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CIS 102T

I’ve got to say that my experience with the residents in New Rochelle has definitely changed me. When I started this course, I honestly had no idea that I’d be working with older adults. I thought it was based on just learning more about computers. I’m glad that I misunderstood what I was stepping into, because had I known, I might have backed out and signed up for another course.

Once I understood what the course was all about, I thought my main objective would be to teach the residents and go about my own business, but I didn’t realize that they’d be the ones to teach me more about themselves. I was always the type of girl that was willing to help out people, but I would shield myself from the elderly because I wasn’t sure how to approach them. I always knew that people 65 years and above tended to struggle with their motor skills and such, but I almost didn’t view them as “equal” to people who were younger like me.

I have a much higher amount of respect for the elderly – more than I knew I had before the course. They’re just like us. They read, they write, they have memories and enjoy thinking back on the great times they’ve had. They laugh, they love, and for the most part, with enthusiasm, they plan to live the rest of their life with joy. They actually seem to do better than younger people. Most of us complain over the not having the most updated cell phone, but hardly ever show gratitude for the simple fact that we woke up to see another day. Sadly, many of us live life thinking, “What’s in it for me?” The seniors, however, are different from us. They like to learn. For the most part, they are patient. They don’t argue with you if you make a mistake. I’ve learned so much from them just by watching them take instructions from us as students.

I realized toward the end of the course that one day, I may very well reach an age where I may need assistance in doing the “little” things (like opening a door, or getting out of my seat), and how much of a blessing it would be to have a younger person take time out to help me learn something new and make life a little bit easier. When putting myself in their shoes, I now see the importance of this course. It was life-changing. Although I may not go into the medical field, I feel I’ve gained a new outlook on all people in general.

Honestly, I’m sorry that this course is coming to a close. When I found out that our last week had come, I couldn’t believe it. I felt like we were just getting warmed up. I would certainly recommend the course to other students – not necessarily just nursing students. In, other countries, elders are considered to be the wisest and the most honored – yet in America, we now rarely see honor or respect from the youth to their own parents. By placing students in a setting where they must learn to work with older individuals, they will learn (like I have) that respect goes much further than being cordial with a person.