

## **Psychiatric Journal Entry**

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Personally, my experience with psychiatric mental health is very limited, but it greatly interests me. Through friends, I have seen how mental health can have a real impact on every aspect of their lives. I have talked with friends about their anxiety and depression, and it was interesting to hear how different the brain can work according to the person. One of my friends with test anxiety does not allow herself to drive on test days, she relies on other people to take her to school to avoid any dangers and/or added anxiety that comes with driving. It is clear to see that she does have anxiety. On the other hand, my boyfriend's sister was actually a patient at Sunrise Canyon a few years back for suicidal ideation. I did not know her at the time, but now she seems to be the happiest, calmest and most content person I know. I would have never known that she does suffer from depression. Based on those two different examples, I believe recognizing and treating mental illness will be the most challenging part of caring for these patients. I would like to identify, what truly is the hardest part of psychiatric nursing? I do believe mental health is a real thing that we as nurses need to take into consideration with every patient.

My first interaction with disorders other than depression/anxiety was during module 5 when we discussed eating disorders and child/adolescent disorders. I found myself greatly invested during those lectures and ended up studying the topics longer than all other subjects. After the first lecture, which was over eating disorders, I began looking into psychiatric nursing as a potential area I would like to work in. I am nervous about caring for the patients, but I am so excited to learn more about the brain and how the different mental health disorders portray in a person. Personally, I do believe I am a very mentally tough person and I feel as though I can handle anything that would come in my way. To the extent of my knowledge on mental health (which is very limited), I think being mentally tough is a great quality to have in a psychiatric nurse. Patients will probably not like me (based on the situation), they'll make rude comments and the work can not be easy. Those are some examples that I could handle as nurse, they would not affect me, not cloud my judgement or deteriorate my image of myself. During the

clinical rotations, I would like to see if my theory on what a psych nurses needs to be is correct (2nd question).

In my family, mental health is not a topic we discuss. As far as my family is concerned, depression and anxiety is not real. We believe that mental health can be real, but only in other families outside from our own. And because of that, I have always felt the need to be mentally tough and never show weakness. That was the way I was raised and my way of thinking until my older teen years. When my friends starting openly talking about their depression and anxiety it would make me so uncomfortable to hear. Truthfully, I did not become comfortable with openly talking/hearing about it until a few months ago, after being in nursing school for some time. It is still tough for me to admit to myself that I do have anxiety in some situations, I feel a sense of weakness and “pity me” during the infrequent times of experiencing it. It comes on at random times, some examples are when I leave my house for too long, having new experiences, or sometimes I am not able to identify the source I just feel a pit in my stomach. Throughout this module, I would like to become more comfortable with anxiety specifically and understand that it is a normal and socially accepted feeling to have. My final question would be, can anxiety be an infrequent thing or is it something else that I have experienced?

Overall,I am looking forward to this module and gaining knowledge on mental health. I would like to answer: What is the hardest part of psychiatric nursing, Is being mentally tough an essential quality to become a psychiatric nurse (if not, then what would be), and Can anxiety be a situational feeling or would it just be considered worrying? This paper was beneficial to me by allowing me to dig deeper into myself and openly talk about a situation that I normally would not do. I hope to educate my family after this module on mental health and allow them to feel comfortable with it as well.