Current Theories and Practice: Journaling Assignment

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IM6

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I have been anticipating learning about and gaining clinical experience in Psychiatric Mental Health Nursing, because it is an area of nursing that is interesting to me. I do not know of everything that it entails, which is why I am excited for the opportunity to broaden my perspective on nursing and to be able to learn the specifics of what psychiatric nursing is. I have had some experiences with psychiatric patients while working as a nurse aide, which I feel will help me feel more comfortable in the clinical setting. The only concern I would have about this course is I do not know what to expect, but at the same time I think that is why I am most excited about it. I think this course will be a great opportunity to focus on patient interaction, because everyone is different, and I would think that you must be more self-aware with this type of nursing.

I would like to think I have quite a bit of experience with psychiatric illnesses, not just in my own life, but with those around me. I was diagnosed with ADHD in third grade and started taking medications for it at 8 years old. I think that sometimes people can compare the different types of illnesses to each other. ADHD is not seen as one of the most severe mental illnesses of course, but it is something that affects me every day and has made an impact on my life. Especially, since I have been taking medications for so long, it is as if I have developed two different personalities and I am torn between the two constantly: ADHD Katie and medicated Katie. I could talk about my own experiences and struggles with my ADHD for hours, because it really does impact a lot in my life. Besides my own experiences with ADHD, I have witnessed psychiatric illnesses at work and through mission work. One of the most impactful experiences in my life was in Los Angeles working with the homeless. I realized just how much mental illness can affect one's life and their families. I am not saying that mental illness leads to

homelessness by any means, this is just a specific example in my life where I have observed how mental illness can make the difficulties of life even more difficult. I think there are so many misunderstandings as far as mental health is concerned, because there needs to be more education about it. Most people lack knowledge concerning mental illness because it does not directly concern them, and I think it deprives them the ability of empathy.

I have not put much thought into my fears and concerns for this module. However, I would say that my main concern would be the unpredictability of it all. I feel like there is a stereotype for psychiatrics that things get out of control and that it is just a bunch of "crazy" people. I have had a few experiences at work with psychiatric patients that have caused me some anxiety, which would also be a reason for my concern. I think there might be some truth in some of the stereotypes, but I think that I might be surprised when we go to clinicals. I will just have to figure out my own opinion when we actually go to clinicals. I do not want to go into this module with fear, because I think that would affect what I get out of it. I am a firm believer of you get what you put in, so I am trying to keep an open mind even if I do have a little bit of anxiety.

My expectations for this module are that I learn more about psychiatric and mental health nursing as a whole and the fine details. I want to know if this is an area of nursing that I could see myself working in specifically, or if it is not really where I would like to be. Overall, I expect to learn more about mental health, which will help me in all different types of nursing. I think by being more educated about the content we are learning, will allow me to have more empathy towards psychiatric patients because I might be able to understand them more. By the end of this module, I would like to find out what makes an individual more prone to mental illness and what can cause different types. I would also like to find out the main differences between them all.

Also, I want to learn different nursing techniques to use when caring for psychiatric patients that
I can use when I am a nurse.