

Mental Health Case: Linda Waterfall

Guided Reflection Questions

Opening Questions

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

- During the simulated experience with Linda Waterfall, I felt that I had a decent understanding of the things that I needed to do during my assessment with her. The one thing that I did notice that was different from any other scenario was that I had a chance to assess my surroundings first to assure that it was safe for me to enter. Normally before beginning psychiatric health, I would just enter the room, introduce myself, and wash my hands. However, I learned that in this specialty it is crucial for us as nurses to always have an exit plan and to always be aware of our surroundings for not only the patient's safety but ours as well. As the simulation went on, I realized that some patients require certain things (for example Linda's medicine bundle) to help them cope with difficult situations. It gives them a sense of security and strength to go through their difficult times, and it is important for us as nurses to respect their decisions even though they may not seem valid to us. After my second attempt, I felt more confident in my therapeutic communication skills and in managing to help a patient feel more comfortable.

Talk about what went well in the scenario.

- Many of my responses to Linda's comments appeared to be therapeutic in helping her cope and deal with her anxiety. I believe that knowing how to respond to her concerns not only helped her to understand her feelings but also allow her to think about what she wanted to do in regard to her health. I took into consideration that her culture is important to her since she wanted to speak with her tribe's healer, and also figured that most of her anxiety possibly stemmed from her mother passing away. Though her mother passed away from complications due to surgery, Linda believed that her mother passed since they threw away her medicine bundle. Despite wanting to tell her the bag won't determine what her surgery's outcome will be; I knew that it was my job to respect her beliefs and therefore advocate for my patient that she refuses to have surgery without her bundle.

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

- After my second attempt at the virtual simulation, I realized that it's important to ask the patient if they would like to have their family members in the room during my assessment. Though I figured it would be better for her cousin to be there since she has anxiety, it is still a crucial thing to ask since it could possibly make the patient feel less anxious. Another action that I would have done differently was to reassure Linda that I was her nurse and that I was there to help her instead of telling her that no one is there to hurt her. I realized that it is better to remind the patient why I am there, rather than

trying to argue with her that people aren't there to hurt her since she already believes those thoughts. I also realized after my second attempt that I forgot to ask Linda if it was okay for my cousin to be a part of the interview. Though I asked if it was okay if she remained in the room, it is equally important to ask if she can be a part of the interview since her cousin will share information that could be important during her stay at the hospital.

Scenario Analysis Questions*

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

- The priority problem that I identified with Linda, is that she was anxious about her surgery since she didn't have her medicine bundle with her. Though it's just a bundle to me, to Linda it may be seen as a protection for her health, therefore it plays a crucial role in her health outcome. It seemed obvious after asking Linda questions that her medicine bundle was playing a major role in not only her anxious state but her overall decisions as well.

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

- If I didn't recognize Linda's concerns, I believe that Linda would have become agitated since she was reacting off on her anxiety and fears of the unknown. As I stated before, a medicine bundle may not seem important to someone who isn't a part of her tribe. However, to Linda, this could mean life or death in her surgery and health. This was shown once Linda stated that her mother passed since the workers at the hospital discarded her medicine bundle. Therefore, she already had a preconceived notion that health workers are trying to kill her since she was scheduled to have surgery without her medicine bundle present.

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

- The Native American medication bundle has an important role in many tribes, it represents protection, gives a sense of power to the designated owner, and brings healing to their nation. Some medication bundles may be passed on by elders, therefore these could have an even more important meaning than just being a bag filled with rocks, claws, arrowheads, or bones.

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

- Some other individuals that I believe should be involved in Linda's case are the surgeon, a counselor who is specialized in psychotherapy, and a therapist who specializes in behavioral therapy. I believe the behavioral therapist can greatly help Linda learn new ways to deal with her anxiety and teach her techniques to overcome her attacks.

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

- I believe that the most effective therapeutic communication technique that can be applied to Linda's situation is active listening. Actively listening to Linda's concerns not only allows her to express her feelings but also allows her to explore her thoughts. This will allow her to feel heard and therefore alleviate some of her concerns that she is having. I also believe that listening and validating her feelings will not make her feel guilty for "wasting" my time and reassure her that talking isn't pointless since her input is important.

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.

- I would apply the knowledge I learned in virtual simulation by first assuring that my environment is not only safe for my patient, but also safe for myself. I also would make sure to ask the patient if they would like for their family members to participate in their interview or stay in the room as well. A skill that I will definitely use with every patient from now on is asking them what their cultural beliefs are and what is important to them since many members of cultures don't believe in certain things. Another valuable thing that I learned that I will be applying to anxious patients is practicing taking deep breaths with them to help calm their nerves for the time being since it has been proven to reduce stress by focusing on their breath. The final and most important knowledge that I learned from Linda is to carefully know when to use silence (do not respond) and when to respond. Since silence is such a powerful tool in therapeutic communication, sometimes when one is unsure of what to say it is best to remain silent and to think carefully about what words say.