

**Psychiatric Mental Health Nursing**

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Health is defined as complete mental, physical, and social well-being. I have experience working with patients to improve their cardiovascular and pulmonary health though mental health was not the priority. Beginning nursing school with the experience I have has been beneficial throughout the program. As far as mental health goes, I have experience through family encounters but am excited to gain more within nursing. I feel confident that my willingness to learn will overcompensate for the unknown of what is to come when it comes to psychiatrics. I tend to be morbid in a sense and this patient population has given me perspective to think that I may encounter some bizarre behaviors. I enjoy the thought of learning and experiencing new things and feel anxious to begin my journey learning more about psychiatric mental health. My concern for this portion of the module would have to be the attitudes of the patients toward me as a student. I feel as I will be an outsider in their mental world, and will I be accepted or will the experience be a difficult one. In my experiences with psychiatric mental health, I was perceived as the enemy and one to stay away from. The feeling of being the outsider left me to think that not everyone is as accepting of me as I perceived myself to be.

My personal experiences with psychiatric mental health mostly pertain to my wife's aunt who is a diagnosed schizophrenic. The very first time I had to deal with my own insecurities around her was during our introduction. I was warned of her condition and the history of how her life had spiraled down to her current state. Years back, this aunt was an immigrant and worked as a housekeeper. She was not married but had one child. The downhill spiral began when she was forced back to Mexico for a report of theft from a homeowner who was an employer. This portion of her life is still unclear for many within the family. When back in Mexico, she was incarcerated for reasons still unjustified as true. The treatment done toward her while in jail

suspects maltreat from males. For when the aunt was released, her attitude toward men was carried with extreme caution and non-trusting. I can only imagine how difficult her situation is with her daughter still in the United States as part of her downhill spiral, as I have a daughter of my own. Now that I have disclosed the history, my experience when meeting her is self-explanatory. I could see her cautiousness and felt I was intruding when I overheard her whispers to her mother as I was being talked about. The damage to her was so detrimental that she avoided me throughout our stay. At this time, the aunt's condition was being treated by medication and she was tolerating it well. Recently, her attitude and behavior have taken a turn for the worst. At one period, she had stopped her medication regimen and had a serious episode. While visiting the family, she had become aggressive and begin assaulting my mother-in-law and her own mother. Throwing objects and nearly hitting others. As the chaos subdued, she began running away into the family's ranch which consist of over 20,000 acres. Once she was retrieved and the episode had passed, the family discovered that she had not been taking her meds and was sent to a hospital for a short duration of time. She is now back at home with the new regimen but continues to have her outburst which have not been as violent and remains cautious toward males.

As for my fears and concerns, I would have to say that I am always willing to lend a helping hand. Though, I would hate to put myself in a situation which could put me in an unpleasant position when it came to psychiatric patients. I can contain my composition and steer conversations in other paths, but physical interactions make me uneasy. I expect to be as engaged as other modules and continue to be open minded about this new population I will be working with. I am interested in learning how I will react and adjust to the new experiences which I believe should be positive. I am also interested in seeing the behaviors of this population with

multiple patients. I have experienced seeing multiple patients with mental illnesses other than television and movie scenes. The curiosity of what happens in real life has sparked my attention for this module. My questions I would like answered during this course would be: How does a psychiatric mental health population handle themselves in a group setting? Will the patients accept me as a nurse or an outsider within their own mental world? Will my calling to nursing be to help with psychiatric population? There are many opportunities out there for future nurses and gaining the experience to work with multiple populations own increases my interests to continue learning and utilize my time in the most productive way.