

Hearing Voices That Are Distressing

Guided Reflection

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1. How has this experience influenced your perception of people who hear voices that are distressing? It has given me a sense of empathy for the suffering that those with schizophrenia must endure.
2. Give a detailed account of which activity you found most difficult during the voice hearing experience. What was it that you found difficult about this activity? Almost every activity was difficult at first. Eventually I got used to the voices and they became background noise, but I know that is not always the case for each person with this affliction. I started off finding the music annoying, then the low-level whispering made it difficult to write my drug cards out without having to pause and think about what I was writing. At one point I had to start over on one of my cards because I wrote what the voice was saying instead of what I intended to write. Then I got up to go to the restroom and was washing my hands and was startled by another student who I didn't hear was there because one of the voices was shouting at that point.
3. What are some communication strategies that you could use with a patient experiencing hearing voices that are distressing? Be specific and give examples. When communicating with a patient hearing these types of voices, you could start by asking them "What are the voices saying?" or "are they telling you what to do?" "How are you feeling at this moment?"
4. What are some assessment questions that you would anticipate asking a patient for whom you are providing care and who is experiencing unwanted auditory hallucination? List at least 3 questions. "What are the voices saying to you?" "How are you feeling right now?" "What happened before the voices started talking to you? Did something stressful happen?"

5. What are some therapeutic nursing interventions that might be used for a patient who is experiencing unwanted auditory hallucination? If the patient's trigger was a stressful situation, speaking calmly to them or removing the stressor can be helpful. We can encourage them to listen to music, draw, and write in a journal. The primary thing to do is make sure they are safe. If they are shouting, you can remove them from the area to keep the milieu therapeutic for others, but also remove them from a potentially stressful situation that could be triggering the event.

6. How will this experience influence your future nursing practice?
This experience allows me to understand a little more what someone diagnosed with schizophrenia or schizoaffective disorder might be experiencing and it will foster a sense of empathy, having placed myself in their shoes for a time to gauge what they are perceiving.