

My Questions for Psychiatric Mental Health Nursing

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The public has many opinions about the people who suffer from mental illnesses. Having struggled with mental illnesses and witnessing the struggles of many of my family member I have also been able to develop my own opinion. My hope is that at the end of this course I will be better equipped to combat the stigma that has been built about mental illnesses and be able to effectively communicate with my loved ones.

A common misconception that is attributed to psychiatric patients is that they are always hostile and or obnoxious. However, in my experiences with three family members, I have been able to view these patients very differently. I have three very close family members that currently struggle with various types of mental illnesses.

Family member one struggles with depression. Although a common understanding of depression would be that the person is in a constant state of despair and can be a drag, this family member will still try her hardest to make you laugh. She is probably the funniest person I know

Family member number two struggles with severe anxiety. To further explain, this family member could not bring herself to come out of her house to visit or say goodbye to her mother, who was dying of cancer. Moreover, if you happen to visit this family member at home, she is very hospitable. She will try and accommodate your every need you have while you are visiting.

Family member three, in response to years of using hard drugs, has been diagnosed with schizophrenia. Although the common knowledge of people with this diagnosis is not good, he is the friendliest and most protective person you will meet. He will give you almost anything you ask for if he has it. Family member number three is constantly concerned with the well being of other around him.

Furthermore, I too have dealt with my fair share of anxiety and depression. I can remember feeling as if nobody in the world knew exactly how to talk to me. Having dealt with these things myself I have developed a precaution of talking to people who are coping with these illnesses. With this in mind, I am concerned about effectively communicating during the hands-on clinicals we will be engaging in during this module.

I am concerned that due to my own experiences and family relationships, it will be hard for me to communicate to patients in the way that is recommended. I simply fear that I will not always say the right thing, and I, on a personal note, know exactly how that can affect someone who has a mental illness.

Moreover, I am working to mold my own experiences with what I have learned about nurse-patient communication to effectively respond to patients properly. I am aware that I will not always be prepared for the unexpected, however I would like to be as equipped as possible to handle an unexpected situation.

My expectation for this class is to sharpen my communication skills with psychiatric patients in a nursing environment. I want to be able to understand what happens in the brain that makes one behave in a depressed, anxious, or schizophrenic way. Is there something physiologically different in the brain of a schizophrenic, depressed, or anxiety filled person? In what ways does medication help a person to act or feel normal. Does it only suppress what they feel? Has anyone ever been cured from a mental illness?

In conclusion, my hope for this class is to better understand exactly what psychiatric illnesses are not only to help better care for patients, but also to help myself and possibly others who could be struggling with a mental illness around me.