

Clinical Journal One

- 1) My first clinical experience for mental health was most definitely not what I expected. I thought that the unit would be loud with frequent episodes from patients, it would be dark, and that clients were to stay in their designated room at all times. I was completely wrong. The environment is welcoming, there are beautiful paintings on the walls, and the staff was very helpful. The clients had the choice to roam where they wanted whether that be in their room or visiting each other in the lounge. I thought that the security of the unit was very well put together, there is only one way in and one way out. Therefore, absolutely no patients can escape if they tried to. I was feeling very nervous and did not know how patients would react to seeing students on the unit. Some people refused to let students take their vitals, and I completely respected their boundaries. During dinner time, I noticed a patient who had to be accompanied at all times by a nurse. The client was curled in a ball on a seat and looked very uncomfortable in the element. I assumed her personality to be quiet, shy, and reserved. I bring this up because the client really opened up to us nurses towards the end of our clinical. She ended up talking to us about herself and her diagnosis which completely dissolved my assumption of her personality. It felt good knowing that she was comfortable with us to where she actually opened up and had a conversation with us about herself. I am looking forward to my next clinical to get to know more about these patients on the unit.
- 2) One misconception about mental health is when people think that Post Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD) is only a military man's disease. This misconception is false. PTSD is related to a traumatic event that happened in one's past that affects their present psychologically. These events are so traumatic that it is hard for one to forget about it, and therefore it affects most of their everyday life. It doesn't have to specifically be about an experienced war, although most people do experience this after being active during a war. PTSD can result from many situations involving domestic or family violence, sexual or physical abuse, natural disasters such as hurricanes, flood, or fire, or even a serious car accident.
- 3) One thing I am interested in learning during this clinical is how the nurses are able to calm these patients during an episode. I know that this will incorporate a lot of therapeutic communication, but the forms that we have learned in Foundations isn't much of what will be used in mental health. Unfortunately, without experience in mental health, putting myself in the situation as a nurse- I really would not know what to do in terms of calming the patient down, so I'm really looking forward to learn the ways of communication that these nurses incorporate. Keeping these patients calm and teaching them how to help themselves get through the hard times is one of the most important aspects of mental health nursing in my opinion.