

Reflective Journal

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Taking a course in Psychiatric Mental Health Nursing intrigues me. I know that this topic includes the body as a whole, but I am very excited to see how the brain correlates with disorders, diseases and moods. Back in Module 4, not only did we learn neurological diseases and disorders, but I also had my clinicals on the neurology floor at Covenant Medical Center. It was a really good experience knowing how the brain functions in certain situations and being able to take that information and use it in real life situations. I'm really hoping with Psychiatric Mental Health, I'll be able to have a similar experience.

When it comes to my experience with psychiatric illnesses, there is one moment in time that I think about frequently. I was a junior at Texas Tech University and I was diagnosed with depression. I feel like a lot of factors played a roll when I look deeper into it. First, I'm originally from Boerne and Lubbock is about six hours away from home, so not being able to see my family as frequently was a really hard adjustment to make when coming up here for college. Second, it was difficult finding relationships and I had been dating and dating not really finding any luck with someone who wanted to create a lasting relationship. Third, I was in a sorority and there were always so many expectations of me being an officer and getting certain things done a certain way or the "right way". It was always really difficult trying to fit in as well in my sorority, I would often feel that I needed a certain body type, I needed to dress a certain way, I needed to act a certain way, I needed to hang out with this particular crowd and it was like playing tug-of-war with myself trying to figure out who I was. Fourth, previous to college, my parents have been divorced since I was eight, and there has always been battles to fight for them and expectations that I would spent time with one family over the other and it was exhausting. There came a time in college where I went into anaphylactic shock to Amoxicillin and had to go to Covenant Medical Center via ambulance. When the whole situation went down, I called my

mom and not my dad. Well, I was on my dad's insurance and he decided that year to take me off his insurance without telling me, so I went a year without being covered. I felt betrayed and it led me fighting and not speaking with him up to a year. With all of that happening, I was prescribed Fluoxetine, but I hated the fact being on a medication "to make me happy", I didn't get out of bed for months and my roommate, trying to be supportive, had an alarm and would give me my medication every morning to make sure I stayed on top of it. That year was exhausting, but I really believe keeping myself busy helped and keeping my efforts focused on school to get to graduation lifted me back up; not to mention my supportive friends throughout the whole process as well.

I don't necessarily have any feelings of concerns going into this material. In past modules when going over information that I felt I related to, I would simply think "yeah that seems about right" or "been there, done that". It will be interesting going over depression to maybe make connections with myself, I'm hoping to feel validated I suppose. With those feelings I had expressed a few years ago, being validated that I didn't just need to workout to release endorphins or that I just need to "feel happy"; those were expressions made by my dad who doesn't really "believe" in depression or medications for it.

Throughout this module, I have expectations to learn differences on psychiatric disorders or moods that correlate with us throughout everyday life. I'd love to make connections with behaviors during certain diagnoses to connect it with my own experience and with my loved one's experiences as well. Choosing three questions for which I would like to find answers during this course would include: what system or tools do psychiatric professionals use to diagnose patients? How do psychiatric professionals determine dose and medications specific to

patients? What are the causes of schizophrenia in a patient and how do we determine the best interventions for those patients to live “normal” lives?

Psychiatric Mental Health Nursing is a career that I feel helps almost to everyone, to aid them in completing their everyday activities and lives. I’m really excited to go into more detail surrounding this topic and gaining more perspective on how nurses can help in certain types of situations. It will also be interesting connecting myself with a few of these topics we go over in this module.