

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?
We will very likely encounter many patients suffering from different mental health issues. This class really showed us warning signs and ways to address suicidal situations. We also did an activity that showed us what it was like for someone who hears voices and how it can be difficult for them to hear and comprehend what we are saying to them.
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 thing they really stressed was to address suicide very directly and to be careful with how you word it. It is very important to say “kill yourself” rather than other phrases that may seem more comfortable. I will actually just say that now instead of “hurt yourself” or “end your life”.
 - b. I will have a better idea of how to recognize and communicate with people who suffer from mental health issues. Being told warning signs and things to look out for, I feel like I’ll be able to better help someone and hopefully provide early intervention.
3. Explore your self-awareness about mental health after completing the Mental Health First Aid Course. Did it change?
I feel like I am more careful about the language I use now, and how I feel about people who suffer with mental health problems. I feel a great deal of compassion for people in general, but after this class and this clinical experience, my compassion and understanding of mental health has grown a great deal. With some illnesses, I always felt like it was a choice. Now, I know SOME truly are not.
4. How will you use the knowledge gained in this course to advocate for clients with mental health conditions?
I’ll be more aware and recognize what they can help and what they can’t. I’ll have a better idea of how to communicate with them to be the most effective. I’ll also have empathy for them and their families. A lot of times, mental illness stems from a trauma that was out of their control and that is what has developed as a coping mechanism.
5. Reflect on the overall experience after attending the Mental Health First Aid Course.
I actually really enjoyed this experience. I thought the instructors presented it in a well thought out manner and the way they went back and forth kept you interested. They also

know their stuff and any question asked, they had an answer. I do feel like I learned a lot from them and will be better prepared to handle these situations.