

Step 1:

For this clinical experience, I was able to visit the Fire Sky Ranch, a recovery center for men. I got to tour the facility, but before we did that, we were able to speak with the owner, Robin. Robin is a recovered meth addict, and he opened this facility to provide a better place for men to start their recovery journey. He stated they wanted to make recovery enjoyable, because if it's not enjoyable, they won't want to stay sober. He had negative experiences in different facilities around Lubbock while recovering, so he wanted to make a change. They're currently working on opening a wing for women as well. We also got to sit in on their group discussions. In the first group, they discussed the first three steps. They focused on "powerlessness" in the first step, "sanity" in the second step, and "turning to a greater power" in the 3rd step. They gave personal examples from their own lives for each step. In the second group, Robin lead a discussion over different types of therapy, especially REBT, and the importance of taking responsibility for our own behavior and action and understanding the effects they may have on the people around us.

Step 2:

I really enjoyed hearing their group discussion. A lot of the men spoke on their experiences with their addiction, and their attitude towards their families and loved ones when they were active in their addiction. They also discussed the effects it had on their jobs, and some of them had even been in jail several times due to their addiction and choices they made while they were drunk or high. Robin's discussion during group really helped me reflect on my own choices and the way that I treat others. It helped me understand that I am the only one in control of how I treat others, even if they anger me or upset me. He also talked about the importance of controlling your stress level and our mental health in order to avoid giving in to addiction.

Step 3:

My experience at Aspire was really great. Everyone was an active participant in each discussion, and they all gave insight on what it's like to be an addict, and how you begin to pull yourself away from your loved ones, your job, and everyday life in general. It was sad, but insightful. I did not contribute to the

group, but I was an active listener and even I took away key pieces of information from Robin's teaching.

Step 4:

From hearing each of the men's experiences, I saw my own family members who have struggled with addiction in them. It helped me see their experiences in a new light, and although each of them had a different experience in their addiction, there were a lot of similarities, like underlying stress, anger, trauma, and mental health issues.

Step 5:

I learned how to better understand what life may look like for someone experiencing addiction. I think this will help me be more empathic toward patients who I may encounter as a nurse that are also experiencing the same issues as the men at this facility.

Step 6:

Overall, it was a really great experience and I'm grateful that I got to take part in their discussions. Although I have personal family experience with addiction, I think my time at this facility helped me paint a better picture of how addiction looks different in everyone. I will use this experience to be empathetic toward patients with addiction, I will advocate for my patients, and I will check any bias I have at the door. There is no room for hate in nursing and each and every patient I come across as a nurse is deserving of excellent care and compassion, whether they struggle with addiction or not.