Hermeneutics and Communication

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Write a three-paragraph essay responding to the following question: When have you noticed your pre-judgments influencing your interpretations? How have you experienced a "fusion of horizons" in your learning experiences?

As a member of law enforcement, it is essential to respond effectively and think critically in various situations. However, some calls for service involve individuals who can be combative or challenging to interact with. Over time, I shifted my mindset and viewed people negatively without considering other factors. One significant factor is the prevalence of mental health issues in society. As a result, I had to challenge my preconceived notions and explore new ideas to gain a better perspective and understanding.

Despite advances in mental health awareness, I still held onto the misconceptions and stigmas regarding mental illnesses. The misunderstanding is the belief that mental health problems are a form of aggression rather than acknowledging them as legitimate medical conditions. This misconception perpetuates shame and self-blame for family members and individuals seeking help, hindering their ability to receive appropriate treatment and support. My lack of awareness led to dismissive attitudes and a failure to recognize the severity and impact of mental illnesses on individuals' lives.

Responding to calls related to mental health requires a compassionate and empathetic approach. I learned that prioritizing the safety of the individual in crisis and the responding officer is crucial. I had to learn new skills to communicate and de-escalate situations effectively by maintaining a calm and non-threatening demeanor. I had to remember to be an active listener and acknowledge the person's emotions to establish trust and a positive rapport. It's essential to recognize that mental health calls require a unique skill set compared to traditional law enforcement calls. Working collaboratively with mental health professionals and utilizing crisis intervention techniques can result in positive outcomes, ensuring that individuals in crisis receive the necessary care and support.