

Journaling Assignment

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Instructional Module 6: Psych Mental Health

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Before beginning Instructional Module Six, I've always had a sense of anxiety and an unnerving feeling when dealing with people who have mental illnesses. I have many family members that have mental illnesses such as bipolar disorder and narcissistic personality disorder. However, the most impactful illness that has perplexed me, is paranoid schizophrenia. Many of my concerns with psych-mental health are rooted in my personal experience with my significant other's older sibling, whom he cares for. I believe that most of my knowledge in dealing with manic and aggressive behaviors stems from the employees that work for Star Care Speciality Health. My main concern going into the clinical setting is not knowing what could occur at any moment and unknowingly upsetting the patient to the point where they become aggressive or violent.

As previously stated, a majority of my experience with psychiatric illnesses comes from my significant other's sibling who has been diagnosed with bipolar disorder, paranoid schizophrenia, and borderline personality disorder. Having lived through and seen firsthand what it's like to see someone become imprisoned by their brain chemistry is not only depressing but also heart-wrenching. During my experience with my significant other's sibling, I have been threatened to be hit over the head with a glass bottle of vodka and have had to barricade myself in a restroom to avoid being stabbed during his manic episodes. Though what I've been through has been somewhat traumatizing to me, what has disappointed me the most is how the government has failed people with mental illnesses over and over again. In my personal opinion, I believe that many people think that the solution for people like my boyfriend's brother is to shove them into the penitentiary system and have them deal with the issue. However, helping people with psychiatric illnesses doesn't just require authority and punishment; it requires a great

amount of patience, vigilance, tenderness, and determination to assure people prosper with their illness.

As I reflect on my past experiences, I've realized that my biggest fear going into this module and specialty is the unknown. After years of dealing with constant highs and lows, it became apparent that one has to plan for the unknown. Though it may sound counterintuitive, it's impossible to know what someone with a psychiatric illness will be capable of saying or doing. One particular trigger that causes me to fear the unknown, is saying something that unknowingly upsets the person. As a result of this fear, I'm more hesitant and self-conscious about the things that I should or shouldn't say when interacting with people. This then causes me to be closed off and secluded. From experience, my sheltered behavior can be perceived as scheming or distrustful for people who have any form of paranoid mental illness. Therefore, I must discover new skills and acquire different strategies to effectively care for and help my future patients to thrive in their conditions.

My expectations for this following module and specialty are low since I have had a handful of stressful situations with psychiatric illnesses. I expect there to be intense circumstances during clinical, but I know that I'll be taught the information needed to approach certain illnesses. Therefore, I hope that I will have a great experience when I go into clinical and that I'll learn everything needed to deal with my significant other's sibling at home. One thing I hope to figure out is how to settle intense situations or calm down others when they're manic. Another thing that I wish to learn is different types of body language and tones that are helpful when speaking to people with psychiatric illnesses. The last and final skill that I hope to learn is how to encourage people to adhere to their medical regimens. I believe that learning the answer

to these three questions will not only help me to become a better nurse in practice, but it will allow me to become a more valuable figure to people in my personal life.