Current Theories and Practice: Journaling Assignment

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Current theories and practice in Psychiatric Mental Health

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Prior to this module I definitely felt anxious in the sense of how learning the specifics of these disorders could change my view on myself and others close to me affected by these various disorders. I do tend to be a little on the emotional side and hope to find a balance or method to not let those emotions take over when caring for patients of this specific field. My hope is that developing a better understanding of these disorders will not only enhance my empathy for others but provide some grace for myself. Growing up in my family mental health isn't really discussed although it is very apparent that multiple members struggle with some of these disorders. I'm looking forward to not only gaining an understanding on how to help those struggling but perhaps even coping mechanisms that may be useful for myself.

In my family I have experienced members with eating disorders, depression, post-traumatic stress disorder and substance abuse. The problem with this is the family has adapted a sort of don't ask don't tell mentality. For as long as I can remember multiple people in my family battled these disorders undiagnosed of course. Being a child in this environment it made it difficult for me to express these feelings as I had never seen it done so in a healthy manner by the adults in my family. I learned from a very young age to bottle emotions to the best of my ability. Now as an adult I've allowed myself to express those emotions more than not, unfortunately I feel as if I struggle to find a balance.

In my own life I've struggled with anxiety for as long as I can remember. Diet was heavily pushed as a child and I definitely straddled the line when it came to certain eating disorders. I can remember as far back as ten years old carrying a journal to track the calories I was intaking and this persisted until my mid-teens. When I was eighteen I experienced a sexual

assault for the first time, being in my family it didn't feel very safe to open up about, I am part of the LGBTQ community and that wasn't wildly accepted in my family so I kept it buried to myself for years. It wasn't until a couple years after my second assault at twenty-two that I was able to sit down and have that conversation with my parents. Bottling this for so long I definitely found myself gradually falling into depression. Along with these experiences came some post-traumatic stress that I've only recently learned to deal with. I lost a friend to suicide and the one-year anniversary is in a couple weeks and if I'm being honest, I still haven't learned how to process the situation.

I do fear that some of the content may be triggering but have high hopes that in a sense they may be healing. I definitely have a bittersweet feeling in regards to some of the topics but overall am intrigued to learn about the different layers of our minds. As I said before mental health isn't heavily discussed in my family, and in some weird way I feel like being able to process and understand these disorders could bring some comfort. Although I don't believe it was intentional, in some ways my family has made me feel that having any of these conditions could be perceived as weak. When in reality it takes a strong person to live day to day feeling these things and to keep pushing.

I am eager to learn about the various medications and how they can be used best therapeutically. My goal is to acquire various nonpharmacological techniques and methods for dealing with and living with these various disorders. I'm hopeful that by the end of this module I will gain a better understanding of my family members who have struggled with these disorders, as well as an understanding of myself and how to process these experiences in a healthy manner. Prior to this week specifically I hadn't considered a field outside of pediatrics, but after

simulation I look forward to learning and exploring the possibility of working in the psychiatric mental health field and what that could be like.