

**Journaling Assignment: Current Theories and Practice**

Meagan Britt

Covenant School of Nursing

Instructional Module Six

Instructor Jeremy Ellis

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Mental health has always been inconsistent in my life, sadly. In module one when we got the layout of what was going to be taught in each module throughout nursing school, I was immediately interested when I saw the subjects for six. While I'm interested in mom and baby, I can't help but feel drawn to the psychiatric side. I've looked forward to diving in deeper into the mental health side of healthcare, and really understanding the different disorders involved. Although excited, I remain guarded in anticipation of learning about some disorders that I've struggled with in my life.

Growing up labeled as the “scape goat” of my family... Any anger, sadness, frustration, or disappointment was thrown my way, which was shocking to me, considering I was the baby of the family. I was constantly reminded through jokes and actions that I was an “accident, mistake, or disappointment” to my family. As the loneliness built up, I would eventually act out through temper tantrum or screaming, until I was eight or nine. Getting into adolescence I really started taking in my surroundings more and came to realize that I wasn't the only one in the family that seemed to be struggling with something. My dad was an alcoholic from my birth until I was 22 and has since been sober. Obviously when I was younger, I couldn't comprehend the extent of his drinking, but when I did... Screaming so loud that he would set the alarm off, hearing him down the hall yelling at my mom and praying that he wouldn't be coming to my room next, I grew up in fear. My sister and I started to have sleepovers every weekend, because that was when the drinking was the worst so we would try to avoid it, but when the sleepovers ended up at our house, we always ended up embarrassed and even had some friends that would ask to leave. The fear I had towards my dad got to a point where once I was a teenager, I started to long for any kind of relationship that I didn't have with my father, and tried to find it through dating. I started dating when I was in sixth grade and would often have a “flavor of the week” according

to my family as terrible as that sounds, but they never saw my “why” for dating until I started to speak out. Going into the summer of my freshman year in high school I was returning from a family trip and got invited over to one of my best friend’s house. When he texted me, it wasn’t normal, he was wanting me to wait until no one was at his house, and me being naïve did exactly that and waited. Arriving to his house everything seemed okay, until it wasn’t. I was raped by my best friend that day and still remember every detail of it till this day. I kept it to myself until it came out my junior year of high school when a rumor was started about me, which eventually lead to me transferring out of school and graduating early through an alternative program. My habits continued through college until I inevitable hit rock bottom July 15, 2018. I had finalized my divorce with my ex-husband June 8 and going through turmoil with my family. When I graduated with my cosmetology license I worked many places, but one included the same workplace as one of my brother’s ex’s. After a few weeks of working there she pulled me aside and told me that my brother was cheating with her on his current fiancé, I didn’t say a word to anyone, but apparently for my brother it was easier to blame me for it coming out to his fiancé than to blame his ex for telling her. My brother had convinced my entire family that it was my fault that his fiancé was now wanting to kick him out of the house along with his two kids, and that I was essentially the scum of the earth. So, after being told by my mom to get out of her house for siding with my brother’s fiancé, I did what thought would be a solution for my family. I drove back to my apartment in tears, blocked the front door with my couch, made sure my dog had plenty of food and water, locked all my doors, and proceeded to take a mixture of about 500 pills. I couldn’t remember anything except for a voice in my head saying, “this isn’t how you go; I’m going to make you fight!”, then woke up in the emergency room projectile vomiting charcoal (I have never seen a nurse pull an NG tube out faster than I did in that moment). My mom told

me when they got to me, I felt like ice and had a faint pulse, but that she saw all the pill bottles and started doing sternum rubs. The Dr. told my patient that they were surprised I didn't have extensive brain damage with the amount of time I wasn't getting oxygen to my brain. I recovered through therapy and moving back home (maybe not the best place). In January 2019, I had the opportunity to be hospice care for my grandad and promised him I would finish what I started in healthcare and go back to school for nursing, leading us to the present.

I combined a few of my questions together in the paragraph above, but as far as triggers go, for me its stress and uncontrollable situations. After multiple doctor visits through the years, I have been diagnosed with anxiety, depression, OCD, and ADD (also hypothyroidism which is just icing on the cake for hormone involvement). From my experiences in life with mental health I've developed a goal for myself... "Meagan if you can make even one person feel comfortable in a situation where they're feeling uncomfortable, then you've made a positive impact on that person's life." I can only hope that I make the same impact in my patients lives, that the medical staff that saved my life had on me.

### **Questions for the module:**

1. What are some of the best approaches when caring for psychiatric patients?
2. What areas in the hospital or in the community offer psych-based nursing jobs?
3. How can I help others with similar diagnoses as me?