Goals:

Educational

My educational goal is short-term with graduating UNMC Accelerated Nursing with a GPA of 3.0 or higher. Before I began this program, I had high expectations and hopes. But I quickly realized I had to balance school, my daughter, family and friends. I had aimed for A’s but Health Assessment quickly changed that goal, which I am grateful for. I am grateful I learned earlier that mastering the material does not always reflect the test grade. While earning a 3.0, I am expecting to master skills of nursing.

Personal

My personal goal is to gain independence. I currently live with a friend and rely on my parents for some financial help. Within a few months of graduating, I expect a full-time nursing career. This would free me from financial assistant of my parents. I want to provide for my daughter and myself. In the next five year, I plan to buy a home. Marriage is an ideal but hard to put a time frame on since one never knows when love happens.

Professional

I chose nursing as a career for many reasons. Money and stability are a lure, but for nursing it is the opportunities to help others of all ages and stages. Ultimately, after 10 years, I want to work in public health. I truly believe everyone has the right to equal healthcare and that is not the current situation in this country. I do not want to settle on a specific field any time soon. Public health has a variety of channels to explore. I know I will switch focuses many times in my career since that is at the heart of who I am. Always be open to change. It never hurts to try something new, no matter what age.

Unexpected Change

When I was 24 I become a mom. I was with her father for over 3 years. After time, we realized we did not work well together and parted. A few months before starting accelerated nursing school I became a single mom. I had to learn to manage time differently; I learned new coping mechanisms for her and I. I did not have the instant support that I had the past years. Every morning, evening and weekend, it’s her and I together. It was not easy the first few months with her waking up in the middle of the night, changing every diaper and eventually the potty training, and not to mention illnesses. I was tired and stressed, and she was noticing. The way I coped was reaching out to family and friends. I asked for help and accepted when it was offered. I began yoga for a therapeutic exercise. I also set time aside everyday where there are no distractions so my daughter and I have time for us to be a family.

Stressful Situation

The week before my daughter was born, the restaurant that her father’s family owned and he worked at closed without warning. I was already working two jobs, paying school loans among other bills. We had some money saved but not nearly enough to start a family. I worked over 60 hours a week, with an unemployed partner and a newborn. Stressful did not begin to describe our situation. Instead of complaining about our situation, we made the most of the little we had. We cooked family dinners, played board games or video games we already owned, and hosted movie nights.

Problem-solving Technique

At my previous job, my boss was unreliable. He was hardly in the office, maybe five hours a week. He ignored deadlines, and always worked under pressure. I assessed the situation and decided I needed to take initiative and prepare as far as I could go. I learned to work independently and trust myself. I would prepare everything I could and then hand him a project that he would need to only approve. I set my own goals. I realized I had no control over on his side and had to let go at a certain point.

Self-Directed Learning

Statistics is one of the hardest courses I have taken and I have always excelled at mathematics. To be able to take Statistics at the community college, I took a math placement exam. I scored one of the highest the school had seen, male or female. I decided I could take it online. I was self-taught statistics. Frustration was a common emotion during my study time along with relief when an assignment was complete. I spent hours almost every night learning statistics. The three-month course was dreaded. I passed with an A.

The Life Experience

My work at Opportunities Unlimited was the primary reason I chose a career in nursing. Opportunities Unlimited is a long-term rehabilitation center for disabled adults in Sioux City, Iowa. I was a residential counselor who helped with activities of daily living and assisting in therapies. I worked with people who could or would not walk, talk, eat, or participate. With specific interventions, some were able to learn new ways of communication and mobility. I was able to assist them by doing therapies and rehabilitation at home. It was truly amazing to see one young man walk after fives of being confined to a wheel chair. I saw the hope in his eyes. As a nurse, I want to be a part of the nursing diagnosis that allows the unthinkable to happen.

Envision Myself

The next five years I hope to work in an emergency room. I want to be exposed to as many situations before (or even if) I settle on a more specific interest. Since I have little experience with nursing and health care in general, I do not want to limit myself even more. I feel I have the characteristics to handle the ER- patience, coping under pressure and flexibility.