



# PSYCHIATRIC MENTAL HEALTH NURSING

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Faye Gary  
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*With 27 contributors*

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To the memory of my father and mother, Homer G. and Ollie C. Gary

*Faye Gary*

To my mentor, Dr. Richard Anderson, who taught me nearly all I needed to know; to my analyst, Dr. Mark Trewartha, who taught me the rest, plus gave me back my self; and to my patient Kristen (September 20, 1980–January 13, 1990), who, in the five short years I knew her, taught me what is *really* important: how to live and how to die.

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# PREFACE

We believe that nursing care must focus on the whole person, not simply one dysfunctional or diseased part. This makes psychiatric mental health nursing not only a specialty but a vital component of every nurse's practice, regardless of clinical setting. Nurses assess, analyze, and synthesize the data they collect, and plan nursing interventions related to *all* aspects of the individual: physiological, psychological, and sociocultural. However, it is not just this attention to the whole person that gives nursing its unique perspective in the health care field. Nurses, unlike anyone else on the health care team, have the daily access to and frequent contact with the patient and family that allows them to develop a therapeutic relationship, observe subtle deviations from baseline, and *really* get to know the patient and the unique meaning of the illness or injury to him or her. Moreover, "R.N." may inspire a kind of trust and willingness to open up that "M.D." may not. This unique opportunity for establishing a therapeutic, caring relationship with the patient is specific to the psychiatric and nonpsychiatric nurse alike.

*Psychiatric Mental Health Nursing* addresses that component of nursing that focuses on psychological functioning—mental and emotional health and psychopathology. The goal of this text is to prepare nursing students to work in any number of general nursing or specialty areas, including, but not limited to, psychiatric nursing. For the student who will be working in nonpsychiatric settings such as a pediatric clinic or a medical-surgical service, *Psychiatric Mental Health Nursing* provides a sound basis for the assessment of emotional problems associated with acute or chronic illness or injury and its treatment or those related to the unique stresses in an individual's life and their outcome. It teaches the student how to differentiate between "normal" responses to illness or hospitalization and primary psychological dysfunction. And it prepares the student to provide sensitive, scientific care that always takes the psychosocial dimension of health into account.

For the undergraduate nursing student who will be working in psychiatric health care settings, *Psychiatric Mental Health Nursing* provides the depth of information needed to care for patients suffering from a variety of psychiatric illnesses, in conjunction with the primary therapist and the psychiatric team. It focuses heavily on the importance of good observation and communication skills. In particular, Chapters 5 ("Psychiatric Assessment for the Generalist Nurse") and 7 ("The Nurse as Therapist") provide concrete material on the roles in the therapeutic process available to the nurse. Finally, for the student who plans to continue with advanced study in psychiatric nursing as well as the professional nurse already working in this clinical specialty, this book provides in-depth coverage of the theories that attempt to explain human behavior, especially the etiology of psychological dysfunction, and the theory and research that have led to the development of therapies used to treat psychopathology and rehabilitate affected individuals and families.

In this text, we have strived to present the *realities* of the health care system. We started by inviting contributions from experts in a wide variety of academic disciplines who practice in the field of mental health as clinicians, teachers, and researchers. Psychiatric nurses, nurse educators, psychiatrists, psychologists, social

workers, and researchers—all of whom play a vital role in the description and treatment of mental illness—have contributed chapters in their particular areas of expertise. Because of this, each chapter, within the overall framework of the text, has its own flavor and the perspective of the author's discipline along with that of nursing. Chapter 21 ("Psychiatric Mental Health Nursing with Families"), for instance, mirrors the systems approach to family therapy required to define and treat the family when it is defined as the "patient." This chapter's existential-experimental feel reflects this approach as well as the clinical style of its author, a family therapist. Chapter 3 ("Psychiatric Classification") is written by a psychologist who has devoted much of his professional life to the study of the classification systems that have defined mental illness since the concept was first described. Most chapters rely heavily on recent research to guide their contents. Chapter 25 ("Psychiatric Mental Health Nursing with the Patient in Intensive Care"), for instance, describes in detail the research carried out by nurses and physicians to determine just how damaging the critical care environment can be to the patient, and on strategies used to lessen the stress of the critical care experience.

Two classification systems, chosen because of their widespread familiarity in the nursing and mental health fields, are used in *Psychiatric Mental Health Nursing*. The North American Nursing Diagnosis Association's *Taxonomy I, Revised* (1988) provides a framework for describing actual or potential health problems that fall within the scope of nursing practice. NANDA-approved nursing diagnoses are an integral part of the text and, in conjunction with end-of-chapter case studies, form the basis for in-depth nursing care plans. The American Psychiatric Association's *Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders, Third Edition, Revised* (DSM-III-R [1987]) provides the classification system for the description of psychopathology within the text. Though not ideal, DSM-III-R criteria provide a common language for communication among all mental health professionals—a necessity, given the team approach used in helping individuals with mental illness.

The *reality* of psychological pain and suffering is generally manifested not in a blood sample or x-ray, but in a person's eyes, verbal expressions, or nonverbal behavior. Therefore, observation and empathic listening are probably the most important skills to be developed by the nurse working in the mental health field. To help students practice their observation and analytical skills, we have provided numerous brief case studies, based on the authors' experiences, throughout the text. Of course, nothing can replace the student's own experiences in talking with patients, but the cases can help to prepare the student for the variety and intensity of such interactions. At the end of each chapter, one or two detailed case studies depicting individuals in a psychiatric or a nonpsychiatric health care facility provide the student with an opportunity to delve deeper into the issues of psychiatric nursing. When the case provides enough information, a DSM-III-R diagnosis is given on the five axes. For every case nursing diagnoses are listed, followed by a nursing care plan that includes nursing diagnoses, desired outcomes, interventions, and their rationales. It is our hope that students will spend time reading and evaluating these cases on their own, and consider whether they might handle certain situations differently and why. These detailed cases can also be used effectively as a springboard for classroom discussion of theory, current or needed research, and/or the complexities of clinical practice that considers the individual and that individual's own story first and foremost.

Another example of our focus on the current realities of mental health nursing is our acknowledgment of and attention to the elements of today's society that contribute to psychopathology and, often, make the nurse's job more diffi-

cult. These include the prevalence of violence and abuse within families and society as a whole; the growing AIDS crisis; the complex problem of drug abuse and addiction and the violence that has accompanied the drug culture; the increasing incidence of suicide, particularly among adolescents; the growing homeless population, particularly among the chronically mentally ill; and the cutback of governmental programs to adequately handle these pressures. The mental health care system is stretched to its limits, yet the nurse, in a variety of roles and varying responsibilities, can have an enormous positive impact on the lives of individuals who seek help both within and outside this system.

*Psychiatric Mental Health Nursing* is divided into five major sections. Part One, “Theoretical Foundations and Content of Practice,” provides the core of scientific principles and social realities necessary to understand and implement psychotherapeutic nursing care. Chapter 1 describes psychiatric nursing practice in today’s world and places the nurse at its center. Chapter 2 defines the three major models of behavior—psychoanalytic, behavioral, and biological—used to describe and understand “normal” human behavior as well as psychopathology and its treatment. Chapters on communication theory, psychiatric assessment, sociocultural issues, and the role of the nurse as therapist provide the clinical focus for the rest of the book.

Part Two, “Psychological Dysfunction and Psychopathology,” describes the major types of psychological dysfunction, their assessment, treatment, and nursing care. Each chapter, where relevant, covers the range—from normal to severely dysfunctional—of “psychopathology” involved in the mental disorder discussed. For instance, Chapter 8 (“Anxiety Disorders”) discusses both the normal anxiety felt by a patient undergoing surgery and the severe anxiety of the person suffering from one of the anxiety disorders, as well as the associated nursing responsibilities for each.

In Part Three, “Psychiatric Mental Health Nursing Throughout the Life Span,” the science and art of psychiatric nursing practice is applied to the problems of women, men, families, children, and the elderly. The most common types of mental illness and special needs of individuals from infancy and childhood to old age are the focus of this section.

Part Four, “Psychiatric Mental Health Nursing with Special Populations,” focuses on the unique mental health problems and needs of other special populations—the violent patient (Chapter 24), the critically ill patient (Chapter 25), and the chronically ill or dying patient (Chapter 26).

Part Five, “Psychiatric Mental Health Nursing Practice Issues,” addresses legal and ethical issues relevant to psychiatric nursing practice. Patient rights and the associated legal and ethical responsibilities and dilemmas they create for the nurse and other health care professionals, are discussed in these two chapters.

In writing this text, we have taken much care to present both the science and the art of the full experience of psychiatric mental health nursing—the settings, the variety of patients and their problems, the theory and research behind medical treatment, and nursing care in today’s world. Since this encompasses a huge amount of information, we have also taken great care to present it in a manner that will be most interesting and useful to the student.

Each chapter follows the same format, beginning with an outline and a list of *Learning Objectives*. Brief *Case Studies* throughout the chapters provide “pictures” of psychopathology and interactions among patients, nurses, and other members of the health care team. At the end of each chapter, detailed Case Studies (whenever appropriate, one for the psychiatric setting and one for the non-psychiatric setting) apply the key concepts discussed in the chapter. These are

followed by a *Summary* of the chapter's major concepts, a list of the *Key Terms* that appear in boldface type in the chapter (and are defined in the glossary at the end of the text), *Study Questions*, and *References*.

*Psychiatric Mental Health Nursing* is also filled with summary tables, illustrations (many done by patients), numerous photographs, and special interest boxes that focus on controversial issues and, often, provide a different perspective (or most current research) on the topics covered in the text. The *Glossary* at the end of the text provides a quick and ready reference for definitions of key terms. We have also developed an instructor's manual for educators using this book. This supplement contains chapter summaries, test questions (both short-answer and essay), and answers to these questions as well as to those appearing in this text.

It is our hope that *Psychiatric Mental Health Nursing* will give students genuine insight into a facet of life they possibly have not seriously considered, an awareness of their own feelings and responses to human pain and suffering, and a growing eagerness and facility to observe, listen to, and effectively communicate with people who are experiencing such pain, whether it is the result of "fragmentation anxiety" or Alzheimer's disease. We further hope that students will come away from the study of this text with an understanding of the importance of caring to healing in all interactions with the patient and family, as well as an understanding of the range of psychiatric disorders and associated treatment modalities, and what is known about the origins of both; and, finally, a sense of confidence about their ability to use themselves and their own experience to practice sensitive and effective psychiatric mental health nursing with *all* their patients.



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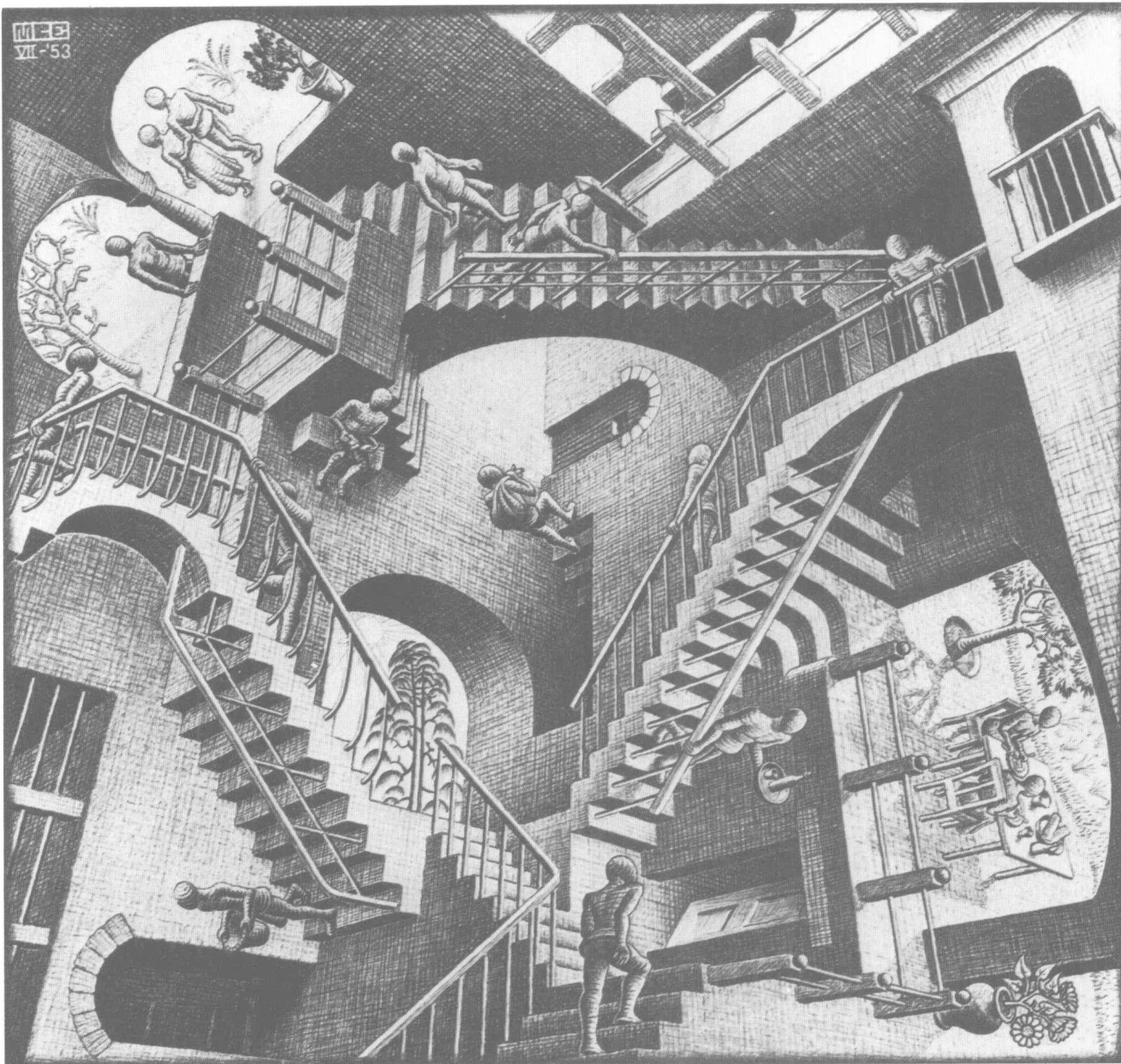
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