

Covenant School of Nursing Reflective Practice

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Step 1 Description

I went to an AA meeting on Tuesday, March 28th at New Beginnings in Lubbock. I sat in the corner with Anzleigh and we introduced ourselves to the staff, explaining we were nursing students. We were actively listening to the participants stories about their addictions and how they have affected them. The topic was about loss of loved ones throughout addiction and how that made them feel. The role we played at the meeting was simply an observer and active listener.

Step 4 Analysis

I can apply my previous knowledge of patient communication and empathy to this situation. We were able to talk to some of the participants about their history with addiction and use effective communication skills such as active listening. What broader issues arise from this event are that life continues to be difficult for individuals even after getting clean. Addiction is seen in society as a sign of immaturity, weakness, or loss of control, and they may be treated poorly by others, even their own family. Although people fail to acknowledge that many of these individuals have been through traumatic experiences and used as a way to cope.

Step 2 Feelings

At the beginning I was feeling nervous. Everyone there knew each other from attending meetings in the past and were curious as to why we were there. The participants were very welcoming and engaging and would introduce themselves to us. This made me feel welcome and supported even though we were just there to listen. The most important emotion that I was feeling was supported because it shows a positive and encouraging environment for improvement.

Step 5 Conclusion

I could have made the situation better by not isolating in the corner and getting more involved. Although, I felt that it was more my place to sit back and actively listen to the participants. Other could have not made the situation better. The staff was very welcoming, and the participants were vulnerable to share their stories with us. From this event I have learned that addiction is a disease and many people have past experiences that lead them to become addicted. I also learned that many people with addictions want to get better and seek help themselves.

Step 3 Evaluation

What was good about the event was that I was able to firsthand hear people's experiences with addiction and loss and learn more about being an empathetic nurse. What was difficult was hearing some of the heartbreaking stories that people have suffered through and their grieving. What was easy was being empathetic towards the participants stories with addiction. What did not go as expected were that many people have been sober for up to 10 years and still attend meetings. I did not know how long addiction can continue to affect a person after they become clean.

Step 6 Action Plan

Overall, I think going to the AA meeting was a very eye-opening experience that allowed me to firsthand hear experiences to improve my nursing by being empathetic. I can apply these learnings to other events by recommending support groups to my patients as I have first-hand seen the positive effects of group meetings. This had taught me how when support groups come together and support one another, through their similar experiences, they can become better together. Support from others and having someone that understands you, empathizes with you, and supports you, could be all someone needs to make a change. I will recommend AA any other fitting support groups to my patients as needed.

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