

Internship Student Profile

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My Experience at Asha The Hope

When I first joined the internship program and talked to Pranjul Ma'am, I have to admit that I had no idea or expectations of what I wanted to do at the center. So, I kind of started the internship with an open mind and was ready to just go with the flow, unsure of what exactly this internship would entail. We started out our internship talking about ourselves and sharing our experiences with Counseling(if any) and how we all solve conflicts between us and others or even between people around us. As we talked about ourselves and our lives, I realized that my classmates with whom prior to this internship, I had barely shared a minute conversation with, shared a lot of past experiences with me.

In our sessions with Swati ma'am, we got to experience a non-traditional approach to therapy, over the course of the three sessions we got to experience firsthand how different types of Art Therapy methods help the counselor pinpoint the issues that the client is facing or maybe need to work with. At the beginning of the initial session, I was skeptical about the effectiveness of Art Therapy in telling ma'am about my issue, but after the first activity, I was proven wrong. Ma'am, just through a few words, was able to uncover things about me that I myself had thought that I had long accepted and reconciled with. During this time, we also started trying out mock counseling sessions with each other under the supervision of Pranjul Ma'am who would tell us where we might have gone wrong or where we could phrase questions we ask, better. I had fun in these mock sessions, both in the position of a client and as a counselor, as I could adopt a different persona to try and stump my fellow interns.

Another crucial part of becoming a counselor is firstly, knowing oneself, which was the main focus of the sessions we had with Jyoti ma'am, we were asked questions to help us to introspect. The questions ranged from finding words that describe us to words that we would use to describe our ideal work environment. Through the sessions that we had with Jyoti ma'am, I was able to find out the things that I pride myself on and the values that are crucial for me to uphold.

In our sessions with Asha, I was spellbound by the wealth of knowledge she has and her achievements in the past 10-15 years. She talked about her background and her struggles, and she used them as a driving force to get to where she is right now. Her ability to relate the epics of Hindu Mythology with Western psychological theories was fascinating, the way she spoke to us was the voice of someone who truly loves what she does. Her love for her work inspires me to find something that I love and make it my career.

When we went to the school to talk to the students and explain the career assessment tests, I was initially hesitant to talk to them out of a fear of them resenting us. But, as the days passed and I got more comfortable with talking and interacting with the students, everybody started to come out of their shells. What I learned from this experience was that we didn't need to stick to the questions religiously, instead, we took liberties if we felt that a question was unneeded or that we wanted the student to expand on a certain question. The lines of questioning we followed flowed more naturally this way and the students themselves felt more comfortable this way as well. Some of the students I talked to were very unsure of what they wanted to do and hesitant to open up, some were extremely open to talking and regaled me with the hilarious happenings of their life. And, one person already had an entire road map planned on which

degree they wanted, from which university, and by what age they wanted to be done with a certain milestone.

In the past month, I have gained so much knowledge, more than I would have normally if I had gone to another center. The experiences that I shared here and the lessons I learned, are those which I will hold onto forever, taking them with me to wherever I end up. I am extremely grateful to the team at Asha the Hope for the opportunities that I was given.

Feedback:

I had a wonderful experience working at Asha the Hope, I got a so-called taste of various fields of Psychology and went to see how each field is interconnected with the other. This internship also offered me the opportunity to get to know my classmates better and realize that we all aren't so different from each other. As a naturally shy person, this internship helped me to come out of my comfort zone, by making me interact with people who I never had spoken to for more than a minute at a time. For me, this internship I had was a treasure trove of information and experience for me, where I was able to be on the other side of a counseling session and fill the place of a counselor. All in all I had a wonderful time, learning about everything that goes into becoming a counselor, the elements that make up an effective counseling session, the different ways through which counseling can be administered, along with so much more.