

## Therapeutic Communication Gerontology Assignment

### Step 1: Assessing Your Personal Thoughts Prior To the Interview

1. Which of these two statements is most important to you?

- I want to live as long as possible regardless of the quality of life that I experience.
- I want to preserve a good quality of life even if this means that I may not live too long.

I want to preserve a good quality of life even if this means that I may not live too long, is more important to me. I would rather have a quality life over quantity. Enjoying the life you have is more important to me than just trying to live for a long time.

2. Do you feel you have full autonomy for decision making? I feel like I have complete autonomy in my decision-making. If I was not able to make decisions, my family is aware of my wishes and decisions.

3. How do you feel when people make decisions for you? People do not often make decisions for me, but I'm not too fond of it when they do.

4. What do you see as important in your life? There are many things that I hold as important in my life. I believe that you should make the most of your life, so doing the things you enjoy is essential when it comes to living the best life possible. I enjoy running long distances, traveling, working, and spending time with friends and family. These are things that I would not be willing to give up.

5. What risks have you taken in the past that has affected your quality of life? Being a young adult, there have been risks I have taken that have affected my quality of life. I have drank alcohol in my life, which could affect someone's quality of life—speeding while driving could have affected my quality of life.

6. What risks have you taken in the past and how has this affected you? Risks that I have taken include:

Drinking alcohol, speeding.

Eating poorly (a lot of sugar and sweets).

Trying new things and traveling.

Even going to school.

All of these things are risks and have affected me. Eating poorly can cause health issues in the future, speeding is never advisable, and going to nursing school was a risk itself!

**7. What risks do you want to take now?** In my life now, I want to do what I can to enjoy my life. Anything can be a risk. I am finishing up school and will eventually get a job. That is a risk that I want to take.

**8. What risks are you not willing to take?** I am not willing to take risks that involve money or overall health and well-being. For example, I would never gamble or smoke cigarettes.

**9. How would you explain to the people who love you why you want to take this risk?** If I explained to my family why I would take these risks, I would let them know that I am trying to live my life to its full potential. I would ask them to respect my wishes and choices because that would make me happy.

**10. What frightens you about taking this risk?** My biggest fear behind the risks is dissatisfaction. Wanting to be good at something (nursing, working, etc.) is a fearful thing, and risks need to be taken to achieve these goals.

## **Step 2: Conducting Your Interview**

I am interviewing my grandpa (82 years old).

**1. Which of these two statements is most important to you?**

- I want to live as long as possible regardless of the quality of life that I experience.
- I want to preserve a good quality of life even if this means that I may not live too long.

"I would rather have a good quality of life rather than living just to live. I have lived my life always doing what I enjoy and have many stories to tell because of that. I would say I have had a pretty good life so far".

**4. What do you see as important in your life?** "I find my family to be the most important thing in my life. Outside of family, I enjoy exercising (I used to run long distances, which turned into biking after my second knee replacement at age 76, to now walking). I also enjoy scotch and Hershey's chocolate. All of these things are important to me".

**7. What risks do you want to take now?** "As an 82-year old, a lot of things that I do are a potential risk. Traveling to Illinois to see my family is a risk that I take twice a year; taking long walks is a risk, going fishing with my retirement buddies is a risk, and out of all these things, they are risks that I want to keep taking".

**8. What risks are you not willing to take?** "There are certain things that I know I am not able to do anymore. I used to travel all over the country. These days I am not willing to risk traveling too far from home. I am also not willing to fly on a plane anymore (outside the country). I know I will not run or bike anymore, and I would never risk that."

**9. How would you explain to the people who love you why you want to take this risk?** "If my family members (specifically my children) were to question the risks that I still take at 82 years

old, I would explain to them that I have lived a wonderful life because of what makes me happy. Having them understand that I am happy is important, and I hope they would respect and understand that".

### **Step 3: Completing A Self-Evaluation After the Interview**

- 1. What therapeutic communication techniques did you use during the interview? Provide examples.** During my interview, I participated in active listening, which is part of therapeutic communication. Asking for clarification when I didn't fully understand something was part of my therapeutic communication as well. I also understandably asked the questions.
- 2. What went well?** I thought the majority of the interview went well. I am pretty close with my grandpa, so the questions I asked went smoothly and fun. I love hearing about my grandpa's experiences and opinions and thought the interview was great.
- 3. What would I do differently next time?** Next time, I would go into the questions deeper. I would ask these questions and then branch off and ask more.
- 4. What are the major take-home lessons after interviewing an older adult?** My major take-home lesson after interviewing my grandpa is that once you are a certain age, it is important to maximize your quality of life. It is also a priority, but especially in older age. You would not want to deprive someone of something that makes them happy and enjoy their life.
- 5. How can I adapt my nursing practice to be more responsive to the unique needs of an older adult client?** Respecting and understanding an older adult client to the best of your ability is something that I can do to adapt my nursing practice towards older adults. It is easy not to understand why a patient does something but reminding yourself that this is their life and they would like to live it to their best ability needs to be understood.
- 6. In what way am I building my nursing skills?** I am building my nursing skills by becoming more compassionate and understanding. When you understand specific individuals and carry compassion, nursing care will be of a higher quality. Studying older adults and their body and system changes helps us become more competent and improve nursing care overall.