

Current Theories and Practice: Journaling Assignment

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Module 6

March 20, 2023

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

I will admit, I am a bit nervous, but am also very much so looking forward to having the opportunity to experience psychiatric mental health nursing through our clinicals. There is a long history of mental health problems on both sides of my family. Of which includes the loss of loved one's due to suicide on both my mother and fathers' side of the family. My family also has a history of struggles with addiction, substance abuse, depression and anxiety, and narcissistic personalities that have led to physical and mental abuse. Concern wise, I think the only thing I'm a bit worried about is how certain situations may make me feel due to my family's history.

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 grew up in an abusive household where one adult family member would physically, mentally, and verbally abuse myself and the other members of my household and the other adult family member looked away and turned to substance abuse as their coping mechanism. Growing up, it was myself and my brother who has a disability, so we had to learn to protect each other. On top of that, I had to be the adult and the responsible caretaker for my brother on several occasions in order to best protect him. I have since struggled with depression and anxiety as I was growing up and in high school, I had a few failed suicide attempts of my own. Due to my family's history with mental health issues and the history of abuse that myself and other family member endured, I have worked very hard to get to where I am today. I have made use of therapy and mindfulness over the years and am confident in where I am mentally.

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?

As mentioned previously, I have made use of therapy in the past. I am not actively going, but in high school I went to therapy for just under a year, where I gained tools to add to my toolbox in the off chance, I ever found myself in triggering situations. However, working in healthcare since then, I have noticed a few instances where I have found myself effected. I've only experienced moments of feeling triggered when I had a combative patient. I've had patient's try to hit and kick me. I've been spit on, yelled, and cursed at and each time these things happened; it involved a male patient. When moments like this have happened to me, I have found that I respond best when I'm able to first leave the room, but also when I'm able to take a second to myself to breathe and think about what just happened. Having worked in healthcare as a nurse's aide for several years now, I know when things like that happen, I can't take it personally. The patient usually isn't lashing out because of me, I just happen to be the one in the line of fire when it has happened and I know that is not a reflection of me.

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.

Personally, I'm just eager to get to witness psychiatric mental health care in a way that I've never had the opportunity to witness before. I've had loved one's go to rehab facilities and be a part of programs like that, but I've only ever experienced those things second hand through what I was told my them of their experiences. Although I don't know that I'll learn this in this module, I would find it helpful to be able to understand substance abuse a bit better than I do. Growing up

with someone very dear to me abusing substances, it's been hard not knowing how best to help them. So, one question that I would like to find an answer to is how to you go about guiding someone to seek help for substance abuse? How do you safely encourage someone who is struggling with their mental health to lean on those around them? How do you convince someone who is abusing substances that when someone wants to help them, it's not because they're against them?