

Mental Health Nursing School

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Instructional Module 6: Nursing 1206

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1. Discuss your feelings, attitudes, experiences, and concerns about taking a course and having clinical experiences in Psychiatric Mental Health Nursing.

I am feeling very excited to be this far into nursing school. I am eager and hopeful to do well during clinical and practicing as a mental health nursing student. I have no previous experience in the mental health setting but, will strive to do my best. My concerns are how my reactions and feelings will be during stressful and chaotic situations. I want to be the best student in this environment by acting quickly but, I also understand acting appropriately to each varying situation is just as important. I will develop these skills by being a sponge and observing interactions initially, taking mental notes, and asking question when I am unsure. I do realize that certain stigmas and hearing stories about mental health patients will place me in new experiences that I may not be used to. Again, my plan is to do my best and learn as much as possible. It is then that I will utilize the nurse, ask questions to the instructors, and apply my theory and lessons into practice.

2. What is your experience with psychiatric illnesses? If you don't have any experience with psychiatric illness, then discuss your beliefs or your perceptions about mental illnesses.

I have no previous experience with psychiatric illnesses. I have worked the neurology unit for six years and have experienced diagnosis such as altered mental status, depression, anxiety, and some suicidal ideation patients. However, I have no experience where the hospital or institution is focused solely on the patient's mental health, practicing therapies and

interventions to assist the patient with their mental capacities. Diagnosis such as bipolar disorder, schizophrenia, and other mental health diagnosis will be new for me to witness and take care of. My belief is that mental illness is something that is very psychological and unlike other illnesses. Illnesses usually have physical characteristics where one can recognize and identify them through visualization and the illness presentation is very apparent. Mental illness has the possibility to be very subtle and if wanted can be hidden by the individual until hospitalization is required or more serious actions need to occur. The idea of mental health varies from person to person it is either easily accepted and discussed or it is something taboo that you do not accept and do not discuss. Mental health is very important as it plays an intricate role in the development and effects many aspects of the body. Neurologically it effects mood and expressive thoughts in addition to physical aspects effecting body systems such as kidney function and gastrointestinal diseases with signs and symptoms like constipation and nausea. Perception of mental health between sexes is different as well. Males often times have grown up to the idea that expressing one's thoughts or situation is a form of weakness where as in females it is seen as accepting and something you socially discuss. Hormonal imbalances occur more frequently in women than men so the understandings and parallels can also present misunderstandings. In addition to sexes, cultural perceptions are different too. In my experiences Hispanic culture tends to keep personal matters to themselves, and they usually don't like to admit or discuss mental conditions that they may be going through. All of these factors play a role in the development of one's mental health and how well they can express and deal with life's obstacles.

3. What are your fears and concerns? Can you identify anything that might have triggered or initiated those fears or concerns? (Explore the possibility of past experiences that may elicit an emotion). How do these thoughts and emotions affect how you behave or respond?

I have fears and concerns of failure. These fears and concerns of failure come from wanting to make my mom, dad, and family very proud of me. Since grade school I feel as though I have been trying and wanting to make my parents proud. My first failure in my eyes for my parents was when I came out that I liked men. Considering I grew up in a very small town where status and image were very important, I feel as though I was an embarrassment by not living a “normal” life. It was in that moment that I believed I may have failed them due to my sexual orientation choice but wanted to make them proud by doing my ultimate best in my educational journey. I then attended Texas Tech University as a first-generation college student and graduated in 2016 with Bachelor of Science in Kinesiology and B.A. in Business with a minor in Spanish. I still felt this void despite graduating. After discussing this void to my parents, they expressed how proud I make them and wanted to me realize that I have always been enough. Fast forward to nursing school and my journey being anything but easy I strived and worked hard to get to this point. Many sleepless nights discussing with my mom if I was made for this profession. These thoughts circled my mind daily. Many sacrifices financially and emotionally were made from my mom and family. I finally I had my chance and got into nursing school. I did it and was going to show my mom that she was right about me being a nurse at heart. My life was finally falling into place, everything was making sense and with hard work I was starting to get the hang of nursing school. Until February 1st the last day of module

four. I lost one of my biggest supporters the one that was supposed to witness me graduating school and becoming a nurse. She always believed I could and would do it despite my own self doubt. The fear and concern of failure crept back in. Although I have been doing good and getting through these modules there are many times where the loss of a mom is hard. Despite this I refuse to fail. I will make her proud. I will persevere through nursing school despite self doubt and my fear of failure. I will remember and hold in my heart that despite her not physically being here to witness me become a nurse and walk that stage. It is in every patient interaction that I remember just what she has raised me to do and become the nurse deep down she knew her son always was.

4. What are your expectations? What do you hope to learn during this module? Identify at least 3 questions for which you would like to find answers during this course.

My expectations for this module are to gain better insight and understanding of what mental health looks like both physically and psychologically. I hope to learn how to care best for this specialty of patients and to always do what is best patient by patient! Always respecting their own beliefs and practices. I seek to expand my knowledge of nursing and apply these skills not only during this module but, to always carry them with me as I become a practicing registered nurse. The three questions that I would like for you to find answers for is; What steps are needed to guide and counsel children who have or are suffering from depression? What steps and services exist in our community that assist veterans in adapting to civilian life after they leave the service? What is the scope of practice and steps needed to become a SANE nurse?