PMH Reflective Journal Assignment

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Instructional Module 6

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March 20, 2023

Growing up, I was never surrounded by people who struggled with their mental health, so it never occurred to me how serious and important it is for a person to take care not only for their physical health, but for their mental and emotional as well. I grew up in a Hispanic household and my parents were firm believers that because I have a roof over my head, food on the table, and clothes on my back, sadness or depression was not an option. With this mindset, I was always afraid to open up and I always found myself suffering alone. I still find myself struggling with opening up; however, with starting this journey of my nursing career, I have met and become close to such amazing people who I can talk to when I feel like I cannot rely on my family. Unfortunately, many others may not have this type of support and feel like suicide is the only way out. My first question is: What happens in the brain that makes an individual develop a mental illness? My second question is: For people who don't have a support system, how can they get the appropriate help they need and how accessible is it? I have had personal experiences with suicide/suicide ideations and it is a very scary and sensitive topic for me. This topic alone makes me question a lot of things and I hope this course answers them for me so I can take them into account and utilize them in my nursing practice or even in my personal life. Being in the situation when a person is telling you they want to harm themselves is a terrifying experience and, in a way, makes you feel completely helpless. Feeling helpless is a big fear of mine and I hope I learn how to cope when I feel this way. Being in this course and going to clinical to be with patients with mental illness is very intimidating and I'm nervous because I'm not sure what to expect. I think it will open my eyes and give me insight on things that are real and have a lifechanging impact on one's life. My last question is: How prevalent are mental health illnesses and is it common for some of these illnesses to improve rather than progress? To my knowledge, mental illnesses are developing more by the day and I feel like many of these illnesses developed

during the Covid-19 quarantine. Covid has definitely had an impact on all of our lives from being isolated, to people catching the disease and becoming very sick, to people even dying and losing loved ones. Although everyone had a different experience with this disease, we were all impacted and affected greatly. One of the illnesses I'm curious to learn about it is multiple personality disorders. Every time I hear or think of this illness, the movie "Split" always pops into my head. I understand this illness most likely will not occur that dramatically and it may be a very subtle change when a person shifts personalities; however, I'm very curious as to what happens in the brain that allows this to happen to a person. I hope I can see this occur in person to help my perception of this illness. An illness I'm pretty nervous about possibly witnessing is schizophrenia. I'm not too familiar with this illness, however, I do know that the people who suffer from this disorder are not in touch with reality. I say this because these people usually have delusions and hallucinations. I feel like seeing this happening in person would freak me out because these individuals are hearing and seeing things that are not there and they convince themselves that they're real. Again, I know these are not the only things that occur in a person with schizophrenia, but with my knowledge about this disorder, I mostly hear about the delusions and hallucinations this person experiences.

As I said previously, mental health is a huge factor that determines who we are as a person and how we live our lives. Learning about this topic will hopefully answer all of the questions I'm curious about and will help me in giving the best care I can to my patients both in clinical and in my career.