

Current Theories Journal Assignment

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Psychiatric mental health nursing is so very important. I believe that in every specialty of nursing, mental health nursing is used in some form. Although it can be difficult, I think that it is a part of nursing that everyone should familiarize themselves with. I have always been interested in mental health nursing from a young age and I look forward to learning everything I can about it as well as gaining experience in this field of nursing.

Mental health is very important to me and was brought to my attention at a young age. When I was 11, I had someone I looked up to commit suicide. A couple of years earlier I became very close with a girl I met at a rodeo queen contest. She was older than me and I looked up to her in many ways. She was one of those girls that everyone liked, and you would never know she was upset. I remember she made me feel so important that summer. For the next couple of years, I saw her at rodeos, and we would pick up right where we left off until the summer of 2012. I saw her early in the summer at a rodeo right after she had hip surgery, but at the end of July she committed suicide. At 11 years old I did not know anything of depression, suicide, or mental health. It was after that when I told my mom that I wanted to help people like her. I then began looking into becoming a counselor, studying psychology, or entering mental health nursing.

Another experience I had was a little over a year ago. One of my best friends is on medications for bipolar disorder as well as depression. While I knew she was on some medications I wasn't aware at this time what they were for or her history with depression and bipolar disorder. One night she began telling me how she didn't want to be here anymore, she wasn't happy being alive, she thinks it would be better if she were gone. I immediately left work to go see her. I wasn't sure how to help her, or what I was supposed to do. It turns out, the pharmacy in Texas wouldn't refill her prescription from Arizona, so she had been without her medications for quite a while. This opened my eyes to how hard it is to get these prescriptions

filled and how hard it would be if they did not have the money for the medications, they needed to keep their mental health well. It was so scary and has furthered my want to know how to handle situations and help patient's feeling like this.

I also have a family history of addiction; my maternal grandfather and my paternal great grandmother were both alcoholics and three of my uncles have struggled with drug addiction. While I was too young to see the effects of alcoholism on my grandfather or my great grandmother, I have seen how substance abuse has torn my uncle's family apart. I was very close with my cousins, my uncle's kids, so I have seen how his addiction has affected them for years. I have also seen him steal change from my brothers, siphon gas out of my dad's vehicle, steal my little brothers' go cart to pawn it off. It is truly sad what addiction can do not only to a person, but to a family. So, my experiences have pushed me to learn as much as possible about psychiatric mental health not only for nursing but to understand as a friend and family member.

More than anything I am afraid to see people hurting in a way I cannot imagine. With physical pain it seems to be an easier fix, but with mental pain it is more difficult. It is harder to pinpoint a reason behind psychiatric disorders and the reason people feel the way they do. I think this comes from learning at a young age that you can never assume you know everything someone is going through. However, despite these fears I am looking forward to the experiences!

What would I like to learn? I don't think I can learn enough. I want to learn about substance abuse, alcoholism, bipolar disorder, schizophrenia, anxiety, stress, PTSD and more. However, three questions I would like to see answered are: what are the risk factors for alcoholism/substance abuse? What are the genetic factors in alcoholism and substance abuse? What easily available resources are there for patients with psychiatric illnesses and expenses?