

## **“A Beautiful Mind” Movie Review**

***Question 1. Describe the character in detail. What would you document when conducting a nursing assessment on him?***

The main character suffers from paranoid schizophrenia. He demonstrates classical symptoms of schizophrenia (Goldberg, 2010). For example, John believes that he is being followed by enemy agents, because he is the only one, who can decipher the conversation of the enemies for Pentagon, and reveal the Soviet plan against USA. However, all this is just an example of paranoia. Nash perceives reality in a bit different way, than other people. John acts in a bizarre way from the beginning of the movie, and says odd things to people. John Nash behaves in a strange way not because he is under stress, as everyone thought at the beginning, but because he is mentally ill. John has strange thoughts, which lead to his odd behavior, and to the fact that he sees things and people that do not exist. John has delusions, and experiences hallucinations. He believes, that knows everything better, than the professors, and does not want to read books by people, who are, in his opinion, not as smart as he is. John is also dressed inappropriately at the university. For example, he wears sneakers when his fellow students wear leather shoes. He looks clumsy, and not focused. John also often forgets that he needs to eat and drink. He even experiences physic anxiety.

***Question 2. Write details of the story.***

It is the story of John Nash. At the beginning of the movie, John begins his education in Princeton University. He thinks that he is going to live alone in the room, but later he starts to believe, that he has a roommate, Charles Herman. John is a mathematical genius. John seems to be a normal person, however, he already suffers from a mental illness (Lewis, 2003). He has

schizophrenia. Even though, John does not know this yet, Charles Herman is just a creation of his mind. John is constantly being under pressure, because he is supposed to publish books. However, he is unable to find the proper idea for the book. While trying to meet with the girls in a bar, John invents a concept of governing dynamics. After some time, Nash believes, that he has been invited to work for Pentagon, because only he is able to crack the coded communication of the enemy. He believes to be working with agent William Parcher, who works for Department of Defense of the United States. John starts searching for specific patterns in the newspapers, in order to contravene the Soviet plot. This job excites John more than his job in MIT. However, all this happens only in his mind. John becomes more and more obsessed with his imaginary task at Pentagon. Nash believes, that he is being followed by an enemy agents, when he puts his reviews into the mailbox. At that time, John meets a student, Alicia. After some time, they fell in love and marry. One day, during his lection in Harvard, Nash tries to run away from Soviet agents. After this incident he is put into a psychiatric clinic. Nash believes, that it is Soviets, who keep him there, because of his work for Pentagon. Dr. Rosen tells Alicia, that William Parcher, John's best friend Charles, and Marcee do not exist. Alicia is shocked. She reveals the truth to Nash. John is mentally ill; he has schizophrenia, and must take antipsychotic medication. However, medication has side effects, so John stops taking it, and his schizophrenia becomes more severe. After knocking down Alicia and his son onto the ground, Nash realizes that Marcee is not real, because she is not growing up, she is the same age and height every time John sees her. Nash accepts the fact, that he experiences hallucinations, he starts taking medication once again. Finally, he learns to ignore people, who follow him everywhere, but do not exist in reality.

***Question 3. What were your reactions to insulin therapy?***

When John was treated with insulin, I thought that it is not the best way to treat the disease, because this method has too many side effects. Besides causing a person to be sweaty and tired all the time, insulin therapy can also cause brain damage and death. It was a method that made people suffer, and go through insulin coma. This method only gave a temporary relief of the symptoms, so actually it was not so effective. Nowadays, in the US, this method is completely replaced with neuroleptic drugs. These drugs show better effect, and have less side effects.

***Question 4. When did you realize he was mentally ill?***

I realized, that John Nash is not completely healthy mentally, when I saw the way he looked at other people. His face showed a lack of emotions. It was obvious for me from the beginning of the movie, that it is not easy for John to socialize, and establish bonds with other people. However, I did not know that his illness was so severe. I understood that John is mentally ill, when he started running away from people during his lecture at Harvard. At that time, it was obvious for me, that there is no Soviet plot against the United States, which John was supposed to reveal, and which only John was able to decipher by analyzing the texts in the newspapers. I understood that it was one of the symptoms of paranoid schizophrenia.

***Question 6. Does the movie change your view of mental illness? Why or why not?***

The movie changed my view of mental illness, because it helped me to better understand how the person, who has schizophrenia, really feels. I understood, what shock it is, to find out that your best friends do not exist at all, and all your bonds with other people were created only

in your head. I also understood, that people, who have mental illness are not always useless. I understood, that some of these people might even be mathematical geniuses, who will be able to establish theories, and prove different scientific principles. I also understood that the mental illness sometimes is the reason for the person being a genius. If the illness would be taken away from the person, his/her genius might vanish as well. In addition, I understood that it is very hard to live with a mental illness, and cause harm to people you love, without even realizing it. Even if the person manages to fight back the mental illness, her mind will continue to set traps to conquer the person completely.

***Question 7. What emotions did he display? What hallucinations and delusions***

At the very beginning of the movie, the main character demonstrated uneasiness. He stared at the floor or wall instead of looking at people's eyes (Lewis, 2003). His face expressed lack of emotions. John isolated himself in his room, and tried to prove mathematical principle, which he was sure he was going to prove soon. When he looks out from the window, he sees how people interact with each other, and at that moment, for the first time in his life, he sees a hallucination of a person, who is going to become his best friend, but only in his mind. At the university, John feels isolated, and he needs a friend, so his mind creates him a friend. John also experienced delusions of grandeur, because he thought, that he is better than the professors, that he is smarter than everyone else. He had exaggerated perception of his importance. He thought that only he was so smart, that Pentagon asked him to cooperate with them, and that only he can solve serious problems, and decipher a code from Soviet enemies.

***Question 8. How would you treat him as a health care professional? Meaning, what nursing interventions would you use to care for him on an in-patient unit? What about her?***

As a health professional, I would try to treat schizophrenia in the prodromal phase, if possible. I would use the neuroleptic drugs to minimize the symptoms of the illness. I would write reports on his conditions daily to notice the smallest progress of his treatment. I would adhere to drug-compliance, composed by a doctor. I would recommend to use drugs, which have a minimum of possible negative effects on the patient's health.

***Question 9. Who was in danger in the movie?***

In the movie, Alicia and her child were in danger, while they were near John, because during his delusions, the people who existed only in his mind, ordered him to kill her. John was not able to differentiate between a delusion and reality (Lewis, 2003). Thus, he might have caused her harm, if his hallucinations would succeed in convincing him, that it is Alicia, who is guilty for all negative things, which happen in John's life; that she is an enemy, or that it is she, who does not exist in reality. Schizophrenic, who does not take medication, and is not treated by doctors in the specialized facility, is a threat to individuals, who surround him, during his delusion, schizophrenic can cause harm to his friends, family, co-workers. Professor, who suffers from schizophrenia can even cause harm to his students during hallucinations.

***Question 10. What support could be given to his family?***

In my opinion, a specially trained nurse should have taught Alicia to communicate with John in a way, to help him conquer his illness. Alicia should have been taught by a nurse to reduce the level of stress, which John felt. A nurse should have educated Alicia to react properly to various types of John's behavior, and to notice if he is getting worse.