



This Guide for Reflection is intended to help you think about a given clinical situation you encountered and your nursing response to that situation. This guide can be used in many nursing situations. The situation can be a specific patient problem, such as an elevation in temperature, respiratory difficulty, or restlessness. You may choose to describe a situation involving a patient's family. The situation could be a description of your role in interdisciplinary problem solving. The reflection situation may describe an ethical issue you encountered in practice. Use the guide for reflection as a way to tell the story of the situation you encountered.

The guide provides you with a way of thinking about care that supports the development of your clinical judgment. Although there are many ways of organizing your thinking about patient care and professional nursing practice, Tanner's (2006) Clinical Judgment Model provides the framework for the questions in this guide.

This guide was adapted for use for the Heritage University BSN program from: Nielsen, A. et al. (2007). Guide for Reflection Using the Clinical Judgment Model. *Journal of Nursing Education* 46(11).

Instructions: Take time to reflect shortly after you complete a nursing encounter. Write some reflective notes (not exhaustive details), and discuss your thinking with your clinical faculty. This guide is intended to help you to compose your reflections on the clinical unit and explicitly dissect the components of the stages of clinical judgment. It is primarily about your thinking process, not the details of the encounter. You should also be able to briefly summarize key points of each step (Noticing, Interpreting, Responding, Reflecting) of your clinical judgment without needing this guide or extensive details.

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Student

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Date of Encounter



INTRODUCTION	Student Reflection
Briefly describe the nursing situation you encountered.	During my time at Camp Corey, I spent the week helping a child who was wheelchair-bound and had a feeding tube, as well as a condition that caused them to experience many seizures throughout the day. During my time at Camp Corey, I helped the family care for him and spent time with his parents and siblings as a camp counselor.
BACKGROUND	Student Reflection
- Describe your relationship to the patient at the time you noticed the situation (e.g., previous contact with patient and/or family, the phase of the nurse-patient relationship, and quality of your relationship). - Consider experiences you have had that helped you provide nursing care in the situation. (e.g., previous nursing experiences with a similar problem, and/or personal experiences that helped guide you as you worked with the patient). - Describe your formal knowledge from the liberal arts (e.g. humanities, liberal arts, physiology, psychology, communication skills) Describe your formal knowledge from humanities and sciences that would explain your understanding of the human response (e.g. physiology, psychology, language, art, communication skills) that informed you in the moment. - Describe your personal, ethical, empirical and aesthetic knowing in the moment. - Describe your beliefs about your role as the nurse in working on the situation. - Describe your emotions when you encountered the situation.	At the time, I had no prior personal contact with the patient or their family, but I was acting as a camp counselor and had the opportunity to develop a working relationship with them over the course of the week. I provided support by helping care for the child, who was wheelchair-bound and had a feeding tube, while also spending time with their parents and siblings. My previous experience in caring for individuals with medical needs helped me navigate the situation, and my knowledge of basic nursing care informed my actions. I thought my formal knowledge of the liberal arts was displayed during my time at camp while I interacted with the children. I tried to really understand the human response that my patient was going through, as well as what their sibling was experiencing. I considered the caregiver strain the parents might experience on a day-to-day basis, and the thoughts and feelings my patient's younger siblings might have had about their brother being sick. My role as a caregiver in this context was to be attentive, respectful, and supportive. My emotions during this encounter were empathy for all involved—the child I was caring for, as well as his family.
NOTICING	Student Reflection



REFLECTION-IN-ACTION ON THINKING LIKE A NURSE

Guided Worksheet

• What did you initially notice about the situation? • Describe what you noticed as you spent more time with the patient and/or family.	Initially, I noticed that the child had significant medical needs, but he was happy and a normal, smiling, carefree kid. I noticed that the child seemed to require continuous care, and I saw how much his family loved him by the tender care they gave him. I realized how important it was for the family to have support, not just for the child's physical needs, but also for emotional and social connection. The dynamics of the family revealed both their resilience and the weight of caregiving responsibilities.
INTERPRETING	Student Reflection
• Describe what you thought about the situation (e.g. its cause, potential resolutions, patterns you noticed). • Think again about any similar situations you have encountered in practice before. Then describe the similarities and differences you observed when compared with the current situation. • What other information (e.g. assessment data, evidence) did you decide you needed as you considered the situation? • How did you obtain this information? • What help with the problem did you get from your clinical faculty or nurse mentor?	In reflecting on the situation, I thought about the complexity of the child's medical condition and how it affected the entire family. I considered the potential for long-term caregiving challenges, both for the child and the parents. I also thought about possible resolutions, such as ensuring the family had adequate support and resources to help manage the child's needs while maintaining a sense of normalcy. A key pattern I noticed was the balance the family had to strike between meeting the child's medical needs and maintaining their relationships with one another. I thought it was really cool how the parents always set time aside for the other sibling and made sure she didn't miss out on things, even though the child I was working with required a significant amount of time and care throughout the day.
CONCLUSION	Student Reflection



REFLECTION-IN-ACTION ON THINKING LIKE A NURSE

Guided Worksheet

● What did your observations, pattern recognition and data interpretations lead you to believe? ● How did they support your response to the situation? ● Include pertinent knowledge from physiology/development/psychosocial theories and humanities.	My observations, pattern recognition, and data interpretation led me to believe that the family was doing their best to manage the child's complex medical needs while also striving to maintain a sense of normalcy and balance in their lives. I recognized a pattern of resilience in the parents, who were clearly dedicated to not only caring for their child but also ensuring that their other child did not feel neglected. The fact that they prioritized their other child's emotional and social needs despite the demands of caregiving showed the family's strength and commitment to maintaining healthy relationships.
NURSING DIAGNOSIS	Student Reflection
● What nursing diagnoses did you make? ● Were they problem, risk, or readiness diagnoses? ● Did you holistically consider the patient? Their family?	Risk for Caregiver Role Strain related to the demands of managing a child with a complex medical condition - I could see the stress that managing the child's physical needs might have brought, while also trying to provide emotional and social support to their other child. Caregiver fatigue and emotional strain are potential risks to their well-being
RESPONDING	Student Reflection
● After considering the situation, what was your goal for the patient, family and/or staff? ● What was your nursing response? What actions did you take? List all actions that you took. ● Describe stresses you experienced as you responded to the patient or others involved in the situation.	During my week at Camp Corey, my goal for the family was to provide some form of caregiver relief by spending time with their child, being a family pal, and lending a hand during the daily care tasks. I also had a goal of spending some time with my camper's younger sibling because, as someone who grew up with an older brother who also had a complex medical condition, I knew that sometimes it can feel like all eyes are on them all the time. So, I made an effort to spend time with my camper's little sister and take her to do activities that she might not normally get to do. Aside from that, I just tried to be a support to the family.
REFLECTION-IN-ACTION	Student Reflection



REFLECTION-IN-ACTION ON THINKING LIKE A NURSE

Guided Worksheet

• What happened? • How did the patient, family, and/or staff respond? • What did you do next?	The family seemed really grateful for my presence and that I was there to just be a helping hand to them during the week. Although they were leery to participate in the parent events, as they didn't want to leave their son without one of them, it was also really cool to see one parent at a time get to go and enjoy the fun little parent events, knowing that they weren't leaving their spouse alone to care for both children by themselves because I was there. I think the family was mostly just grateful that I was there to lend a hand and help them out during the week at camp.
REFLECTION-ON-ACTION AND CLINICAL LEARNING	Student Reflection
• Describe three ways your nursing care skills expanded during this experience. • Name three things you might do differently if you encounter this kind of situation again. • Explain how you integrated the fundamental patterns of knowing in nursing (personal, ethical, empiric, aesthetic). • What additional knowledge, information, and skills do you need when encountering this kind of similar situation in the future? • Describe any changes in your values or feelings as a result of this experience.	During this experience, I expanded my ability to provide emotional support to both patients and their families. I learned how to actively listen, validate feelings, and offer comfort to parents who were experiencing emotional strain. I developed my skills in providing care not just for the patient, but for the entire family system. I became more mindful of the emotional, social, and developmental needs of the other sibling, ensuring that she felt included and cared for. My personal experiences, particularly growing up with a sibling who had a complex medical condition, deeply informed how I approached this situation. I could empathize with the sibling's potential feelings of being overlooked and made a conscious effort to spend time with her. This personal insight allowed me to connect with the family on a deeper level.

My overall clinical experience at Camp Korey was incredibly rewarding. It was a privilege to provide support to families facing challenging circumstances and to witness their resilience firsthand. The opportunity to apply nursing knowledge in a non-traditional setting was eye-opening and reinforced the importance of holistic care, for me personally. I learned the significance of understanding family dynamics, the impact of chronic illness on the entire family system, and the importance of providing emotional support to both patients and their families.

I felt as though the family systems theory resonated throughout my experience at Camp Korey. The camp's structure itself reflected the theory's principles by recognizing the interconnectedness of family members. Activities and programs were designed to engage the entire family, promoting togetherness while also providing individual support. For instance, the presence of "family pals" allowed parents to have



REFLECTION-IN-ACTION ON THINKING LIKE A NURSE

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some rest while ensuring the children felt supported. The theory's emphasis on boundaries, roles, and communication patterns was evident in the family interactions I observed. Understanding these dynamics allowed me to better support the family and recognize potential areas for intervention, such as addressing caregiver role strain. One of the nursing diagnosis I would have for the family would be Risk for Caregiver Role Strain related to the extensive demands of caring for a child with a chronic illness and complex medical needs, including a feeding tube and frequent seizures.

My experience at Camp Korey differed from what I expected in several ways. While I anticipated a focus on medical care from the families, I found that emotional support and fostering a sense of normalcy for the children with complex medical issues, were equally important. Additionally, I was surprised by the depth of connection I formed with the family in just a weekend.