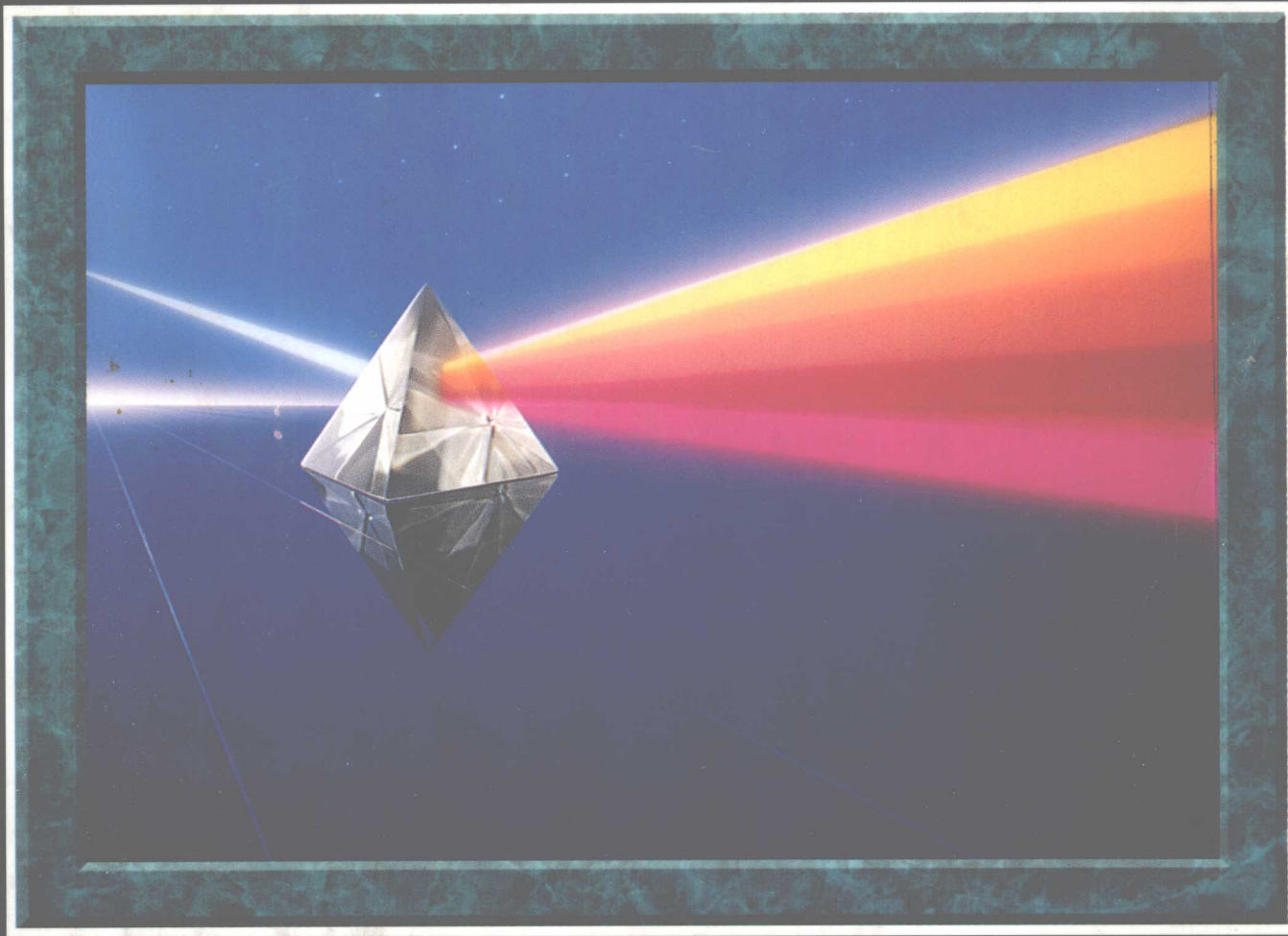


Psychiatric Mental Health Nursing: *Concepts of Care*



Mary C. Townsend

Includes the Latest DSM-IV Classifications

Psychiatric/Mental Health Nursing: Concepts of Care

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This book is dedicated to:

All of my nursing students, past, present and future. I learn a great deal from you.

Preface

The purpose of this text is to provide nursing students and clinical nurses with a concise, yet comprehensive, relevant, and up-to-date resource to assist with the learning and practice of psychiatric/mental health nursing. The focus is on holistic nursing, and because psychiatric/mental health nursing is applicable to every nurse's individual practice, the concepts discussed in this text may be utilized in all clinical nursing settings.

The idea behind this text was to omit a great deal of extraneous information that is often included in other psychiatric/mental health textbooks and that is most often ignored by students during their short psychiatric nursing rotations. As a psychiatric nursing instructor for 11 years, I have come to understand well the needs and desires of students. I have also come to understand that clinical nurses in psychiatry want a resource that is quick, practical, and relevant to their practice. They want a book that is *usable*. I believe this textbook fulfills the needs in both categories.

This book is based on the conceptual framework of stress-adaptation, largely the work of Lazarus and Selye (see references for Chapter 1). Assessment of the patient has its foundation in predisposing factors (genetic influences, past experiences, and existing conditions) that contribute to the way in which an individual copes with a stressful event. The individual's perception of the event is taken into consideration, along with available strategies for coping with stress. The mental health/mental illness continuum is considered to be dynamic, and it is hypothesized that an individual may assume virtually any position along that continuum at any point in time, based on any of the above considerations. It is also hypothesized that all ill individuals possess some wellness components and all well individuals possess some illness components. Nurses utilize these strengths and limitations in planning care for psychiatric/mental health patients.

The textbook consists of four major units:

- Unit 1: Basic Concepts in Psychiatric/Mental Health Nursing
- Unit 2: Therapeutic Approaches in Psychiatric Care
- Unit 3: Nursing Care of Patients with Alterations in Psychosocial Adaptation
- Unit 4: Special Topics in Psychiatric/Mental Health Nursing

The chapters in Unit 1 provide background information for the textbook. They include a basic overview of the concept of stress, a discussion of the most common psychosocial adaptations to stress, and delineation of the components of personality development as postulated by several major developmental theorists.

Unit 2 consists of Chapters 3 through 14, which provide information for the practicing nurse regarding various therapies that may be implemented with clients. The role of the nurse in each of these therapies is emphasized, and although the nurse is not likely to be the primary therapist in most instances, thera-

peutic intervention is well within his or her scope of practice in all of the regimes described in this text.

Unit 3 comprises the major portion of the text and includes chapters describing psychopathologies that have been identified in the DSM-III-R (1987). Each chapter includes learning objectives; an introduction; pertinent historic and epidemiologic factors; background assessment data, including predisposing factors and symptomatology associated with each disorder; common nursing diagnoses with standardized guidelines for intervention in the care of patients with these disorders; outcome criteria; guidelines for reassessment and evaluation of nursing care; and descriptions of common medical treatment modalities. A unique aspect of this text is the inclusion of critical pathways for nurses working in case management situations. Critical pathways are included for selected diagnoses in which short stays with outcomes pertinent to specific time dimensions are appropriate.

Unit 4 includes special topics, such as the aging individual, the individual with HIV/AIDS, victims of violence, and ethical and legal issues in psychiatric/mental health nursing. The topics of aging, AIDS, and victims of violence were selected for inclusion because of their prevalence in society. Nurses in all settings are likely to encounter any or all of these individuals repeatedly and frequently. The final chapter comprises ethical and legal issues as they apply to the practice of psychiatric/mental health nursing.

It is my hope that this text can provide assistance to nurses working with individuals who are experiencing emotional pain and suffering. I believe that psychosocial nursing is the most difficult part of nursing, and I observe that it is often neglected outside the psychiatric nursing specialty area. The practicality of this text makes it a useful tool within both spheres.

I am hopeful that the text will provide students with a positive perspective toward psychiatric nursing. It has been my experience that most students are anxious and somewhat fearful of the unknown when they begin their psychiatric nursing rotations. This text answers the question most frequently asked: "What do psychiatric nurses do?". Hopefully, it will assist students to gain the confidence and skills necessary to practice psychosocial nursing with *all* of their patients, and optimistically, win a few over to psychiatric nursing.

Mary C. Townsend

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