

## Mental Health First Aid Clinical Journal

Jessica Warren

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?

This first aid class relates to this course by helping us to understand on a deeper level what it is to have a mental health crisis. The activities we did in the class really opened my eyes to some of the clinical symptoms those with mental health challenges go through. I think the exercise on auditory hallucinations really opened my eyes to those who suffer with these conditions. It was “silly” when going through the exercise and experiencing someone talking in your ear while we were trying to talk to another person in our group but once I sat back and reflected on the exercise it puts a knot in my throat. I have taken care of residents who have had auditory hallucinations. I now appreciate the distress it puts them in. This first aid course really helps to magnify what we are learning in class.

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

First thing I learned is how to approach and help someone with auditory hallucinations. While I have worked with a resident with this condition it wasn't to the extreme as what was in the video we watched. Not going into the home of the gentleman with the hallucinations opened my eyes. I would want to help them in an environment where they felt safe but it isn't necessarily a safe place for me.

Second thing I learned is to pay better attention to those around me in my life. I had a friend hang herself 4 years ago. We all went out for supper and talked about her soon to be grandson's baby shower that was coming up. She was fine at dinner and seemed to have a great time with everyone. After dinner, when she got home, that's when she did it. Prior to this dinner her behavior was a little off and it seemed like she was finalizing things in her life. Things that I did notice but didn't really take into consideration she may want to kill herself. The behavior changes were so slight that I missed it.... We all did. I learned that if something is even slightly off I am just going to come out and ask... I'd rather someone be mad that I asked the questions then feel the guilt I do now by not asking Penny.

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

Yes, it changed. I know the scenarios we did are not real life to what someone may be going through but I certainly gave me an appreciation of what people go through.

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

I will advocate that just because you do not see the illness doesn't mean something isn't wrong with someone...It doesn't mean they are being lazy or can snap out of what their issue is. Advocating for mental health change is going to be the only way to bring about a bigger change and for others to recognize we do need resources to help those who cannot help themselves. It's not a choice for them to have the health issues they do.

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

Over all I enjoyed this experience. Like I have already stated, it has opened my eyes to a new perspective. Just reading about things and even going to clinical doesn't impact me like what this course did. I think some of the scenarios we did is what opened my eyes to how things are for some people and I will be less quick to respond to things until after I have taken in every consideration.