

Journaling Assignment: Current Theories and Practices

Katy Needham

Covenant School of Nursing and Allied Health

Psych Mental Health

Ms. Jaynie Maya

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When I learned that module six included psychiatric lecture content and clinical experience, I started dreading the upcoming eight weeks. To be brutally honest, psych intimidates me and somewhat terrifies me. My fear is that I will be attacked by patients not just verbally but physically. I am a small female; I could easily get out powered. I have watched Grey's Anatomy; the psych patient always wins. Besides my concern for safety, I am worried that I will struggle with the psychiatric lectures, especially the medications. Just a gut feeling I have. Despite my "fear" of possibly getting hurt and failing the course, I am choosing to walk into lecture and clinical with an open mind and a positive attitude for the next eight weeks.

A few years ago, I trained as an emergency medical technician. In order to get that certification, you have to work in the emergency room for a certain amount of hours. During my time in the emergency room, I encountered one specific psychiatric patient. This patient was schizophrenic and withdrawing from drugs. They would constantly yell, run out of the room, jump of the bed, curse, try to gag themselves, and pull out the IV. The patient believed we were there to hurt them and not help them. Thus they got physically violent. I had the pleasure of sitting in that room for eight hours watching the patient. What an experience that was. Other than that, the only exposure I have too psych would be mental illness in my family. I have anxiety. Also, my dad has severe depression as a result from his quality of life declining due to his health issues. A few months ago he had a second amputation to his left leg. After the procedure he got septic and went into kidney failure. Before the hospital he was completely independent but after he became completely dependent on others. Because of this his mental health took a huge hit. He stopped eating and ultimately stopped fighting for his life. Watching depression take over his life really emphasized to me how important mental health is. (Today he is doing better)

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During these next eight weeks my expectation is to lose the fear of caring for psychiatric patients and improve my confidence as a nurse. I know that completely losing that fear is probably impossible, but maybe instead of fear I develop an understanding of how to properly care for a psychiatric patient and how to do it safely. I expect myself to step up to the plate and work even harder since I feel like I will struggle with this content. I will not let it intimidate me. As mentioned above, I would like to learn how to protect myself and the psychiatric patient. Also I would love to learn about Dementia and Alzheimer's because I work in assisted living and just in case somebody in my family gets it.

One question I would like to get answered by the end of this module would be why is mental health not treated like a real illness in this nation? It is overlooked and it should not be because after all the head is attached to the body. Another question I want answered is how COVID impacted mental health? In my opinion it increased anxiety and depression but I would like facts. My final question is, what other treatment is there for psychiatric patients other than medications?