

# **Pavilion Reflection**

**1. What was the most challenging interaction or situation you encountered today, and how did you handle it? If faced with a similar situation in the future, what might you do differently?**

I found it difficult to interact with young adults who were admitted for a suicidal attempt. It's difficult to know what to say to these individuals, no matter how much I feel for them. I am reaching a point in my life where I am somewhat removed from their experience due to an age difference, and there are subtle ways in which that influences my interaction with them in ways not easily perceived. Moreover, while I have had my fair share of trials and struggles in life, including with mental health, I have never been suicidal. So I relate enough to know that it can ring very hollow and facetious when someone else tries to sympathize with your situation without personal background to relate to. I did not want to come off this way, so I struggled with the right words to say to convey my heartfelt support for them, but in a way that didn't seem phony or contrived. I would definitely like to better understand communication strategies when in this position, and in the future will try and be more versed in them.

**2. How did your communication style affect your interactions with clients today? Were there moments where you could have adjusted your approach to be more effective or therapeutic?**

Certainly, as stated above, it could be difficult to navigate such a sensitive subject. Although I think it went well. Most of these clients appear to acknowledge your intent, even if hamfisted in

execution at times, and show genuine appreciation for the fact that you're making any effort to consider them at all. I imagine many of them have had their challenges dismissed or minimized by insensitive people, so I surmise that simply being kind and considerate means a lot to them.

**3. What emotions did you experience during your clinical experience, and how did those emotions impact your ability to interact with clients and staff? How can you better manage these emotions in future clinical experiences?**

The client that I interviewed was only about 19 years old and was transgender – having only recently come out. Their family struggled with this pronouncement. The lack of family support, set against the backdrop of a national political environment that had recently been very vocal about denouncing and otherizing the transgender community, had led to this client's suicide attempt. Sharing a similar cultural and political view as this individual, I shared their anger for the bigotry and hatred plaguing our society today. This interaction therefore had a significant emotional undercurrent throughout it, but I appreciated that we were both of the same mind and were able to have a healthy exchange about how upset we were with these elements.