

Psychiatric Mental Health Nursing: A Student's Point of View

Thoughts, Feelings, and Expectations about Psychiatric Mental Health Nursing: A Student's

Point of View

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### Abstract

Psychiatric mental health nursing is one of the many nursing fields student nurses learn about. As a student nurse, I have different feelings, beliefs, concerns, and expectations about this field of nursing. My feelings about the course and clinical experience differ from excitement to fear. My overall belief of mental illnesses I feel makes patients' lives difficult. My feelings of fear come from not knowing how to care for psychiatric patients due to inexperience. Finally, my expectations are to truly understand the world of psychiatric health.

## Thoughts, Feelings, and Expectations about Psychiatric Mental Health Nursing: A Student's Point of View

Student nurses are constantly experiencing new situations and gaining new knowledge. We are exposed to numerous kinds of nursing fields including psychiatric mental health nursing. With new experiences, comes new feelings, concerns, and expectations. As a student nurse, I have many feelings, beliefs, fears and concerns, and expectations regarding psychiatric mental health nursing.

### Feelings About the Course and Clinical Experience

With all new things, I always experience different feelings. I am always excited to learn new things. For the course of psychiatric mental health, I am very excited to learn about the different kinds of mental illnesses as I have always been curious and fascinated by them. I am most excited to learn about schizophrenia because I do not understand it well and I would like to know more about the voices people hear. Although I am excited to learn the course content, I am more nervous, anxious, and scared about the clinical experience. I feel that way because I do not have any experience with psychiatric patients, so I do not know what to expect in clinicals. I find it difficult to experience new things when I do not know what to expect, so that makes me more nervous for clinical.

### My Beliefs and Perceptions of Psychiatric Illness

Today, psychiatric illnesses are all around us and make up a portion of the nursing practice. However, as a student nurse, I do not have experience with psychiatric patients. I am also not very familiar with the different types of illnesses. From the little knowledge I have, I do believe psychiatric illnesses make life difficult for the patients because they do not have control over it. Sometimes, it even takes over their life enough to where they are hospitalized. It makes

me look at life from a different angle. It makes me grateful for the lives my loved ones and I have because I would not want to see them go through what I think the psychiatric patients go through.

#### Fears and Concerns

As a student nurse, there are some fears and concerns I have about psychiatric nursing. One thing I have a concern about is not having the experience of how to care for a psychiatric patient. In clinical, I do not want to do or say anything that will upset a patient because I do not want to provide bad patient care. I also fear not knowing what to do if a patient is being hostile or having an episode of their mental illness. Like with all new clinical settings, I am also concerned about what the nursing staff will be like. I always get worried that I will have a bad experience with a nurse or that they may not want to teach students.

#### Expectations

Overall, at the end of the module, I expect to overcome my fears and truly be able to understand psychiatric health. I want to like psychiatric health nursing enough for it to be an option for me to work there in the future. I also expect and hope to learn how to care for the patients and learn how to help them manage their illness. I would like to find the answers to these questions; what are the different types of psychiatric illnesses and how do they affect patients' lives? How do psychiatric patients perceive their illness? What kind of character and skill does it take to care for psychiatric patients?