

Running head: Final Reflection

Keira Britto

Final Reflection

NURS 180 002

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Prior to this course, my ability to manage stress fluctuated in conjunction with the presence of the stressors in my life. As the number of stressors increased, my ability to cope with them decreased. Looking back, I realize that this indicates that I was never really coping with stress, but rather I was suppressing and ignoring it. When I would reach a point where there was too much stress to suppress, everything would boil over and manifest as feelings of being overwhelmed, drained and defeated. This course has taught me that it is important to identify my stressors and tackle as many of them as possible, if not all of them. Having to face so many stressors head-on used to seem daunting, but I've learned that by using multiple strategies for coping and self-care it becomes manageable; small changes can stimulate a world of positive change. Accordingly, one of my biggest takeaways from this course has been that while not every strategy or theory works for every individual, successful self-care and coping involves the exploration of a multitude of strategies in order to find and develop a personalized arsenal of effective methods. Having an open mind and moving past occasional skepticism has allowed me to find effective strategies that I previously discredited. For example, I used to struggle to see how writing down my thoughts and feelings in a journal could be conducive to healing or stress management, but I gave it a chance and have found journaling to be an incredibly cathartic experience and a way to increase my emotional intelligence. I believe that the successful identification of effective self-care strategies and coping mechanisms should not be taken for granted because it is a difficult process. On that account, I am making a personal commitment to the frequent use of meditation, journaling, ecotherapy and healthy sleep practices, after the cessation of this course. These are all strategies that I have found beneficial and that were introduced to me in the course, and I owe it to myself to continue practicing them. I will also ensure that I continue to practice yoga on a consistent basis as it has been an essential part of my

self-care routine in the past. I will begin scheduling time out of my day dedicated towards these activities, as I tend to schedule the rest of my life while leaving self-care as an afterthought.

Throughout the semester, I struggled with some of the in-class participation aspects of the course. When Ranjit would ask self-reflective questions to the class I would always have an answer or a response in my head, but I often found it difficult to share. After some rumination, I have come to the conclusion that my hesitancy is partially because the other 29 courses that I have taken at UBC have never asked about anything remotely personal or self-reflective, and so it was foreign to me. While this is largely due to the content and structure of the courses themselves, I also think it is because we (as individuals in society) rarely ask the people in our lives questions regarding their well-being. We ask, “how are you?” but we seldom expect or give a genuine response. With these observations in mind, I am now determined to ask my friends and family self-reflective questions and questions about their well-being, and I will also push myself to answer those types of questions truthfully and not in the way society expects me to. I began implementing these behaviours a few weeks ago and I am already more comfortable with expressing how I feel, and I am more in touch and aware of my emotions. Having recognized my struggles with answering questions during class time, I do believe that I was able to engage deeply with my peers in small group activities and discussions. This is an area where I saw growth throughout the term as I became noticeably more comfortable interacting and sharing.

Overall, this course has taught me that self-care should always be a priority no matter what is going on in the outside world. This is a simple concept, but it is something that I struggle to recognize in my day-to-day life. Accordingly, I am vowing to myself to never forget that notion and to live by it to the best of my abilities, by making myself a priority. Hopefully, my learnings from this course will stay with me for the rest of my life, because even though my life will change, the importance of my wellbeing will not.