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I was able to attend an AA meeting at the Hub of the plains. My classmate and I were able to attend the open discussion meeting. The open discussion meeting allowed each person there to discuss some things that they were currently feeling or going through. There were 11 different members there that varied from different ages and genders. There was no specific topic, but a lot of the discussions were based on the same subject, which was the relationship of a recovering addict and their kids, now. My role during this meeting was to actively listen and understand these people's stories and what lead to addiction in the first place and how it is affecting their lives now.

Being able to attend an AA meeting was beneficial to me and my ongoing education. One of the members emphasized for us to really listen and pay attention because we were going to be dealing with people like them on the daily and it was important to know how to talk to them and not be manipulated by addicts. Which was all true. I will be able to take what I learned in the AA meeting and apply it to future nursing practices. For one, I will be able to provide a great resource for my future patients if needed. Hub of the plains is a great place to start at; everyone is welcomed and the schedule they have works for pretty much anyone. I also know that there are specific communication techniques that need to be used with addicts. It is also important now and, in the future, to never judge these kinds of people and their history. The main focus on their recovery and we as nurses should be grateful, they have come and seeked help.

Before entering the Hub for the AA meeting, I felt nervous because I did not know if the people there were going to be welcoming, especially to students who were just there to listen to them about their vulnerable moments in life. When my classmate and I entered the meeting room, the facilitator and the rest of the members were happy to see us, they offered us coffee, and asked if we had any questions, and even mentioned that we were welcomed back at any time. That interaction made the whole experience even better. Throughout the meeting I couldn't help but be emotional, the stories of each member truly touched me. I also felt a sense of guilt because looking at these people none of them even seem to look like they have ever even gone through an addiction. I had to remind myself that addiction has no specific look and it can affect anyone and everyone.

I don't really think there was anything more I could've done to make the situation better. I was there to actively listen and was able to do that. The main thing that I learned from this AA meeting was that the work to overcome addiction doesn't just end when you stop the drugs or alcohol. There is more work after that to continue being sober. There are multiple steps and even after accomplishing those steps you have to maintain them.

Step 3 Evaluation

The AA meeting I attended exceeded my expectations. I have never felt so welcomed by strangers before. I was able to listen to each member and the current thoughts that were in their minds. The members of the meeting allowed my classmate and I to share if we wanted to. I myself was not able to share anything that related to them because I have not been affected by abuse in anyway. I did however let them know that I was grateful to be there and thanked them for letting me sit in with them.

Step 6 Action Plan

Overall, the AA meeting went well. It felt good to be welcomed by strangers who allowed us listen to their most vulnerable stories. The AA meeting helped me understand that addiction does not only hurt the person that is doing it, but it hurts the other people around them the most. It has also helped me to actively listen to a person. Actively listening is sometimes all people need, addicts or not.