

Current Theories and Practice

Kaitlyn Patrick

Covenant School of Nursing

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Mr. Jeremy Ellis

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Mental health is a growing crisis not only in the United States, but globally. The National Institute of Mental Health states that at least one in five Americans are affected with at least one type of mental health issue/disease (NIH, 2021). With the rise in popularity and its growing awareness, it can be suggested that you or someone you know is affected with a mental illness.

My Thoughts

I have always been fascinated with the human mind and how complex it is. The brain and the thoughts that run through the head continuously are a basis for everyday life. It is the sole (*soul*) foundation for us as beings and can be either beneficial or hindering depending on its performance. The simplicity of the natural occurrence of the thought process amazes me and is also incredibly frightening. The brain is malleable; constantly learning, perceiving, and rewiring our situations and experiences in order for us to achieve functionality. If the brain is working correctly, then we will be able to continue on with life without hindrance, but it has become increasingly evident that there really is not such a thing as normal. Life can affect our mental and emotional health in different ways. Or the state of our mental health can be affected in relation to a congenital defect. Either way, our mental health is just as important as our physical.

The Personal Effects of Mental Health

Earlier I mentioned that it is common either to know someone who deals with a mental health issue or dealing with one personally. I have worked in the healthcare field before attending nursing school and have helped treat patients who were diagnosed with some type of mental disorder. I also have family members who deal with mental health disorders as well and have experienced firsthand; the complexities, exhaustion, and emotional turmoil mental health

disorders display. These disorders can be as tiresome and as difficult on the family as a chronic disease like cancer can be. The effects mental health disorders have can be sad and isolating at times. I have a brother who suffers from depression and anxiety as well as having Asperger's. I have a mother who also deals with depression and anxiety as well.

When I would treat patients, who were admitted for an attempted suicide, I could always relate and empathize in some way with those patients. Growing up, my family did not know that my brother had Asperger's. He was not diagnosed with it until we were seniors in high school. That being said, he felt lost and was very misunderstood. He attempted to take his life so many times during our high school years. With that situation, it was very scary and worrisome for all of us. I would always live-in fear and continue to this day, wondering if this is the day he actually succeeds.

Seeing firsthand how mental illnesses affect each other, breaks my heart. Thankfully, a lot of these conditions are treated with the appropriate medicine, therapies, and regimes. I am extremely interested in learning more about the effects of all of the different diseases from a clinical aspect and hopefully will be able to apply a few of the concepts in my life personally.

My Concerns and Goals.

I have a few concerns with what I may or may not experience during this module. I have had several traumatic experiences that have occurred throughout my life, and I am in counseling to deal with these experiences appropriately, but I am also a little afraid. I am not scared to help those who need my help. I am also not afraid to increase my knowledge on this topic, but I am afraid of the unknown. Mental health issues are so complex, and it is so vast, so not knowing what to expect makes me a nervous. I have three questions that I hopefully will be able to answer during this module. If not this module, then at least at some point in my nursing career. 1. Why

are mental health issues increasing more so now, then ever? 2. Why do we not have better systems and treatment options in place for those who cannot afford it (homeless, poverty)? 3. How can I be an advocate for those who have mental health issues, not only as a student, but throughout my nursing career? I want to be able to learn more about mental health issues and I am excited to see where this will lead me to in the future.

References

Mental Illness. (2021, January). National Institute of Mental Health. Retrieved February 13, 2021, from <https://www.nimh.nih.gov/health/statistics/mental-illness.shtml>