

Mental Health First Aid Clinical Journal

The clinical journal is a reflective assignment after completion of the Mental Health First Aid Course. This journal is designed to help you explore what you have learned, and what you may apply as a nurse caring for these types of patients. 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. How does the Mental Health First Aid Class relate to this course?

- a. The Mental Health First Aid (MHFA) class related to this course in multiple ways. For one, the MHFA class offered a general overview of many common mental health conditions, such as anxiety, depression and psychosis. Additionally, it offered students ways to identify when an individual suffering from a mental health condition may be experiencing a mental health crisis, and ways to assist and intervene in the situation. Overall, I think the MHFA class is a good supplement to this course.

2. Name 2 new things you learned in the Mental Health First Aid Class and how you could apply these skills in nursing practice.

- a. One new thing I learned was that an individual experiencing a panic attack may show no outward symptoms, but may internally be facing a crisis. I can apply these skills in nursing practice by knowing that an individual with an anxiety disorder may be having a panic attack even though it is not readily apparent.
- b. Another new thing I learned was that many individuals do not administer naloxone because they are worried about potential side effects of the medication if the individual that has overdosed has not indeed overdosed. I will apply this in nursing practice by educating others that naloxone has no side effects.

3. Explore your self-awareness about mental health after completing the Mental Health First Aid Course. Did it change?

- a. My self-awareness about mental health did change after the MHFA course. The course made me understand that individuals experiencing a mental health crisis usually have very few qualified individuals to turn to, and that even a small amount of education can help these individuals. The MHFA course will definitely make me more aware of mental health situations in the future.

4. How will you use the knowledge gained in this course to advocate for clients with mental health conditions?

- a. This course helped open my eyes to the massive shortage of mental health services in the central Illinois area. According to the course instructor, there are currently 3 (more than likely 2) psychiatrists operating in Vermillion County, a

county of over 70,000 people. This points to a large lack of access for individuals with mental health conditions, and a need for healthcare providers to advocate for these patients and assist in connecting them with the care they need.

5. Reflect on the overall experience after attending the Mental Health First Aid Course.

- a. The overall experience of the MHFA course was positive. The course was somewhat long, but covered a lot of material in an engaging way. It was apparent that the instructors had done this many times (I believe they said they have trained nearly 4,000 in the training) and knew how to engage the audience in things such as discussions and activities. The course provided some basic guidelines for identifying mental health crises, and guidelines for how to assist an individual in a mental health crisis. Overall, I think the class was beneficial and I am happy to have the MFHA certification to put on my resume.