

Psychiatric Mental Health Nursing: Journal Entry

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Psychiatric mental health is something that has always been interesting to me. The opportunity to better understand why people make the choices that they do and feel the way they do is exciting when I consider how I can apply my experiences in ways that are beneficial to others. I can not help but be excited for what this module will have to offer for my personal repertoire in dealing with mental health circumstances not only for myself but also anyone I might encounter, whether that be in a professional or everyday encounter.

Mental illness is a tricky subject. That is what makes it so interesting to me. Not only is it more common than anyone would like to admit, there seems to be an unrealistic expectation to keep quiet about it. I know many individuals that grapple with addiction. I know many people with mood and anxiety disorders. I even know people that have attempted and or succeeded in suicide. I find myself often reflecting on past conversations and experiences and coming to the realization that my thoughts are not always so different from my friends or family who have been clinically diagnosed. With similar problems and experiences, I find that different outcomes is a result of different coping strategies and mechanisms. Unfortunately, individuals that feel like they have no one to turn to and no one to care ultimately end up in darker places. That seems simple but yet, there are still so many people that fall through the cracks. Understanding this and considering the benefits of potentially being a positive outlet greatly impacts my interests in having a better understanding of mental health moving forward.

Fears and concerns... I can not say that I have any. I find that I am only excited to learn new ways of helping people. By nature, I would consider myself a deeply empathetic person. I have a tendency to be emotionally driven and easily connected to just about anyone and

everyone I come into contact with. I find that to be one of my greatest strengths and potentially one of my greatest weaknesses. I am often told that I am too trusting. However, I think that it is more detrimental to be pessimistic by nature than to be occasionally burned by optimism. I know that happiness and positivity are more of a choice than an experience in most cases. I think that is a hard concept for individuals to understand. I also feel a lot of people find it difficult to understand that we can not just talk ideas into existence for ones that are experiencing bouts with mental illness. I think the ability to listen is grossly neglected, especially by positions authority. Nursing falls under that category and I look forward to being part of this relatively newer movement that is bringing mental health to the forefront of patient care.

I expect to maybe gain a better understanding of mental health and its components considering they are intertwined with so many day to day experiences. How might I identify when someone is truly struggling with something despite them trying to be secretive about it? How can I become an even better listener? How will my experiences help me to become a better person, not to mention a better nurse? These are the first thoughts that come to my head when I think of what I might take away from this course and clinical experiences. I find it encouraging that I believe I can only benefit from this opportunity. Also, I look forward to being able to look back at this to see if I was able to answer my questions and what else I might have add that I was not expecting to have learned.