Clinical Journal

The clinical journal is a reflective assignment designed to help you think through your clinical experience. This may reference lecture material as well, but the focus is on your interaction with the client(s) with whom you interacted during clinical. Please address each of the following points with 3-5 sentences. You are not limited to discussing only these points and may write more if you wish. This is not a formal paper and does not have to be in APA format.

1. Reflect on the overall clinical experience.

I had a good week this week at clinical because I felt more involved with the patients than at past clinical. The first thing I did was sat in on a group session for the teenage girl residents. The technician running the session gave the girls different scenarios related to sexual violence. Some of the girls' answers were appropriate, and others were not, but it allowed me to see some of the behaviors we learned in the lecture when talking about the adolescent client. I also realized that I could not work in a pediatric unit because I had a headache after being with the teenage girls for a few hours. I could not imagine doing a twelve-hour shift with an adolescent client, but I commend the nurses. Towards the end of my clinical day, a new admission who had been coming to the facility for a few years came in. He quickly got angry and aggressive with the staff and was put in a "time-out" of sorts. This ended up affecting some of the other clients on the floor. One of the clients even punched the ceiling, and another broke into the nurse's station. When I left, it got very chaotic quickly, and multiple support codes were called to the peds floor.

2. Discuss how you communicated with the client. What communication techniques did you use? What did you notice about therapeutic communication in this interaction?

I mainly observed the children while they were in a group, so I did not do a lot of communicating with the adolescent patients; however, I did try to talk to the little boy that was having a temper tantrum. I tried to use therapeutic communication techniques to the best of my abilities. When he was crying, I said, "I can see that you are upset. Would you like to tell me about what you are feeling?". However, this was not successful because the child continued to cry and even through a Styrofoam cup at me. In response to him throwing, I explained that throwing things was not going to get him what he wanted, which was to get out of time-out. I tried to explain that if he wanted to get out of time-out, he needed to calm down long enough to explain how he felt instead of banging on the door and throwing things. Unfortunately, nothing I said got through to the child, and he continued to have a temper tantrum.

3. Discuss what you think you did best during this clinical day.

I think the best thing that I did this clinical day tried. I say this because even though I could not calm the little boy down, I decided to try to help the staff who was already helping another child who had punched the ceiling. I also wanted to help the patient because he is so young and has had issues with aggression. I wanted to try to calm him down so that he would not hurt

himself by banging on the door to the nurse's station. Instead of freezing up and just watching the chaos, I tried to help restore the peace, and I was very proud of myself.

4. Discuss what you think you might be able to improve in the future.

I could improve my therapeutic communication in the future. I know therapeutic communication is a massive part of the nursing practice, and I am aware that it will continue to grow throughout my journey as a nursing student and as a nurse. But for my therapeutic communication to get better, I need to continue to practice using it in the clinical setting each time so that it continues to get better. Even though my attempt to use therapeutic communication wasn't successful this week, maybe next week it will be.

5. While you were interacting with the clients, did you learn anything about yourself?

While interacting with the clients this week, I learned that I was much more patient than I thought. I now know that I do not want to work with pediatric patients because it would be harder to separate feelings of sympathy. I fear that a pediatric psychiatry career would cause me to burn out from emotional exhaustion. Many employees even said that they have cried about their patients in their car after work, and I do not think I could bear the emotional weight of hearing some of these patients' stories or bear the thought of what some of them have been through at such a young age.