Introspective Journal Entry

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I do not have any history or experience in the psychiatric/mental health area. To be really honest with you it does scare me quite a bit. All I have to reference are movie and TV show stereotypes that only focus on the bad aspects. I am excited to go see psychiatric nursing and form an opinion for myself. I am glad that we are learning more about these topics while in nursing school because they are becoming more and more prevalent in our daily lives. I personally do not struggle with mental illness, but I do struggle understanding some of them. This course will be good for me to learn more knowledge about mental health so that I can put my biases and opinion on the backburner and not let that influence the type of nurse I will be someday to these patients.

One of my distant cousins has Downs Syndrome but that is my only family member, that I know of, that has a psychiatric mental health illness. I have never thought much of her having Downs because she has had it her whole life and that is just what makes her unique. Other mental illnesses, like anxiety and depression, became very prevalent once I came to college and it seemed that every person that I met and got to know said they had a diagnosis of one or both of the two I mentioned. I had never been exposed to this and did not know that it really was a medical diagnosis to be completely honest. I was and still am still a little unsure what to do next once I learn this about someone.

My exposure to psychiatric mental health is extremely limited and that is why I am very excited for this module. I want to learn more and understand why some people click the way they do. I am scared that in the clinical setting I will say the wrong thing or react in the wrong way. I do not want to be offensive or hurt anyone's feelings when we go to the Plaza. I also do not want to be awkward and make situations unnecessarily uncomfortable for anyone. I am hoping that as we listen to more and more lectures that I will become more comfortable with the material and

the instructors will prepare me for what will come with clinicals. Mental illnesses scare me to be honest because I feel like they are very unpredictable, and I am a very big control freak and planner. These lectures and experiences are really going to push me outside of my comfort zone and I am kind of excited and fearful all in one. I am praying that the actual clinical goes smoother than how I have it planned in my head right now.

I am excited to have more knowledge and education in the psychiatric mental health nursing field because I really want to be a well-rounded nurse and be able to help all people. I would like to find the answer to my question of, "How can I make a hospital experience as pleasant as I can for all people that suffer from a mental illness?". Going to the hospital can be scare for a lot of people and I want to make that transition as easy as possible. Another question I have is, "How can I make sure everyone remains safe during all encounters?". I know safety is a huge aspect of nursing and was even stressed today in our first lecture, so I need to understand my role as a student and as a future nurse. My last question that I hope to have answers to by the end of this module is, "Is there anything I can do to make things better, or do I just need to understand the illness and go from there?". I find myself wanting to fix things for people, and I do not want to be offensive and say that people that suffer from mental illnesses need to be fixed, but if I cannot fix things then I really do not know what to do.

Admittingly, I am pretty nervous for my psychiatric rotation and I am so glad that some of my classmates and friends are going there first and I can ask them what to expect and how to act. I want to be kind, treat these people with respect, not be offensive or judgmental, and do whatever I can to make the day I spend with them easy and fun. Because I have extremely limited exposure to all things psychiatric-mental health, I am excited to see if I fall in love with this aspect of nursing or if it is not for me. I am excited to learn because through knowledge I

will understand my patients more and be a better, well-rounded nurse no matter what field of

nursing I decide to pursue.