

Current Theories and Practice

Daisy Armendariz

Covenant School of Nursing

NURS 1206: Childbearing Family and Acute Psychiatric Nursing Concepts

Mrs. Jaynie Maya

August 21, 2023

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My feelings about taking a Mental Health course aren't as concerning or scary as they were when I first took the course last module. I didn't finish the whole mental block during the module, but received a good part of it, which helped ease my feelings for this go around. I feel like mental health is still new to me and in having my own experiences with it, it benefits me to revisit what mental health is, and what it isn't. I hope that my attitude towards this subject continues to be a positive one with an open mind and learn how to steer away from it affecting my own mental health in a negative way.

My experiences with psychiatric illnesses have been quite the rollercoaster, and I'm sure even more while going through nursing school. Growing up in a strict Mexican culture home, mental health is overlooked. It is a subject that isn't even brought up! If you were struggling mentally, you were seen as a weak person. As a man, if you tried to share how you were feeling mentally, you were seen as "not man enough!" As a woman, you were seen as ungrateful or nagging. Now looking back, it's no wonder we grow up with so many mental issues! I have had to be the person to try and break such barriers or "stereotypes" of what mental health is, what it looks like, how to simply talk about it, and how to seek help. Reassuring people how mental illness is a real thing and that it's okay to ask for help. I'm still learning myself, but as I said, while I'm learning along the way, I try to advocate for it in a positive light and share with my friends and family.

My fear so far is when some of my feelings are triggered, how to pick myself back up and keep going. The experience of losing my sister two years ago, miscarriages, and now this past summer the loss of my niece who was 22 weeks gestation while retaking this course can at times be a bit overwhelming. My emotions are everywhere, and triggers are felt in both areas

covered in this module. But I have gotten better at knowing what those triggers are and working on how to respond better to help me work through those emotions. Everyone is struggling with something or have their own battles to face. I have always been aware of that, and due to how I was raised, it played into reminding me that my battles might not as big or serious as I thought they were. But in doing so, it didn't help me deal with or acknowledge how I was feeling that when you least expect it, those feelings get to be too much. Luckily, I have learned to about giving myself grace and working on how to "be nice to Daisy" as Mrs. Gurley says.

My expectations are to continue to learn more about what mental health is in hopes to one day be able to help others who struggle with any of the mental illnesses. During this course, I would like to learn different ways to deal with the mental exhaustion that comes with being a nurse? How to not let a hard day bog me down for so long or carry it on my shoulders that it affects my own health? I enjoy helping people, its what makes me happy. But I also know I must be better about not taking it all on and how to move forward from that? Continue to learn on how to approach people with mental illnesses and be confident in how to help them? And last what different resources we have now in place to help our youth group as those numbers continue to grow in Lubbock. Mental health is still new to so many people, but I am glad that there seems to be more education on what it is, how to recognize it, and how to seek help.