Journal Entry

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Author Note

Module 6 – Psychiatric Nursing

Attitudes and Feelings

I feel great about coming into this module and learning about psychiatric mental health. I think being educated on this topic is so valuable not only to apply in a nursing career, but in life. I have had experiences in work with patients who suffered with mental health disorders, and I have had personal experiences in my own life. I feel happy in a sense that the peers in my class who have not had any experience with this population, will learn and begin to understand. I think the reason why fears and wide misconceptions arise is because people have a lack of knowledge on this subject. I understand why psychiatric patients and individuals with mental health struggles may appear scary - the disease process is going on behind the scenes. It isn't like CHF or a broken bone where you can see the disease manifestations across the room. Mental health is more complex and slower to understand but is still just as serious and just as real.

Personal Experiences

I have a wide range of experiences with psychiatric/ mental illnesses in my life; I even struggle with some illnesses of my own. My family and friends all have a colorful array of illnesses, but that has never stopped us from loving one another through the chaos. My mom has major depressive disorder that gets very bad. My brother just recently got diagnosed with functional anxiety and a paranoia disorder – He got placed on medications and is doing so much better. My uncle has manic bipolar disorder, and that really separated my dad's side of the family for a while. My grandfather and grandmother both suffered from depression and suicidal ideation/ attempts. My half uncle on my mom's side experienced schizophrenia during the short course of his life. He had a violent and unpredictable history and died while incarcerated. My ex-boyfriend suffered with addiction diseases and minor PTSD. My friend, when he got back from

serving 3 tours, suffered extreme PTSD, and actually got admitted for psychiatric help. I have cared for many patients with similar and different mental psychiatric illnesses. Sometimes it is easy and sometimes I find it to be difficult.

Concerns Regarding Psychiatric Care

I don’t have all too many fears when it comes to this upcoming psychiatric module. I know I will be safe, and I have my education and experiences to help keep me out of certain situations. I am concerned about having my repressed memories and emotions coming up during clinicals, but I won’t really know which ones until it happens. I do not do well with yelling mixed with a tight space. I am still recovering from my past relationships where I experienced several different forms of domestic abuse. Fear turns to panic, panic turns to anger, and anger turns to an internal chaos. I have been conditioned in my past to respond to fearful situations with a fight or flight response. This could be in an emotional, mental and/ or physiological way. I realize I need to put my past and coping reactions aside in order to give quality care. I have always wanted to be a calm safe space for people struggling. I know seeing patients struggling with depression, suicidal ideation, and PTSD will personally hurt my heart. I believe I will use this not in fear, but as a way to stir up in me the passion to help.

Expectations and Pressing Questions

My expectations for psychiatric nursing are personally very high. I expect that at the end of this module, I will know if I can handle my dream of becoming a forensic nurse. I am afraid I will not be able to put my past aside and become too emotional. At the same time, I am so excited to find out if I can turn my emotions into a healthy passion for the field. Nothing gets me

more fired up than an injustice happening to those who are with minority ex: women, children, certain races, sexual orientation, the elderly, etc., and those who are with psychiatric/ mental illnesses. I would like to learn more about how to give quality care with dignity to psychiatric patients. I have questions over the legal process in certain psychiatric situations. I would like more answers on how to deescalate situations. I am curious to find out the success rates in mental health treatments, and where this healthcare falls short with psychiatric mental illness care.

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