

Journal Entry: Psychiatric Mental Health Nursing

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My personal feelings and attitude towards facing mental health issues are more mixed than anything else. Going through some of the challenges I have faced in life has been tough, but because of my mental and psychiatric health illnesses, they have been made that much tougher. Scenarios that are easy for some people to deal with, I must take a more careful and standoffish approach to because I know that, should I handle that situation incorrectly, it could have a negative impact on the way I live my life for the next few days, and sometimes, even months. I have been diagnosed with generalized anxiety, major depressive disorder, and bipolar disorder. Because of this, I have been through more than most people my age. From coming back from multiple suicide attempts, not being able to sleep for days at a time, and not being able to identify which emotions I am feeling, to being where I am today, is a true blessing. Having faced these setbacks, one of my biggest concerns about taking this course is being triggered into a mixed episode through caring for someone else while they battle through mental and psychiatric illness, knowing they might be experiencing the same feelings I have.

I never imagined having to face any of this, but oddly enough, I am more thankful for having gone through it. Initially after my diagnosis, I was not informed of too many resources to reach out to to help me find my way through it. I was handed about five different prescriptions, told how I should take them, and the possible side effects, and that was it. It felt as though my prescriber, at the time, was not concerned with my wellbeing at all, and that my coming to them for help, was more of a burden than anything else. That is one thing I am looking forward to in this module's psychiatric rotation. I hope I can take my own negative experiences with mental health and psychiatric illnesses and help someone else who might be facing them. The feeling of being a burden to someone else, just because you simply need someone to talk to and confide in,

is a feeling no one should have to face. It was certainly a setback in my journey to rebuild, not only my mental health, but also, myself.

For the time being, I do not have any fears or concerns about having exposure to others who are battling psychiatric and mental illnesses. I know what triggers I have and am learning, every single day, how to control them, even though sometimes I fail in doing so. But that is just one of the many battles I will always have to overcome while dealing with these labels that have been placed on me; no two days are exactly alike. Some are going to be easier than others, and some might be hard to prepare for, but at the end of the day, I must get through them. I have people in my life, now, that depend on me and need me by their side to lean on when they are feeling mentally incapable, just like they do for me. Having a compassionate girlfriend, a beautiful daughter, and headstrong parents, has shown me that there are always people around to communicate your feelings to, even though opening up to them might be the hardest thing you will ever have to do. And I will forever be grateful to them for all they have done for me.

Figuring out how to connect someone with the resources they need, aiding patients who struggle monetarily to find suitable ways to support their mental and psychiatric health, and discovering different, more therapeutic ways of managing mental and psychiatric illnesses are some of the expectations I hope to meet throughout this module. Three questions I would have about this module's psychiatric portion would be:

1. What can we do better for the male population to ensure they feel they have a safe place to bring forward their questions and concerns about their own mental and psychiatric issues?
2. Some people have mixed feelings about taking medications to treat illnesses of the mind, which has led to the refusal of medication compliance throughout various communities. What are

some more therapeutic interventions, excluding medications, that we could use today to aid these individuals in repairing their mental health?

3. In the LGBTQ community, many people experience depression, anxiety, and suicidal thoughts/ideations over having to cope with their newfound identities and/or how to express those identities to those closest to them. What specialized resources does Lubbock have to offer them? Does Covenant/UMC have special precautions/protocols in place to ensure these individuals feel they have a safe place to turn to?