**Nursing Care Plan – Transitioning to University**

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| **Assess**: Student consider and collect cues related to their own stress. *List/describe/review/gather/recall facts, context, objects, people related to their own stress.** New environment
	+ University campus is very big and it’s easy to get lost
	+ Very crowded in certain areas and at certain times
* New routine
	+ Required get up much earlier than usual to prepare myself for the day (since I’m on campus all day, I must ensure I have everything I need including my laptop, food/snacks, and other materials)
* New friends (social network)
	+ None of my close friends went into nursing. They all went into unrelated programs so they can’t relate to what I’m experiencing
* Transportation
	+ Commute is longer than high school’s
	+ Must take the public transit (the bus can be very unreliable sometimes)
* New schedule
	+ Must stay on campus all day for night class
	+ Large gaps of time in between class
* Tuition
	+ Never had to pay for school until postsecondary education
	+ More pressure to not fail because now there is something valuable on the line
* Family situation
	+ My brother moved away for University but struggled balancing school and living alone. He ended up moving back but wasted a lot of money in the process. My parents don’t want the same mistake reoccurring, so they are stricter with me
	+ I have 2 aunts, 2 cousins, and a mom who are all RNs
		- I’m worried about being embarrassed if I’m not able to complete the program successfully
		- Also reassuring at the same time because my mom and aunts got their degrees when they were much older (I know they wouldn’t rush me if I felt I need to take a break). Also, if I ever need advice or guidance with my program, I have a lot of options in my family to go to.

*In relation to stress, describe their own presenting problem or chief complaint.* * I’m not adjusting to the amount of work there is in University. I’m prioritizing staying up to date on notes so that I’m ready for class, but as a result, I pile up my assignments and lab work until the day before. I get stressed when the time comes to work on that assignment because I’ll realize how behind I am or that I don’t completely understand how to complete the task.

*In relation to stress, describe their own relevant history.** In high school, I took all AP courses, so I am used to a heavy workload. However, the class structure was different in the sense that I didn’t have to take time to prepare notes or watch material ahead of time for class. I was able to use my time at home to work solely on my assignments and projects.
* I was also very stressed back then, but I would take many breaks from my work to relax my brain. For example, I would listen to music and dance in my room to remove any nervous-like emotions I was feeling.
* Used to be extremely active in elementary school, but have not been active physically since then
* Depression: on and off levels since the age of 12
* Anxiety/Panic Attacks: major episode about once a year for the past 3 years
	+ Usually caused by major stressor (big test/assignment, fight, death in the family)
	+ Most recent: day of second Anatomy midterm (was unable to write the midterm due to severity)
	+ Began with regularly experienced symptoms of stress (abdominal pain, elevated heart rate), progressed to more severe form (weakness, nausea, inability to breathe properly)
* Insomnia: trouble falling asleep, staying asleep for a long time
	+ Average 4-6 hours of sleep on weekdays
	+ Worse now that I finish class late and need to wake up early the next day for lab
	+ Constantly feel tired during the day
	+ Harder to focus during class some days
	+ In part due to Vitamin D deficiency (lab results = 23 nmol/L; deficiency classified as less than 25 nmol/L)

*In relation to stress, describe their own situation and process this information by:** *Identify what is or might be happening*
	+ I think I push my work back until last minute because of all the small stressors that happen during the day. If I don’t get enough sleep and wake up tired, I will probably go back to sleep until my last set alarm. By that time, I’ll have to rush myself to get to the bus stop on time. If I forgot to take my pencil case or lunch, I can’t go back because I’ll be late for class if I miss the bus. The bus doesn’t stop right next to Toldo, so if the transferring bus isn’t there exactly when I get off the first, I must walk for 12 minutes. If I’m going to be late for class, I must run the whole way. As a result of all these events, I’ll be tired when I get to class. This make it harder for me to pay attention fully in class. Once class is over, I often go to the library to type out the notes from class and listen back to the recording where I felt I didn’t absorb the material–for some classes this can take the whole day. I also need to leave out some time to eat; if I didn’t bring a lunch with me, it’ll take longer because I must find a place near campus to eat. I finally leave campus around 9pm on Mondays and Wednesdays, but when I get home, I need to prepare for my Experiential Lab the next day by watching videos and doing the readings. After lab on Tuesday, instead of going home and napping like I did back in high school, I have to tutor, so my sleep gets pushed back even further. Thursday is my only weekday off, but because I exhaust myself out the whole week, I spend the day sleeping. All those small events can mess up my mood or my motivation on a given day and affect how productive I can be during the week. All my other work is left for the weekend, which is when I start experiencing the condensed form of stress. In response to the stress, I find myself getting overwhelmed. If I don’t try to stop it by listening to music, dancing, or watching a video, I find myself crying from all the emotions.
* *Compare normal vs. abnormal cues/information*
	+ Vitals - When stressed, all values are above the normal range
		- Normal pulse = 60-100 beats per minute, Normal respiration rate = 10-20 breaths per minute, Normal blood pressure = 120-139 mmHg over 80-89 mmHg
	+ Vitamin D level
		- Normal level = 76-250 nmol/L; my level (23 nmol/L) is extremely below the normal range
	+ Behaviours
		- Normal cues: focused on task, calm, remains in relatively similar seated position
		- Observed cues: distracted easily, emotional (sad/crying, angry), restless/fidgety, withdrawal from family circle and leisure activities
* *Identify/recognize gaps in cues collected*
	+ Lack of appetite - most people tend to binge eat when stressed. The opposite is the case here.
	+ Fight or flight response caused by stress should allow me to think and react better because all my energy is being prioritized to those tasks (Potter & Perry, p. 353); however, I tend to have a short attention span and get distracted quickly when I’m stressed
	+ No cues were collected to show the decrease in stress levels or showing the points where the stress objective cues that show normal values (i.e., vitals)
* *Cluster cues to identify relationships*
	+ Vitamin D deficiency is causing lack of energy and increased fatigue
	+ Distracted nature, overwhelmed attitude, and movement is most likely caused by distracting thoughts. I’m probably forcing myself to think so much that my brain is trying to process a lot of information in a short amount of time. I become overwhelmed because there is so much information, I get distracted because my brain doesn’t know what information should be focused on, and I begin to fidget when I can’t take anymore (I think I subconsciously move to get myself to recognize that I need a break)
	+ My social withdrawal from my family is probably because when I’m stressed, I get more irritated; things they say can come across to me as insensitive. For example, my mom might say, “you practically live in your room, we never get to see you”, but I may get offended knowing that I am doing homework or sleeping because I’m tired.
	+ Increased respiration rate is causing dizziness and nausea; quick breaths don’t allow for CO2 to be released from the lungs making it harder for oxygen to enter (not enough O2 in the brain causing dizziness)
	+ Once it becomes apparent that there is not enough time to complete quality work, the sympathetic nervous system initiates the fight or flight response causing the increased heart rate and respiration rate. This causes the restlessness, giddiness, and lack of appetite experienced. The response gives short bursts of energy where work can be done; however, burnout is quickly experienced because the body doesn’t have enough food in the system to extract energy from. This causes the symptoms of abdominal pain and fatigue. While in this state, the lack of energy also explains the lack of motivation. The whole cycle is a positive feedback loop, where the condition (stress in this case) is being amplified.
* *Form opinions/ideas by based on your own clues (subjective) and the clues of documented findings (objective) cues*
	+ When I readily recognize my symptoms and take actions (taking breaks to relax from work or dancing to help calm down nervous feelings) to reduce my stress, I still display the normal signs of stress including elevated heart rate, blood pressure, and respiration rate. To someone observing, I may still look normal. In contrast, when I prioritize my work and ignore my stress, the symptoms buildup. I start complaining to my mom that I’m very stressed only to find myself crying a couple minutes later; my mood is not stable at all. It is very evident to anyone at that point that I am extremely stressed.
* *Consider alternative opinions/ideas*
	+ My brain may have been physiologically changed as a result from chronic stress (Potter et al., p. 353). This may explain why some of the responses to stress are not what is expected

***Assess****: Synthesize these facts and inferences by answering:* * *What is the student’s response to stress? (What)*
	+ I can recognize when I am feeling stressed due to signs such as abdominal pain and elevated pulse; however, I get irritable when my stress is severe.
* *What is the etiology (cause) of the response to stress? (Why)*
	+ My mild stress is due to my school workload and the severe stress that results from that occurs because I get overwhelmed when I don’t make much progress.
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| ***Diagnostic Statemen****t (identify the problem, risk or wellness situation and formulate a statement).*I’m feeling overwhelmed because of I am falling behind on my schoolwork. This is evidenced by me being emotional with anything including crying while working on my term paper for my writing class. |
| ***Plan:*** *The student establishes measurable SMART goals (short and long-term) by describing in the goals what they want to happen (expected outcomes) and a timeframe.**SMART GOAL #1 -* Better physical healthShort term goal: Starting at the end of this week, I want to get at least 8 hours of sleep every night.Long term goal: I want to have a basic workout routine covering cardio, stamina, and strength by the end of the semester.*SMART GOAL #2 -* Save time and stressShort term goal: Today, I will begin filling out my upcoming projects and completed assignments in my agenda to gauge my progress and plan out how much time I need for each task.Long term goal: During final exams, I want to openly talk about my mood with others to be able to recognize my feelings and what level of stress I’m experiencing in order to prevent severe outbursts. |
| ***Implement:*** *Select a course of action outcomes between different alternatives that are available from the literature.* *MEASUREABLE ACTION OUTCOME #1:* Better physical health * Sleep
	+ I will sleep by 22:00 every night and wake up at 7:00 every morning to ensure a regular sleeping pattern.
		- Allows the recommended amount of sleep
		- Does not confused the body (circadian rhythm: body gets used to falling asleep and waking up at the same time)
		- Waking up early allows me to get ready in a relaxed manner and provides me enough time to eat breakfast
	+ Get blackout curtains and earplugs
		- Helps people fall asleep faster and stay asleep (British Broadcasting Corporation, 2014)
	+ Exercise early
		- Tire out the body
	+ Refrain from eating close to sleeping
		- Harder to get the body to rest if its focus is digestion
	+ Use holistic approaches when experiencing insomnia (Healthline, 2019)
		- Aromatherapy
		- Heat
		- Melatonin
		- Meditation
		- Breathing Exercises
			* TAO
* Exercise
	+ I will start going to the campus gym at least twice a week
		- Take classes I’m interested in (e.g., dance) and go with a friend so that I’m motivated to keep up with it
	+ Walk from Campbell Street to the Toldo building instead of waiting for the other bus
		- Once I start walking, I can’t really turn back because I won’t catch the bus. Therefore, I’ll have a reason to walk
	+ Take the stairs instead of the elevator
	+ Take strolls in between classes if I find myself not feeling well
		- Give me time to relax and sort out my thoughts

*MEASUREABLE ACTION OUTCOME #2:* Save time and stress* Agenda
	+ Highlighters/markers should be used to differentiate subjects and completion
	+ A calendar should accompany the agenda to show future tasks that should be started soon
	+ Important dates from the syllabus should be marked down
	+ Agenda should be out in class so that important reminders the professor mentions are recorded
	+ The agenda should be looked at daily in case there is an upcoming due date
* Talking about stress
	+ Book an appointment with the nursing therapist
	+ Take breaks from studying to have discussions with my friends
	+ Update my mom with my progress and how I feel
		- Ask for advice
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| ***Evaluate:*** *Decide if the measurable action outcomes were effective.* *MEASUREABLE ACTION OUTCOME #1 EFFECTIVE?** Sleep
	+ I will know it is effective when I’m constantly getting eight hours of sleep (I have an app that tracks how long I sleep)
	+ I should feel more energized and less tired throughout the day
* Exercise
	+ Will be effective when I can get up a single flight of stair without being out of breath
	+ Be more motivated to exercise willingly
	+ Feel less emotional because I can get rid of all my negative feelings while doing physical activity

*MEASUREABLE ACTION OUTCOME #2 EFFECTIVE?** Agenda
	+ All the spaces starting from November 25, 2019 should be filled out
	+ Overall, I should be more organized and better at prioritizing all my tasks as a result
* Talking about stress
	+ I will know the action is effective when I hear a response or get feedback from the other person
	+ I should feel safe to share my opinions and feelings
	+ Should feel better afterwards (almost like a weight off my shoulders)

*Has the situation improved, please explain?** I have made stronger efforts to prioritize my health by making sure I sleep more and take a big lunch with me to school. Sticking to a strict schedule is a bit tough for me, but I’m slowly improving to complete my work earlier. Overall, I feel less stressed in similar situations now because I can recognize what the cause of my stress is by thinking about all the individual factors that changed my mood during the day.

*What did you learn from this process?* * When you take the time to reflect on things so that you grow from your experiences, you will realize small issues in your life may be adding up to cause more stress in your life. In my case, small factors such as worrying about being late for class or skipping meals to save time were causing me a lot more stress.
* I also realized how unhealthy my habits were. In the moment, not taking lunch to school does not seem like such a big deal; however, writing it down and looking at it, makes it seem obvious to how unhealthy of a choice it is.

*What could you have done differently?* * I could have focused on a specific event that has occurred and analyzed the specific stressors that were witnessed and compared them to my regular stress to see whether the same behaviours are exhibited or if I react to different stressors differently.
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References

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