

# JOURNALING ASSIGNMENT

Covenant School of Nursing  
Instructional Module 6 Assignment  
Topic: Current Theories and Practice

Journaling Assignment  
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As a student nurse over half-way through nursing school, one of the topics we are required to study is psychiatric nursing. Psychiatric nursing to me is taking care of one's mental and physical health while primarily focusing on how one's well-being is affected by their mind. The brain is one of the most important organs in our body, and I think that psychiatric nursing is just as important as being an ICU, ER, or any other demanding nursing jobs. My feelings toward psychiatric mental health nursing consist of a lot of compassion. Due to previous experiences in mental health nursing which I will discuss later in this journal, any nurse who pursues a job in this field is a hero to me and one that I would trust with my life. I am excited to take a course in psychiatric nursing because I believe that the course will help me better connect with my patients emotionally in my future career and learn more information about mental illnesses.

Initially, when given the task to write this journal, I felt nervous because I truly feel like I have more than enough information to write down from personal experiences that I did not seek out on my own. However, I am utilizing my experiences to the best of my ability because that's what they are there for and I hope I can help encourage somebody else someday with my own story. Anxiety runs in my family as well as obsessive compulsive disorder (OCD); most people in my family on my paternal side have been diagnosed with anxiety, OCD, depression, or a combination of mental disorders. My dad is a scientist who researches radiopharmaceuticals and works with companies abroad making isotopes for medical companies; he also was in a horrific car accident when he was in his early teens which started one of the 13 different surgeries, he has had throughout his life leading to a secret dependency on opioids. My dad brought light to his dependency once when I was sixteen then recently this past summer. Opioids were used as a crutch when he was dealing with anxiety from work or depression and in the process of self-medicating and trying to get off pain pills, he resorted to suboxone which was also hidden from

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our family. My dad went into psychosis this summer from taking too much suboxone and lost his ability to walk, talk, and would have outbursts of crying and sadness, and suicidal thoughts. He was so anxious about a new job he was taking that he lost himself trying to take pain medicine instead of effectively coping. After two months of emergency rooms, therapists, and a two weeklong hospital stay, my mother, myself, his sister, and doctors finally concluded that suboxone was what was keeping him in a psychotic state and causing non epileptic seizures. My dad was sent to Oceans mental health facility for a two-week treatment and rehabilitation/detox. Immediately after cutting out Suboxone, I knew I was going to have my dad back. Now not only was I trying to learn to live with anxiety after starting nursing school, but I was also trying to heal from two months of a living hell thinking that my dad was going to die from mental illness. God showed my family and I the biggest light I have ever seen.

I still struggle to this day worrying that mental illness is what will bring my dad down or someone else in my family, but with all the resources such as therapists, counseling, cognitive behavioral therapy, hippotherapy, support systems, and God, I believe that there is always hope and second chances in life. Not only do I see a therapist occasionally myself via telemedicine (which has been a saving grace in nursing school), but I have experience with working at a horse stable offering hippotherapy and therapeutic riding to adults and adolescents with mental health disorders such as anxiety and PTSD. I responded to my own anxiety after beginning nursing school with low dose anti-anxiety medicine that has allowed me to be my best self as well.

As far as fears go and concerns, I am choosing to let my experiences guide me and benefit me instead of fearing what is yet to come in my psychiatric mental health nursing experience. Every single nurse that cared for my dad at the hospital and at Oceans showed my father comfort, respect, and helped him gain his dignity back. When I first started in nursing

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school, I was worried to learn about mental health because I was scared it might trigger anxiety in my own self, but now I am excited for it because I know how to deal with it and can learn useful information for my patients in all fields of nursing. My family and I could not have gotten through the rough time we went through together without the mental health nurses and staff. My father is who he is today because of them and so am I.

In this module, my expectations are to learn how to adapt to a scenario where I have a patient with varying mental health issues and how I can do my best to help them with non-pharmaceutical interventions. I am also excited to learn more about pharmaceutical interventions because every patient is different. Questions that I have for this module include “how long are patients with mental health issues on medication”, “what are the most common mental health issues in psych patients today versus the most common mental health issues prior to COVID”, and “what type of therapy is seen as most effective for patients with debilitating anxiety”?

In conclusion, I am very excited to learn about this subject in nursing school because of the recent experience I have had with mental health nursing and the questions I have regarding it. As I mentioned earlier, the brain is such an important organ, and our mind is fragile. God sets challenges in our life that are tough to overcome, but with him, support from our friends or family, and the healing hands of psychiatric nursing all patients have the potential to heal to some degree or obtain the ability to live a better quality of life. I believe that we should treat psychiatric patients and nurses with the upmost respect.