

Current Theories and Practice Reflection Journal

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August 19th, 2023

I have a sense of excitement and also nervousness when it comes to learning about Psychiatric Mental Health Nursing. I love expanding my knowledge and gaining new perspectives, and I feel that my horizons will be vastly broadened with this specialty. Mental health is something that I feel a lot of people disregard and look over due to the fact that it can be overwhelming at times. I am anxious to take a dive into psychiatric disorders and be able to learn more about the struggles that many people go through. I myself haven't had anyone in my family that has struggled with any psychiatric disorders. My concerns about this course are being able to care for a psychiatric patient, with psychiatric mental illnesses, there is a lot of disorder and are not always black and white. No two people are the same and not everyone's response to treatments are the same. I feel that this can be difficult to be able to distinguish what works well for a patient I may be caring for.

Before I started nursing, I was initially working to be a Veterinarian and when I switched to nursing I got my CNA. My first job was at Apex Secure Care in brownfield. I initially thought that it was just a regular nursing home facility. After I started, I soon realized that it was a nursing home that specialized in Psychiatric disorders, so a lot of my residents that I took care of suffered from many of these disorders. I had one resident in particular that suffered with Bi-polar disorder. She was a very kind and sweet person most of the time but when she would have a flare she would become very agitated and aggressive towards staff members and other residents. One time in particular was when I was doing a round on her and needed to check her vital signs. I had my pen and paper out so that I could write down her vitals. When she saw my pen she immediately wanted it. Being in a secure care facility residents are not allowed to have these things due to a hazard to safety. She then proceeded to become very angry and aggressive towards me, she began to dig her nails into my hands and arms and tried to take the pen. As a

brand new CNA, having no other experience or really ever witnessed anyone experience these emotions, it was very hard to see how emotionally distressed she was. I felt helpless and scared because I didn't know how to deescalate the situation and to protect myself and her from harm's way.

Two weeks before I started back to module two I was in an ATV accident that resulted in me breaking my femur. The ATV rolled over after a sharp turn was taken and we flipped onto my side of the vehicle. There are times when I am in the car with my husband and if he takes a turn too fast I immediately begin to panic. My heart races and I feel like my stomach twists in knots, the sense of fear I felt the night of the accident comes right back. I feel like the trauma I endured that night still has a tight grip on me and at times I feel like I can't escape it. A time that I used to feel safe is no longer there, a lot of the time I don't like letting other people drive due to the fear of losing that sense of control. In those moments of panic I tend to lash out at my husband which is not like me at all. I feel guilty when that happens, because it isn't his fault and it's not like he understands the feeling of having no control.

I am hopeful to help patients who feel a sense of having no control or not being able to feel a sense of security in their own skin. I am also hoping to be able to identify way to helps me cope and manage the trauma I endured.

- What are some ways to deescalate a patient who is trying to harm you? How can you safely ensure their safety while also maintaining yours?
- Learning ways to identify a bi-polar patients outbursts to be able to care for them in a better manner?
- I would like to be able to be more aware of the different types of psychiatric issues and easily identify them and care for them.