying she needed her medication bundle and I just wanted to go get it for her where ever it was at. I just wanted to hug her because I honestly could not imagine being diagnosed with breast cancer and knowing her mom passed away due to surgery and being told you needed surgery. She has not had enough time to process the situation and she is just looking for some compassion and understanding and that understandable she has lost control of what is going on with her health. She wants the control back to when she feels ready to have surgery and that's okay.

Talk about what went well in the scenario.

I believe I did well by asking her to explain how she felt. She was first saying she could not have surgery because she did not have her medication bundle and she could not do it without it. She was hiding her feeling and using that as her way out. Then I started asking her how she was feeling and asking why is it important to have her medication bundle here. She then stated to open up about her concerns about having surgery. Her fear of dying and just not being ready to commit to surgery. I reassured her that that was okay and if she is not ready she did not have to have surgery today and it was her decision to have surgery not ours. Just me telling her her right to refuse surgery gave her the courage to say yes I just do not think it is a good idea today. I did not make her feel bad about it or reconsider it. That was it we let her go home and let her know when she was ready to reschedule it was in her hands.

Reflecting on Linda Waterfall's case, were there any actions you would do differently? If so, what were these actions and why?

I wish I would have know exactly the importance of a medicine bundle. During the VSim I thought she was just worried that she did not bring her medication bag. I just researched it and it is actually a a wrapped collection of sacred items, held by a designated carrier, used in indigenous American ceremonial cultures. To her it was a sign not to have surgery but I think she was using that more as a way to get out of it without explaining her feeling toward the situation. I also at first had a hard time with the therapeutic responses vs non therapeutic responses. At first I was picking responses that really was not helping the situation or my patient. The second time around I chose the more therapeutic response for the patient.

#### Scenario Analysis Questions\*

**PCC** What priority problem(s) did you identify for Linda Waterfall?

She was anxious and nervous about her surgery. Her not having her medicine bundle made her more nervous because that was her security blanket. She had her cousin there by her side but all her other support system could not be there due to living out of town. She was grateful for her cousin but you could tell her not having her other family there was making her even more anxious about the surgery. She was just not in the state of mind to have surgery today. She also had not had the time to process her diagnosis of cancer.

If the nurse did not recognize or respond appropriately to Linda's concerns, what could the ramifications be?

If I would not have recognized her responded to her anxiety it could had led her being in complete distraught and having a panic attack. If I did not respond to her anxiety I would not be a good nurse. A nurse is suppose to recognize the ques a patients is giving. She was pacing back and forth and heart rate had increased. If I would have not intervned she would have more than likely felt forced to have surgery. She might have had a longer recovery because she was not mentally prepared to have surgery. It could had escalated and she could had become inconsolable and irritable. I did not want her to have a bad experiance so it was important to not have the surgery today and to come back when she was mentally prepared for it.

**PCC/I** Discuss the importance of a medication bundle for Native Americans.

A Native American medicine bundle is a container for items believed to protect or give spiritual powers to its owner. It could be small enough to wear around the neck, or it could be a large bar with a long strap called a bandolier. In historical times, shamans generally carried medicine bundle that could hold items such as seeds, herbs, pine cones, grass, animal teeth or claws anything that could possess spiritual value to the owner. It represents the owners spiritual life meant to give guidance, good luck, good health, protection, abundance, and even love to the individual who carries them.

**T&C** What other individuals in addition to the primary care team should be involved in Linda Waterfall's case?

Her cousin Alicia had been there for her and should be apart of her care. She has known Linda her whole life and knows her normal and her abnormal so she should be the first one to say something is not right my cousin does not act like this. She is her number advocate alongside the nurse because she is the one Linda will consult in for comfort and support. I also think looking more into her spiritual believes and now knowing what the medicine bundle represents to her. A shamen or medicine man would something to look into to help her feel at ease and help keep her spiritual beliefs apart of her procedure and care.

**PCC** In Linda Waterfall's situation, what therapeutic communication techniques would be most effective?

I believe open ended questions is the best therapeutic communication. This gave us the information to know why she was so anxious and nervous. This give her the opportunity to express her feeling and really give us a chance to listen to her. That's the key for our part as a nurse was to listen to her not only what she was speaking but her body language. I remained quite while she talked and did not interrupt her when she was expressing her feelings. I looked her in the eyes while she talked and was not looking at the computer not making eye contact with her. I restated what I believed she was trying to tell me. By asking her if I was understanding what she was trying to say. I also acknowledged that I understood what she was trying to tell me.

### Concluding Questions

Describe how you would apply the knowledge and skills that you obtained in Linda Waterfall's case to an actual patient care situation.

This Vsim has taught me a lot of skills I can use in actual patient situations. Starting with therapeutic communication. This helped me better understand what that looks like not only from the nurses point of view but the patients point of view. I also learned that if I did not understand something I should do my research on something and than come back to the situation or even ask the patient. I was not sure the importance of a medicine bundle and instead just assumed it was a medication bag. I believe this gave me the tools to see anxiety and to understand that it is a common and valid thing. Being in the hospital in general is a scary nervous feeling it is up to the nurses to better ease or patients and teach them coping skills so they better cope with their anxiety.

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\* *The Scenario Analysis Questions are correlated to the Quality and Safety Education for Nurses (QSEN) competencies: Patient-Centered Care (PCC), Teamwork and Collaboration (T&C), Evidence-Based Practice (EBP), Quality Improvement (QI), Safety (S), and Informatics (I). Find more information at: <http://qsen.org/>*