

Current Theories and Practice Journaling Assignment

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As I enter instructional module 6, I feel eager, excited, and ready to dive into the world of psychiatric nursing. I have enjoyed all of nursing school, some parts less than others, but nonetheless the entire journey thus far. I thoroughly enjoy learning all of the concepts of nursing as well as applying them in clinical, my work or even daily life. I have always had a passion for helping people, in anyway possible, but I found my home in healthcare and that passion burns just as hot, if not hotter, for the psychiatric nursing world. I have quite a bit of personal experience with psychiatry and mental health. In every day life I try to use what I have been through to help others. That is kind of my silver lining. I realized years ago I could either be upset about what has happened to me or I could use those experiences to better myself and help others and it turns out I can apply that to just about every patient situation I am in.

To start things off my parents had me young, I had a half sister who did not live with us full time, my family struggled financially and my father was an alcoholic/addict, which also runs in both sides of my family along with all sorts of other mental and psychiatric disorders. I believe I developed anxiety in grade school but was not diagnosed until I was sixteen years old. I started having problems with my health in middle school, which I think was partly due to my anxiety. Later in life I would find the majority of my health problems would all link back to my mental health. I was sexually assaulted by someone in my family when I was fifteen years old and a freshman in high school. I made a cry out for help not long after and my life was immediately turned completely upside down. I had to go through the legal process of it all from having my first ever gynecological exam and tell my story on camera in a room alone to a complete stranger to actually having to go to court and face my abuser. I was later diagnosed with PTSD, anxiety, depression and fibromyalgia triggered by trauma. I was forced to see a child psychiatrist and counselor which I did not handle well at first and soon started heading down a self destructive path. I quickly realized that I had the power to decide how these events and circumstances affected my life and that it was my responsibility to take control of my mental health with the help of psychiatric and counseling therapy. A few years later I gave birth to my son at nineteen years old and became a single mother. My birth experience was traumatic as well as trying to navigate early adulthood

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and motherhood at the same time. Not long after that I was also diagnosed with ADHD. A few years later I got accepted into nursing school and began my nursing school career right in the middle of lockdown due to the pandemic. Luckily my entire first module was online because I developed excruciating abdominal pain a few weeks after starting and later found out I had a large tumor that had been slowly growing over 10-15 years. Over the course of the next year and a half I had to take multiple medical leaves of absence from school to have major abdominal surgery followed by hernia repair surgery, all while also trying to stay on top of my mental health, which was no walk in the park. I believe everyone has a story. Everyone has circumstances they shouldn't have had to endure but instead of feeling sorry or angry about all that I had been through I decided to harness that emotion and pain and use it to help others. I believe taking care of your psyche is extremely important no matter what you have been through or what disease or illness you have, because if your mind isn't healthy it can negatively affect the rest of your health, body, well being and even hinder healing from non psychiatric illnesses.

I honestly don't think I have any fears or concerns about the psychiatric portion of this module, well maybe learning and remembering all the medications. With all that I have been through, my experiences with psychiatric health is just the tip of the iceberg. There is so much more for me to learn about psychiatric illnesses and how I can help the patients suffering from those illnesses. I definitely think I will find myself in situations that may trigger certain emotions and bring up not so fond memories of what I have been through but I have found even in those moments when I feel triggered or emotional I can use that to teach, comfort, and better care for my patients. I am an empath so I feel what anyone near me is feeling and I believe I can also use that to help care for my patients. I may even learn more about the illnesses I have, which intrigues me, as I am constantly trying to understand why I am the way I am and why people are the way they are. My only expectation of this portion of the module is to grow my knowledge on psychiatric illness and I am completely open to whatever that entails. I hope to better learn how to care for patients equally without judging their situation or illness. Working with mentally ill patients can mean that some of those patients haven't made the greatest decisions in life and I hope to learn how to be better at giving nonjudgmental and equal care to all patients no matter their circumstance.

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Questions I have for this module are as follows: How does any specific mental illness affect the other systems in the body? How does trauma affect the brain and psyche? What do psychiatric nurses do to help keep themselves mentally healthy while working with mentally ill patients? I would also like to know how having ADHD and being late diagnosed affects ones mental health.