Journaling Assignment:

Current Theories and Practice

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Module Six

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April 26, 2022

In the clinical setting of Psychiatric Mental Health Nursing there is a variety of different types of care just like many other specialties but in particular, Psychiatric Mental Health makes me the most nervous. I am excited to break my own negative stigma of caring for patients in such a vulnerable population and opened up opportunities to learn new skills. I have always carried a negative outlook for Psychiatric Mental Health and completely scratched it off my list of units I would apply for just due to fear of the unknown. I have heard others personal stories of patients causing harm to nurses after becoming overly aggressive or the nurse walking into a room after a patient attempting suicide. These stories automatically created this negative stigma but I know its mainly due to myself being uneducated in how to treat this population of individuals. Aside from my personal perspective, I'm excited to create a new perspective and to place P.M.H.N back on my list of possibilities to work.

My experience with mental illnesses involves several family members but mainly my mother. My mom was diagnosed with major depression disorder which was difficult to understand as a child. Her depression was linked to childhood trauma including sexual/ verbal/ physical abuse. As the oldest child I found myself hiding my siblings many times when my mother was verbally expressing suicide and disowning her own religious beliefs. Each episode would last for a little over a week and once she would begin to feel better again things would shift back to normal. As an adult, my concern with mental illnesses is not handling a situation in a way that helps an individual feel better and the situation begins to de-escalate. I believe this concern is due to not being able to help my mother feel better especially when she was contemplating suicide. When I was a teenager, my worst experience with my mom occurred and my main priority was to remove all of my siblings from the environment. I asked my siblings to go with their closest friends and I contacted a family member to come to our home to be with my

mom. I decided to leave the home and left my mother alone which I do not thing was the most helpful thing to do. After reflecting, my emotions have created a mental block on how to respond to unexpected circumstances and has also created anxiety that I will always have a flight response. As a nurse, if this was to occur in a clinical setting I want to be ready to help the patient in a positive manner and I want them to feel confident that I am there to help. Apart from what are my concerns, my experiences have also taught me how to speak to an individual facing a crisis such as suicide. I am able to speak to my mother with words of affirmation when she is experiencing an episode of depression. I have also learned to stop and listen out for what is needed and what triggers should be avoided.

My expectations heading into Psychiatric Mental Health Nursing is to remove my personal stigma around mental illnesses and to build a platform of knowledge around techniques of care for all types of mental health. I want to be able to educate others in society when needed since the stigma of mental illnesses is at an all time high and many individuals needs to have proper education especially those who work with a large population of people. It seems like many individuals with mental illnesses are not understood and in stressful situations their actions are automatically identified as non complaint or violent. If others were more educated they would realize the individual is over stimulated and needs to be placed a less stressful environment to calm down. As mentioned before, I want to graduate the module with more knowledge in how to care for individuals with mental illnesses and I want to become educated in all skills needed to take care of the population in a clinical setting. After learning everything needed to learn for P.M.H.N, my concerns and anxiety will decrease tremendously. Question: What are the major links to developing mental illnesses?

Question: Is a person able to live many years without realizing they are dealing with a non-diagnosed mental illness?

Question: What are the most common mental illness in the United States?