

Happy Kalavadia

My experience as a nursing student in the behavioral health unit were very interesting and unique. Although I had only two clinicals (one clinical was virtual) but I enjoyed every moment of it. I was nervous at first because I had seen movies about the sorts of these facilities. But when I entered the unit, I was at all not scared. Although the patients were physically stable, they were not happy from the inside and they need someone who understands them. I got to meet and interact with my patient for more than one hour. One unique experience was when I got a chance to be with the provider when she interviewed the patient for about 3 hours. The interview was very detailed and an eye-opener for me because my perception of her was different until she narrated her story and what she is going through. Another unique thing that I observed on the mental health floor was the relationship between staff and patients. I expected that the staff would be frustrated about the patients, but they were close to them which is so adorable. I felt that the patients needed more empathy and somebody to listen to them. My patient stated that she got better after she came to the hospital not only because of the medication but because the staff understood her and cared for her. Hence, my experiences although I had a very limited number of hours been unique and interesting.

One misconception regarding mental health is that some people believe that mental health is important like physical health and people who are suffering from it are due to some sins that God is punishing them. I do not agree with this and that misconception is not true. People with mental health problems struggle because the outside world does not accept their condition and hence, they try to limit themselves and eventually think they are worth nothing resulting in suicidal ideation. Hence, we should abolish this misconception and should give equal importance to mental as well as physical health.

The two therapeutic communication techniques are nonverbal communication and active listening. Nonverbal communication can be defined as communication that is done by gestures and facial expressions and not just words. Active listening means listening to a patient and showing empathy so that patient feels that she is accepted and has mutual respect in the conversation. I have seen using these two therapeutic communication techniques when I went with the provider for an interview. The provider was constantly engaged in nonverbal communication by facial expressions and using gestures in the conversation. She was also listening to the patient very carefully so that patient can feel that she is heard and would engage in more depth in conversation.

The legal issue which I want to discuss is the right to refuse treatment. According to the journal, it is mentioned that patient has a right to refuse ongoing treatment and this rule applies to even inpatient behavioral health patients. This issue is very critical and a debate among people whether the mentally ill patient should or not should not have the right to refuse treatment. I do not agree that mentally ill patients should have the right to refuse treatment because they believe that nothing is wrong with them and their life could be in danger if they are not treated immediately. Hence, according to my opinion mentally ill patients should not have the right to refuse treatment because they are sometimes not aware of the problem. For example, one 68 years old female came to ED saying that she is pregnant and have three kids inside her belly. She also had magical thinking and she was saying that she has a special power to heal and does not need any treatment. Hence, patients with mental illness should not allow the right to refuse treatment for their betterment of the condition.

Reference

S, H. (n.d.). Regulatory oversight: Do psychiatric patients have the right to refuse active treatment?
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