

Poverty Simulation insights

Instructions: Reflect on the simulation and answer all of the following questions related to struggles you might have encountered during the simulation.

1. What were your initial thoughts and emotions during the simulation, and how did they change as the activity progressed?

At first, I was wondering how it was going to work, there were a lot of different groups of “families”, and I wasn’t sure how it was all going to come together. But after the instructions were given and the simulation started, my role was clear and it was clear what each person was supposed to do.

2. How did the limited resources and financial constraints impact your decision-making? Were there any moments where you felt particularly overwhelmed or stressed?

I was a child, so I didn’t feel the responsibility that my parents had in taking care of us, but I did experience hunger and not being able to go play because I had to watch my younger brother who had ADHD.

3. How did the simulation change your perspective on the daily struggles of individuals and families living in poverty?

I mean, honestly, I grew up poor, so it wasn’t that far off from what I experienced as a child. My family had to get food from our religious community donations for holidays and we had to borrow money for rent a lot of times too. The only difference was that we didn’t live in a terrible neighborhood. We did get our apartment broken into a couple of times though now that I think about it. But there was no gun shooting, and we went to a good Jewish school, so we didn’t have any bad influences like I experienced in the simulation.

4. What challenges did you face in balancing necessities like housing, food, healthcare, and emergencies with limited income?

My grandparents in the simulation weren't able to go to the grocery store for two weeks, so basically, we only ate what was provided at school.

5. How did the stress of living in poverty affect your ability to think clearly, plan ahead, or manage crises?

It looked stressful for my grandparents when one of them was disabled also. They seemed stressed out and always thinking about money.

6. In your future role as a healthcare provider, how might understanding the impact of poverty influence your approach to patient care?

I think it would help me ask more pertinent questions, especially about how the patient will be able to continue to have care when they go home.

7. What aspects of the simulation most surprised or impacted you? Were there situations that you had not considered prior to the exercise?

I was impacted most by the violence that occurred at my school, having people drop drugs off and having the school on lockdown.

8. How do you think poverty influences a person's physical and mental health? How can healthcare professionals address these challenges?

Stress is an important factor that affects a person both physically and mentally. There are so many health problems that are exacerbated by stress. I think healthcare professionals could help patients by helping them find ways to relieve the stressors in their lives.

9. What role do you think empathy plays in delivering effective healthcare to individuals facing poverty? How can you cultivate this in your practice?

Empathy allows the healthcare team to understand what a person may be going through by imagining as if they were going through what the patient is going through. It focuses the attention on finding ways to help the person as if that person were themselves. What would the professional do in their situation. Maybe the person doesn't know how to think outside of their own situation and how to make the right decisions.

10. Reflect on the limitations of the simulation itself. How does this exercise compare to real-life experiences of poverty? What additional factors might affect those living in poverty?

Obviously, there are time restraints in the simulation that is not the same in real life, like people would most likely be able to get to the grocery store before it closed or find another store that was open. However, similarities to real life would be feeling the time restraints of having bills due, not having transportation to get to the store, having no help, etc.

Honor Code

I have not received, knowingly given, nor tolerated the use of unauthorized aid on this work.

Signature: shoshana zimmerman Date: 10/10/2024