

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.

The clinical experience on 10/12/2022 was a good experience, because I was able to observe two separate group therapy sessions, interview a client, and learn about medications from the nurse. I actually learned a new way to explain feelings to clients by using pictures and weather analogies. The lesson compared depression to a rain cloud because it's gloomy and covers you up, anxiety was a lightning bolt because it can arise suddenly and create issues that essentially arise from nothing, and the most intriguing comparison was comparing anger to an umbrella because many people use it to cover up their real feelings and protect them from the sadness and other emotions that they are truly feeling inside. The umbrella analogy was really cool to see because the kids understood that it is easier to put your umbrella up and be angry, when you do not want to address real feelings and possibly ones that will make you seem "weak" or "fragile".

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

When interviewing my client I used therapeutic communication techniques to navigate care plan questions in order to maintain a therapeutic, productive conversation. When the client mentioned that her dad had recently died, I made sure to take a moment away from the questions to provide support to the client and her feelings about that discovery. I used a lot of open-ended questions during the interview to let the client explain their thoughts and feelings about certain topics to gather as much information as I could. The client that I had was very open and cooperative, so therapeutic communication was not necessarily essential to obtain information, but I believe that it helped the client to trust me more and to be able to talk about these difficult topics with me.

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

I felt like my communication with the client while using the therapeutic techniques was a positive experience for me. The client I had picked me to question her, and told me she "could tell that I was a good person" which made me feel good. I also made sure to

include everyone on games that were played during group therapy, and helped out one client who was unable to spell words to figure out how to spell them.

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

The only downside of being a student nurse in a mental health facility is not being sure when you can or when you should jump in and help a client. It is also difficult to differentiate between clients that are using your compassion to get what they want versus clients who truly need compassion to get through the day. As I continue in my classes, I also want to make sure I really learn the medications so I can apply that knowledge when administering them to the clients and when I see the prescriptions on my care plan and how it effects the clients.

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

As I previously stated, I think one of my strengths is that I am very compassionate in this environment and all environments, but I can struggle to separate compassion with empathy. The client I interviewed was a very similar personality to me, down to favorite foods and other personality traits, but the only thing that separated us was the difference in our childhood and trauma from it. I have ADHD, and I am very open with views on the world, which helps in a setting like this where people are struggling with internal issues such as identity, sexuality, mood, trauma etc. I interact well with the children, probably because I consider myself to be a big kid at heart, but I feel like this clinical experience further solidified my passion for working with children and young adults to let them know they are not alone in this world.

