

# Reflection on self development in mental health nursing



**ASSIGN  
BUSTER**

The Nurse Association (ANA) (2003) defines nursing as the promotion, protection and improvement of health and abilities, stopping of illness and injury, relief of suffering through identification, medical care and support in the care of individuals, families, societies and citizenry (Nancy, 2001 p. 2). Generally nursing is liable to the society for providing quality, economical as well as improving the care rendered. Hence, nurses are responsible for their patients' standard of health.

The area of practice I would like to develop in this regard is mental health. The World health Organisation (WHO) (2009) defines mental health as a state of well-being where all individual notices his or her own potential, can cope with normal stressful events of life, can be fruitful and productive, and is able to contribute meaningfully to his or her society.

For a person to live happily and meaningfully in life, mental health is important as well as physical health. Inadequate mental health can interfere with keeping meaningful relationships, having a sense of fulfilment in one's self, work and ability to perform in daily activities of life. Mental illness can obstruct one's interest in sleep, food and sexual contact.

How we cope with life situations, the way we think and feel can be defined as mental health. By description mental health could be defined as a state of well-being which enables one to be fruitful, being able to live in peace with other people, adjusts to alteration and been able to handle difficult situations.

Health conditions marked by alteration or abnormalities in mood, thinking or behaviour (or a mixture of the three) that causes discomfort or impair

<https://assignbuster.com/reflection-on-self-development-in-mental-health-nursing/>

functioning is known as mental disorder. Giving a lot of definition without going into thorough details is difficult. One huge reason that is partly responsible for the difficulty in defining mental health, mental disorder and mental illness is the differentiation between mental and physical health which is largely pretended. Our ability to think, feel and respond is governed by our brain. The brain needs constant supply of oxygen and nutrients like any other organ in the body because it can also be damaged by thyroid issues, tumours and physical trauma. Mental health and physical health are interweaved (Linda, 2010, p. 334).

## **STRENGTHS AND WEAKNESSES ANALYSIS OF MY CURRENT KNOWLEDGE BASE ON MENTAL HEALTH**

My main tool as a mental health nurse is caring for the elderly living with dementia. As a mental health nurse I show compassion for the people I am dealing with by showing care towards them. Regrettably, there is still some stigma attached to mental illness. Combating this and helping the individuals and their families deal with it is the key part of my job. The danger of violence is often associated with this branch of nursing and one of the special skills required is to spot a build-up of tension and defuse it.

Dealing with the behaviour and human mind is not an exact science. The job of helping people back to mental health is every bit as valuable and satisfying as caring for those with a physical illness. Showing professional compassion in my field of practice as a mental health nurse is a very important strength that I possess. For true care to take place feeling compassionate and empathetic towards a stranger is a must; a good feedback feeling is set into motion by doing this. Feelings are important in a <https://assignbuster.com/reflection-on-self-development-in-mental-health-nursing/>

human's life. I will say compassion is strength because it is a very important ingredient in nursing profession. Compassion is more than just showing pity or concern; and some dictionary definitions indicate that compassion is part of caring because it involves suffering with the person (Moya, 1992 p 5).

As a mental health nurse, it is my duty to understand how to care for the elderly with dementia because their cognitive and affective states are conflicting. Now my experience with the elderly does not appear to me differently put myself into the private world of my patient and this is what empathy and care requires. Moya (1992, p 8) suggested that though as mortals we may find true empathy hard to practice because true empathy is only possible among archangels.

My weakness on my current knowledge based on this area unfortunately is lack of Confidence which is evident in certain instances. Public speaking, presentation and demonstration of procedures to nursing assistance plague me. It is one thing to be nonchalant and laid back when speaking with your family and friends, but in a professional environment the whole mood and interpretation of things changes. It all comes down to one thing, the amount of self-esteem that I have and I am willing to exert.

### **CLEAR STATEMENT FOR PERSONAL KNOWLEDGE**

Snow (1991, pp. 195-197) identifies compassion as pain, sorrow or grief for someone else. Emotions help me focus my moral actions. From my personal knowledge as a mental health nurse, compassion should be totally added in my concept of care. Furthermore the role of a Registered nurse is to improve the health and well-being of the people. My aim in focus is to strive for moral

height because I have the opportunity as a nurse to give attention to the pain and suffering of my patients (Ferrel, 2005, p. 86), with a workable process in leadership and putting more compassion in practice.

Putting compassion into nursing care is really not an easy task as it involves a lot of work. How this will be achieved is by involving in a compassion program for qualified nurses; going into wards that are already selected for excellence in compassion. In addition getting myself in an NHS Lothian centre for compassionate care which is also called the " beacon ward" where patients can be asked what we the nurses are doing right and tell us how can improve health (2008) puts it as bottling the magic formula and sharing it. The beacon ward will involve me using an " all about me" sheet which patients will fill when admitted. This form is not about their medical conditions; about how they will love to be addressed and who is important to them. This gives me an opportunity to look at people values and beliefs.

## **DEVELOPING KNOWLEDGE IN THIS AREA**

My professional role and expectation from my clients as a mental health nurse is to win trust and establish contact with my clients. They find it difficult to gain trust and build good relationships with professionals in this field. In achieving this, competence is needed.

What is competence? Spencer & Spencer (1993) describe competency as the ability to realize organizational goals. It involves skills, attitudes and knowledge. These " soft skills" are vital in this area of practice. Developing my knowledge in mental nursing will enable me be a better nurse and gain a higher level of competency. Registered mental health nurses are regularly

<https://assignbuster.com/reflection-on-self-development-in-mental-health-nursing/>

faced with clients who stay away from care. They involve patients with severe personality and behavioural disorders, older people living with dementia.

Nursing and Midwifery Council (2002) Professional code of conducts describes situations where my professional role as a nurse is needed to be put into practice as regards competence. Throughout my year of practice I must keep my knowledge and skills up to date. Taking part in learning activities that will develop my performance and competence.

In order to practice competently and professionally i must possess the knowledge, skills and abilities needed for lawful effective and safe practice without supervision. I must know the things that I am capable of doing and only accept those procedures and practice that I am competent at.

If an area of practice is above my level of competence or outside my area of specialty I should call for help and supervision from a competent practitioner except otherwise.

## **SMART CHART DETAILING HOW I WOULD ACHIEVE MY GOALS**

My goals, when adequately structured can be achieved in a means elaborated below using a SMART CHART. Extension (2008) stressed that SMART goals will enable one achieve relevant actions and goal; they further explained SMART is an acronym for goals that are: Specific, Measurable (Mutual, Motivated), Attainable, Relevant/Realistic, and within a specific Timeline. Clearly stated, my goals are:

- Improvement in the area of my level of competence as a mental health nurse
- Ability to win patient trust
- Develop my level of confidence
- Broaden my level of knowledge in mental nursing

## **S**

- My goals are limited to my area of improvement and strengths particularly related to my area of specialization which makes it specific

## **M**

- These goals serve as a driving force to my striving for excellence in mental health nursing

## **A**

- A right move in attaining or achieving these goals is by the embarking on my current programme in the University which has boosted my assurance of being a figure head in the nursing profession.

## **R**

- My goals are still in line with my first degree and profession hence its relevance in to my career and to the improvement of patient status. The Nursing and Midwifery Council has embarked on nurses self-development training programmes which my goals conform to.

## **T**

- Putting into utmost consideration my level of adaptation to the health system of the UK and my academic pursuit, my goals are already being actualized and is an on-going process of development till my career is

over because learning is a continuous process and knowledge is acquired on a daily process.