

Psychiatric Mental Health Nursing: Journal Assignment

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I am feeling curious and ready to learning about this course of Psychiatric Mental Health Nursing. I am excited to get an experience in the field with a nursing perspective. My current experiences with mental health includes a semester of Psychology class in highschool. Additionally, I have visited a mental health institution and shadowed a nurse for a project. My concerns however, is the clinical safety for both the patients and I as well as learning how to interact with them appropriately.

Personally, I have observed some of my family members deal with a mental illness. Recently, I had a cousin who was admitted to an institution due to depression and substance abuse. Closer to home, my father, a retired soldier, has mild PTSD that gives him nightmares from time to time and sometimes causes him to kick during sleep, as if defending himself during a dream. I myself, although undiagnosed, have had anxiety attacks. One specific occasion that I remember experiencing such crippling anxiety was during an English class where we discussed about a book we read. I remembered the feeling of wanting to answer but I felt really cold, my heart was beating so fast and I was frozen to my seat while shaking. I did not realize how bad that anxiety attack was until my teacher had talked to me after class and she assured me of how smart I was and that I shouldn't be intimidated or scared. Moreover, growing up in the Philippines, we were not taught about mental illness and the impact it had. The general consensus is that having a mental illness, unfortunately, was seen to be an embarrassing condition, especially if it relates to substance abuse. Many make fun of those who have it, and most deny even experiencing it. For example, depression was just regular sadness or schizophrenia was just plain crazy. The economy or location plays a big role in this as it was not common for people to seek

help or be admitted in an institution due to cost or availability. It seemed as if only the rich could afford to learn and get treatment for such illnesses.

Pertaining to personal conditions, my biggest fear is being alone and interacting with new people. I tend to be shy and quiet and often I fear being put on the spot and facing an audience alone. I don't exactly know what triggers this fear, perhaps the feeling of insecurity and worrying about what others may think of me, especially if their focus is on what I do or say. That said, my biggest concern is insecurities, which causes me to often lose confidence in my abilities and feeling anxious to the point of stuttering and feeling frozen. These thoughts definitely have affected my performances negatively. A possible trigger is family. In my culture, family members tend to make straightforward comments about looks and achievements resulting in most children feeling pressured to look good or do well in order to receive praise instead of offensive comments.

Lastly, I expect this course to be interesting and to change my stigmas about mental health. I hope to learn about the definition, differences, and healthy coping strategies about mental illnesses. The three questions I would like to find answers to during this course includes what are effective coping strategies to deal with anxiety, how can I learn to understand and live with people who may deal with such illness, and how can I use the knowledge of the illness and its triggers to interact with its victims safely and effectively?