

The feelings I experienced during my past clinicals have consisted of gratitude and empathy.

These feelings are a part of being a human, but I feel I was more susceptible to them because of how involved we were with patient care, thanks to my preceptor. I am very lucky with the preceptor I was given, Sydnee. She is very open to letting me learn and taking the lead, and is great about allowing me to ask questions without the fear of sounding “dumb”.

The feelings I experienced were especially strong on my second clinical day. We got our report that morning, and I honestly didn't know what to expect. I have never had a patient in this shape, and I was nervous I would somehow break them. My patient was an oncology kid who did not have a great prognosis. Even though we learn about these situations in school, it never really prepares you until it's staring right in your face. We gave many medications and charted endlessly, but what really stood out to me was the patient care and the respect we gave the family through such a hard time for them. Throughout the day, we checked in hourly, changing and switching their positions, making sure they were comfortable. You never know, until you've been there, how to react to these things and how not let your own feelings get in the way of your patients and family. Sydnee was great. We talked about our feelings when we had time away from the patient and how we felt, but the way she talked to the patient and cared for them and their family shifted my whole perspective. Just being there for someone is huge; asking questions, offering breaks, and meals go so far. By the end of the day, I was comfortable going in with the family do the patient care all on my own. I even had a conversation with the patient's older sister and talked about the fun family times they had.

I learned a lot about therapeutic communication and honest and powerful patient care. I also learned that we are so blessed and take things for granted in our everyday lives. I will be taking what I have learned so far and applying it to my future nursing career, and using every shift as a new learning opportunity that I am so grateful to be a part of.

