Psychiatric Mental Health Journal

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I am more excited than I initially thought that I would be about this module. When I thought about coming to the "psychiatric module" before, I had feelings of fear and uncertainty. It can be kind of scary when you think about the stigmas that come along with psychiatric patients. These are ideas that all psychiatric patients are not within their right mind, they are irrational, and almost always are going to put you in harm's way. So, with those ideas in my head, it was easy for fear and uncertainty to implant itself in my mind and make me not excited about this module. However, after having just a little introduction to psychiatric mental health I was more educated on the truth behind the stigmas. I learned many different things that opened my mind to what a big part that nurses could play, especially in being a positive benefit to a patient's mental health.

I've seen other nurse's different experiences with mental illness. Many of them were not positive which further fed my fear about this topic. I have seen patient's throw phones at nurses, or try to choke the nurses with their stethoscopes that were handing around their neck (this was a good lesson on why not to where my stethoscope like that). I have had some personal experiences with mental health. Not all of them were extreme, but there has been a recurrent number of experiences. When I was younger, I remember my mom trying to kill herself and even being admitted to a psychiatric facility that might have been the plaza. She has dealt with depression ever since, especially due life situations that have happened. I have had to "talk her down off the ledge" on some occasions, or even have had to care for her when she has used alcohol to "self-medicate". I suppose these situations also contributed to my negative thoughts/feelings of psychiatric mental health. Aside from it being scary, it can also be extremely sad and painful to have to be a part of or witness.

My only fear or concern is being caused harm by a mental health patient. When I think about this after learning some truth behind mental health, I actually feel that this is a selfish thought. As a nurse caring for the patients is my priority. If my job is clouded by my own judgements or fears about mental health, then that creates a barrier restricting me from delivering the best patient centered care possible. I think of the fact that patients who are in an extremely poor state of mental health are the actual ones who are at great risk for harm. It is part of my duties that these patients be kept from harm and be brought to a stable state to be able to go back out into the community and function in their daily lives.

I have expectations to learn more about mental health this module. I plan to keep an open mind to everything that I encounter and learn. This could be a specialty that I come to realize that my skills might actually be most useful for. I wish to learn the complete truth behind mental illnesses that go beyond the stigmas surrounding them. Along with that, I hope to learn the best possible practices in delivering care to these mental health illnesses. It is my great desire that I have great clinical experiences that show me the range of aspects that come along with delivering care in the psychiatric mental health care setting. When I do go to clinical, I pray that I have teachers who show me beneficial ways of dealing with these patients, not just easy or convenient ways of delivering care to get through the day/shift.

For questions that I have, I suppose I could start by my questions about what risk factors are the greatest contributors for each mental illness, and are there any things that we can do to prevent them? Then I would like to know, what are the differences between levels of care that we give to different levels of psychiatric mental illness? Finally, I would like to know what are the greatest impacts that nurses can have on psychiatric mental health patients and how best can we achieve this? I am also very interested in finding out what things we should look for in those

around us that might signal that someone is in need of help. I can't wait to find out what this

module will teach me and realize what role I can play as a nurse in psychiatric mental health.