

Current Theories Journal Assignment

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I feel excited and a little apprehensive about taking a course and having clinical experiences in Psychiatric Mental Health Nursing because it'll be interesting to go in depth on a topic we've only briefly touched on in previous modules and since I've only taken introductory psychology classes. It'll also be interesting to see how diagnoses can manifest differently and learn the various ways that we can help them. I am a little apprehensive in the very rare chance we come across a combative patient or that I'll be unable to help them in the way they need.

My experience with psychiatric illnesses only officially started a few years ago when I was diagnosed with severe anxiety and mild depression right before the pandemic started. Throughout middle school and high school, I was only mildly aware that the anxiety and sadness I experienced weren't exactly at the same level as my peers which had prompted me to start seeking counseling when I got to college. The counseling worked pretty well, but since it was through the university and free, students were only allotted 3 sessions. For several months after it was still manageable until my sophomore year at college and started experiencing aversion to school and just not being able to keep up as well with attendance and grades. It wasn't until I had come home for spring break in 2020 that I had casually mentioned it to my doctor which prompted him to having me fill out questionnaires. After that I was initially on SSRIs until my new primary care physician found and SNRI that worked well for me, but I was still struggling with the underlying thought processes I had. Because of that, doctor and I agreed that counseling would be beneficial, so I was finally able to start counseling this past July which has been very useful especially with nursing school.

I do have some fears over the possibility that the content could bring up old memories that aren't exactly pleasant or question things again that I had finally resolved with my counselor. I'm a little concerned when we do get to the topic of psychiatric disorders and my specific diagnoses come up, especially depression. For the most part it's well managed so it wouldn't affect me too much besides just a little rumination for a little bit. The topic I'm most concerned about is the topic of OCD and psychiatric crises since I have a family friend with it and have just gotten close to reaching a conclusion on my feelings regarding the situation with my counselor. The entire topic is really complex to me and even now I still revisit the situations that arose from time to time and question almost everything. I'm concerned that it may trigger me to go back to asking those internal questions frequently and illicit the same feelings of guilt, confusion, and frustration. Even the concern makes me a little anxious for when the topic comes up while the specific feelings and thoughts related to the concern usually leads to me becoming a little more withdrawn and introspective.

For this module I'm expecting to learn a lot about not just the diagnoses and their manifestations, but also the various ways we can best help the patients within our role. I hope to learn more about therapeutic communication and gain further insight in the field of psychiatry, especially since there are so many different topics within it. I'm also curious to learn about the nursing side of mental health and psychiatry. I'm also hoping to learn how to hone my communication skills with patients and have opportunities to sit down to really talk to them. Some questions that I have that I would like to find answers to during this course are: How does schizophrenia progress? How many mental health issues and illnesses are genetic? How much of mental health issues and illnesses are nurture, nature, or a mixture of both? What are the long-

term effects of the various medications used for mental illness? What does the future of helping those with mental illnesses look like?