

## Covenant School of Nursing Reflective Practice

*Use this template to complete the Reflective Practice documentation. Do not exceed the space in each box. Any information not visible to you is lost.*

<p><b>Step 1 Description</b></p> <p>I went to the Southwest Group AA meeting and as soon as I walked in I received a warm welcome. I introduced myself to the group when the leader asked if there were any newcomers or visitors and explained to them that I was a nursing student. Some of the members of the group read statements before the meeting began, and then the 12 steps were recited. It was then explained that because today was Friday, it was their day of gratitude! The meeting consisted of everyone taking a turn to say what they were grateful for, whether it be their families, their sobriety, getting to drive their mom's Tesla, etc. No one was interrupted as they spoke, and everyone unanimously welcomed each person after they introduced themselves. After each person spoke everyone responded by saying "we're glad you're here." The meeting ended with us holding hands and a prayer being spoken.</p>	<p><b>Step 4 Analysis</b></p> <p>Meeting these people and hearing their stories further instilled in me a belief I already had, which is that no one who is addicted to alcohol, drugs, etc. would choose to be if given the choice. Maintaining or failing to maintain sobriety is so much more than a simple "choice." There are so many contributing factors such as traumatic events, psychiatric disorders, or lack of support systems that play a role in substance abuse and it's important to remember that. As I continue with nursing school I know that this experience will weigh on me heavily when I come across patients who suffer from alcohol or drug addictions.</p>
<p><b>Step 2 Feelings</b></p> <p>At the beginning I noticed that I was nervous, and I think it was because I was worried that I would be viewed as an "outsider," but a few minutes into the meeting I realized that the atmosphere was extremely accepting. Throughout the meeting I felt myself overwhelmed with emotion while listening to people talk about their lives' and what they were grateful for. Of course it was sad to hear about peoples' hardships, but I think what I took away from this meeting was a message of hope and encouragement. I loved the environment that was created among the group, and felt myself being amazed at how vulnerable everyone was being with one another. Leaving the meeting I felt like everyone (not just those struggling with alcohol or substance abuse) could benefit from a meeting like this one that I got to experience.</p>	<p><b>Step 5 Conclusion</b></p> <p>Truthfully, I don't think there was much to improve during this meeting. When it was my turn to speak I mentioned that like many others had already said I was also grateful to be there. I told them that it was a beautiful energy that they had created among the group with everyone being so vulnerable. I expressed my gratitude for allowing me to feel so welcome and get to hear everyone's stories. I think listening to people speak during the meeting gave me a better understanding of how difficult it is to try and maintain sobriety for someone who has an alcohol addiction. For many of them, they expressed how big of an accomplishment it was to have to have attended the meeting. Many talked about feeling sadness for how they had negatively impacted others, or destroyed relationships because of their addiction.</p>
<p><b>Step 3 Evaluation</b></p> <p>I really appreciated the inviting and accepting atmosphere that had been created at the meeting. One person even explained that she considered herself to be extremely introverted and that when she first started going to the meetings she didn't talk much. She explained that she finally felt herself coming out of her shell and that it had everything to do with the group of people that were at the meeting. Everyone was extremely respectful of one another, and everyone got the opportunity to speak. I think for me the most difficult was fighting the urge to cry while listening to people's stories. Listening to people's stories made me realize that although they were all struggling with an addiction to alcohol which many would consider a weakness, each and every one of them had so much resilience. Hearing a person describe waking up in the morning and making a plan for their day so that they could maintain their sobriety was eye-opening to me.</p>	<p><b>Step 6 Action Plan</b></p> <p>The way it made me feel listening to these people speak about their addictions gave me a newfound respect for anyone trying to maintain sobriety, and gave me more empathy for those who are struggling with addiction. I think that in the future when I come across patients with alcohol or substance abuse issues, having been to this meeting might give me the courage to talk to them a little more about what they're going through. To ask them a few more questions, or to hear from their perspective what triggers their drinking patterns. This experience will help me see patients fighting addictions as people first, rather than addicts. It will also allow me to recommend an AA group to a patient, if they are at a place in their healing to hear it. After this meeting, I can see myself treating my patients who are alcoholics with more sympathy and kindness.</p>