

PMH Simulation Reflection

- Describe your feelings about your participation in the simulations this week.

I feel like the simulation lab this week was very effective in helping us practice our therapeutic communication. Especially as a little baby future nurse, it is hard to not have a set list of things to do or accomplish. Most of the scenarios focused more on communication and listening instead of being goal oriented. I think it was a great experience in a safe place to practice communication and to try and prioritize that over being task related.

- How did it go compared to what you expected it to be like?

I was honestly very nervous about simulations this week. I know that therapeutic communication can be difficult. It is very difficult to me to be in a situation where I don't know exactly what to expect, especially in the role as a nurse. In reality the sim situations were not as bad as I thought they would be.

- What went well?

Recognizing as the primary nurse that my patient was depressed and needed some company. It was a little late in the scenario but when I heard the "I just want to go to sleep" I felt warning bells going off in my head. I also want to mention that I am generally very hard on myself and have a hard time sometimes seeing the positives because I want everything to be perfect.

- What could have gone better?

The scenario where I was the secondary nurse I was honestly not quite sure what to say or do (it was the manic patient). I probably should not have blocked the door when the patient started to walk out. It was instinct and I honestly didn't realize I put my foot out until after I did. I should have followed up with lets talk about how you are feeling or something else before you go for a walk etc. When I was the primary nurse, I should have pressed more into the depression and suicide thing. Maybe if I had picked up on it earlier I should have called the doctor and maybe asked for something for depression etc. I know it takes a while for any of that to take effect but it might have been a good idea. I was also very nervous and it felt very clunky so to speak to use some of the therapeutic communication tools. I guess in my head it played out more smoothly.

- Reflect on the scenario in which you were in the role of the patient or family member. How did that experience affect you?

Honestly in the scenario in which I was the patient I was very proud of my fellow classmates. I felt like they did an awesome job with their communication. While I was the patient I was reminded of feeling out of control. I have had experience with alcoholism in close family members and it helped me to relate some to struggles that I have seen and been a part of.

- Did this week change the way you think about mental health? If so, how?

The situations in sim this week helped me to actually visualize some of the different mental health disorders. Seeing different representations of different disorders and acting some out helped them to feel more “real” to me so to speak. These scenarios also helped me think more about the different mental health diagnoses not being the sum of the patient. I have a friend from High School that has been diagnosed with borderline personality disorder and he is definitely “extra”. I know we learned about this in class on Monday but today when we discussed it things sort of clicked. I could see why he reacted in some of the ways that I have seen and I can completely see the whole wounded inner child. The scenarios this week helped me to think about why or how someone who is irrational might make decisions. I feel like this week helped bring these people to life.

- How will you use the knowledge gained from this experience in your practice as a registered nurse?

Many (if not all) of the communication techniques that we practiced this week could be used not only in the wild but in any nursing setting. In all disciplines and units there will be an irritated patient, a mad patient, an agitated patient, someone with anxiety, and everything in between. Deescalation is a skill that will be very useful in my future nursing career. Throughout my nursing school journey therapeutic communication has been discussed in depth but it was completely different to be in a scenario to practice this skill. It is truly a skill that takes more practice and I am glad that I had this opportunity in a safe space to practice. I feel like overall this was a very helpful sim experience. Thank you.