

# Journaling Assignment

Module 6 Journal Assignment for PMH

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Going into each module has made me extremely nervous. This module seems to be even worse because it seems like it is two modules put together. I have trouble grasping one topic at a time. The content for this module seems hard altogether. Although I am more anxious about the psychiatric aspect of it.

I do not feel that I have enough experience with psychiatric illness. Personally, I have come across people with mild issues. My sister has IDD and as a child she was aggressive which made it hard to form a bond with her. Growing up I never understood why she was so different, but I did not sympathize with her because of the lack of knowledge I had on the topic. My sister struggles with being a widow and a single parent. She lives with my mother because my sister also has epilepsy and cannot work or drive. My sister was the first person that I knew that had suffered from MHMR/IDD.

I have always been fearful of psychiatric patients. Sometimes there is no way to expect what is coming at any time. Moods can flip and I feared for the aggressive patients. I have been a CAN for about ten years. I have worked in every aspect of the field (except med surg). I used to work at a neuro rehab facility. The patients did not all have psychiatric illness, but most of them did. I have been beaten up, pushed, kicked, and almost thrown downstairs by patients like these. I understood that the patients did not always remember the things they did, and that they also felt trapped in their facility. Being able to empathize was not the hard part; the hard part was that it was mentally and emotionally draining. After that facility I worked at a state prison. My job was to be assigned to mentally unstable patients and make sure they would not commit suicide. I would work until 0730 and the correctional officers would say, "Keep 'em alive till 745."

Between the two types of patients, I would prefer to work with inmates. There were numerous similarities between neuro patients and inmates. But the inmates were even more manipulative than the psych patients. I worked with these types of patients because I was so fearful of them. I am glad that I had the exposure to those types of patients because there will be psych patients in every area of nursing.

I also have a personal experience with my ex-husband being a narcissist. Of course, when our counselor tried to talk to him about the importance of mental healthcare he stopped going to sessions. I was not aware of what a narcissist was until seeing a family counselor. She expressed worry for my wellbeing and the wellbeing for my daughter. She taught me what gas lighting was and referred me to literature to read about what to look out for and possible triggers.

Those were all my experiences with mental health that I have. It is not a lot, but it is enough for me to know that I do not desire to work in a psychiatric unit or facility. I frequently have patients that suffer from a wide variety of psychiatric illness. At CMC we get patients from Sunrise, The Plaza, and people living at home with mental illnesses.

Regarding my fears and concerns about patients like this would be that it hits close to home with abuse and manipulation. I know that at any given time a patient can flip and become aggressive. That is not always the situation, but I am prepared for that, and to me that is concerning.

My first question would be: How do those little old people become so strong when the sun goes down? It is as if they acquire superhuman strength as soon as the moon is out when before that they needed help to raise sit up straight to be fed. I would also like to ask why is mental health seen as such a bad thing? This hinders people's desire to even seek the help that is

desperately needed. It is treated as if it is not a real illness. This makes people feel shamed when they should not be.

I also worked at a hospital that did not allow the staff to wear scrubs in their psych unit. This was because the patients there did not react well to people in scrubs. Why is that? Is that a real thing that scrubs would be a trigger for these types of patients? Anytime we were floated to this unit we had to change from our scrubs to our normal clothes. I also want to learn how to best care for patients with mental illnesses. I know that every patient is different, but I would like to learn more evidence-based practices for all patients. I would also like to be better equipped to help my mother care for my sister.

I do not know if my questions are unintelligent, and I am sorry if they are. These are just things that I have always been curious about after my small amount of experience with mental illnesses.