

# **INTRODUCTION TO NURSING**

**CONCEPTS,  
ISSUES,  
& OPPORTUNITIES**

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Any procedure or practice described in this book should be applied by the health-care practitioner under appropriate supervision in accordance with professional standards of care used with regard to the unique circumstances that apply in each practice situation. Care has been taken to confirm the accuracy of information presented and to describe generally accepted practices. However, the authors, editors, and publisher cannot accept any responsibility for errors or omissions or for any consequences from application of the information in this book and make no warranty, express or implied, with respect to the contents of the book.

Every effort has been made to ensure drug selections and dosages are in accordance with current recommendations and practice. Because of ongoing research, changes in government regulations and the constant flow of information on drug therapy, reactions and interactions, the reader is cautioned to check the package insert for each drug for indications, dosages, warnings and precautions, particularly if the drug is new or infrequently used.

# PREFACE

*Introduction to Nursing* is intended for anyone who anticipates being a professional nurse in the 21st century. Nurses differ in their backgrounds, education, and individual aspirations. Each, however, has the potential for professional growth through both formal education and lifelong learning. Nursing is both an art and a science. As an art, nursing is as old as civilization; as a science, it is relatively new. Professional nursing practice now is developed on a scientific and theoretical foundation. It involves sophisticated decision making and proficiency in certain skills. For both novices and practitioners, this book explores the development of futuristic nursing practice on a scientific foundation that enhances nursing art. Through concepts, issues, and opportunities, *Introduction to Nursing* details professional nursing practice involving decision making and skills beyond those traditionally associated with nursing.

The conceptual framework of the book is the conceptual framework underlying nursing as a science and a profession. The book introduces four concepts that are basic to nursing science: nursing, person, health, and environment. The book also presents additional concepts that shape nursing as an art and a profession: nursing process, the problem-solving process of nursing practice, communication, learning and teaching, and ethics and legal aspects. Other important ideas such as adaptation, culture, research, and spiritual aspects of persons are woven throughout the text. Although the four major concepts are those generally acknowledged to provide a theoretical base for nursing, the authors recognize that emphasis on concepts may vary from institution to institution.

*Introduction to Nursing* is divided into five parts. Part One is a single overview chapter that briefly represents the conceptual and practical chapters that follow.

Part Two sets forth the conceptual framework by introducing the four basic concepts that are the foundation for nursing science. Chapters 2 and 3 are devoted to *nursing*, the one concept unique to the profession. Chapter 2 presents an historical perspective of nursing as a prelude to the present. Chapter 3 details a current view of nursing as art, science, and profession. Part Two concludes with individual chapters dedicated to person, health, and environment, the other major concepts.

Part Three focuses on nursing practice in the real world of health-care delivery. Chapter 7 provides an overview of the health-care delivery system today. The remaining four chapters demonstrate how nurses communicate, solve problems and practice inquiry through nursing process, facilitate learning

for their clients, and encounter ethical dilemmas and legal aspects of practice. In other words, this section demonstrates actual application of the basic concepts. In the spirit of person-centered care, clients in the clinical examples are referred to by name rather than by initials. Because ethical practice requires maintaining client confidentiality, the names are, of course, fictitious. In actual learning situations, students refer to their clients by initials when writing reports and case studies so that no name-linked information leaves the nursing unit, where care is given.

Part Four is a single concluding chapter detailing prospects for the future. Selected opportunities and challenges highlight the incentives to be a nurse in a promising health-care profession. These opportunities and challenges are intended to provide answers to questions prospective students might raise and also to offer food for further thought.

Nursing can be understood on a number of levels. Our presentation aims to make this possible for you. The reader may have had previous nursing experience but this is not assumed. As practitioners, educators, and administrators in nursing service and education, we share with you our experience of what makes nursing unique as a profession. You will learn how there is room for creativity in the practice of nursing as both art and science. You will discover what nursing, the health science of caring, offers to its practitioners.

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# PART ONE





# 1 THE PRACTICE AND PROFESSION OF NURSING

## KEY WORDS

Adaptation  
Caring  
Client  
Communication  
Environment  
Health  
Illness  
Nursing  
Nursing ethics  
Nursing process  
Patient  
Person  
Wellness

After completing this chapter, students will be able to:

- Identify the expertise of the profession of nursing.
- Identify common elements of several leaders' definitions of nursing.
- Explain the concept of caring in relation to nursing practice.
- Identify the elements of person-centered nursing care.
- Describe the connotations of the terms *patient* and *client*.
- Identify concepts basic to nursing practice.

Can you tell which occupation meets the criteria listed below?

- Is both new and old
- Claims elements of art, science, and profession
- Is in worldwide demand currently, foresees universal demand in the future, and yet provides job opportunities in virtually every hometown
- Has current and future personnel needs that exceed all projections of supply
- Offers life-long career opportunities without changing fields
- Serves society's health and well-being
- Offers participation in life's major events
- Offers interpersonal interaction in a high-technology world
- Develops self-understanding
- Provides immeasurable personal satisfaction
- Confronts issues of humanism, ethics, legalities, and economics that shape public policy
- Encourages entrepreneurs in the business of health
- Offers wide diversity in career possibilities

Nursing can certainly be an answer to the above question. Nurses are a scarce human resource in today's society. Although nurses are greatly admired by persons who have

directly benefited from their services, nurses and their profession often are not understood by those who have not experienced nursing care directly.

This text is an introduction to the profession of nursing. There are many ideas about what nursing is. Common to many definitions of nursing is the idea of helping persons. Throughout history, the potential for helping was shaped by the influences of society, by forces within the health-care delivery system, and by visions within nursing. Today this helping takes many forms and is bounded primarily by the vision of nurses themselves. Indeed, nursing today is both like and unlike nursing of the past.

Nursing has always been the art of caring. Now nursing is becoming known as the health science of caring. Yesterday's nurses were found most often at the bedside of ill persons. Although grateful patients acknowledged nurses' skills in promoting, maintaining, and restoring health, nurses' unique expertise for health received little emphasis.

Today's nurses are still found at the bedside. The need for their expertise in caring for ill persons is at an all-time high. Traditionally and in many ways, nursing has emphasized its technical aspects. There is currently, however, much room and need for creativity within professional nursing practice. Such innovation occurs at the bedside and elsewhere. Today's nurses also enjoy practice opportunities as creative entrepreneurs, managers, administrators, teachers, and research scientists. Although practice at any level provides an important service to society, practice at different levels accommodates individual nurse's interests, different ability levels, and varying career investments.

In this chapter, we present an overview of what nursing is, both from our own perspective and from the writings of nursing leaders. This chapter also discusses concepts that are essential to nursing as a science: nursing, person, environment, and health. Additional concepts related to the practice of nursing within the health-care delivery system are also defined: nursing process, communication, learning and teaching, nursing ethics, and legal aspects of practice.

Before beginning a detailed discussion of the individual concepts, it is important that we have a clear understanding of how these concepts relate to nursing. To do this, we must first have a firm understanding of what *nursing* is. Beginning nursing students may now be saying to themselves, "But I know what nursing is. I learned that from my aunt who is a nurse (or from books, television, volunteer work in hospitals, guidance counselors . . .)." When asked to define nursing, most beginning students respond that it involves helping people. Our own concept of nursing is similar, for we believe that the essence of nursing is caring for *persons*. This is the approach to nursing that inspires this textbook. This chapter presents the concepts that we believe are essential to nursing practice. We hope to provide our readers with an appreciation of the philosophy that underlies this text.

## | PERSON-CENTERED NURSING CARE

There are many professions in today's society. In this wide array, nursing is viewed as one of the health professions. Although the term *profession* has many common meanings, some writers have tried to ascribe a more strict definition to it. Schein and Kommers have identified certain criteria of a true profession, including a body of knowledge on which expert skills and services are based (1972, p 8). The other criteria related to professional status are discussed in detail in Chapter 2. In Table 1–1 we list some of the groups that are considered professions and identify their expertise.

TABLE 1-1  
PROFESSIONALS AND THEIR FIELDS OF EXPERTISE

Professional	Expertise
Lawyer	Law
Pastor or minister	Spirituality
Physician or doctor	Illness, disease
Psychologist	Mind, behavior
Social worker	Societal support systems
Nurse	Caring for persons

The emergence of professional nursing is usually attributed to the influence of Florence Nightingale, who practiced in the last half of the 19th century. Thus, nursing as a profession is relatively young in comparison to the other professions we have listed. Nursing is an *emerging* profession trying to fulfill the criteria that define a profession. What is the expertise that nursing claims? We believe that it is *caring for persons*.

### Caring as a Basis for Nursing

Nurses constantly use the term **caring**: “I’m caring for seven patients today,” “Mr. Jones needs complete care,” “Mrs. Smith doesn’t require much care.” When this text uses the term “caring,” it does so with a specific meaning in mind. Caring should involve more than just carrying out nursing procedures such as bedmaking and treatments. True caring is based on an attitude of nurturing, of helping another to grow. Mayeroff, a philosopher who explored the nature of caring, stated, “To care for another person, in the most significant sense, is to help him grow and actualize himself” (1971, p 1). He continued, “In caring, I experience the other as having potentialities and the need to grow” (p 6).

Jean Watson is a nurse-theorist who described nursing as the science of caring. Watson contrasted care with cure. With cure activities, the end is treatment and elimination of disease. In caring, one assists the person to grow toward his or her potential. Watson stated:

Human care . . . consists of transpersonal human to human attempts to protect, enhance, and preserve humanity by helping a person find meaning in illness, suffering, pain, and existence; to help another gain self-knowledge, control, and self-healing wherein a sense of inner harmony is restored regardless of the external circumstances. (1985, p 54).

Watson identified factors integral to the caring process, including the following:

- Cultivation of sensitivity to self and others
  - Development of a helping-trusting relationship
  - Promotion of acceptance of positive and negative feelings
  - Provision for a supportive, protective and corrective mental, physical, sociocultural, and spiritual environment
  - Assistance with human needs gratification
- (1985, pp 9–10)

Chapter 3 describes Watson's theory of caring in further detail.

Leininger, a nursing leader, believed that caring is essential to human development, growth, and survival. Leininger described the following caring behaviors:

Comfort	Nurturance
Compassion	Presence
Concern	Protective behaviors
Coping behavior	Restorative behaviors
Empathy	Sharing
Enabling	Stimulating behaviors
Facilitating	Stress alleviation
Health consultative acts	Succorance
Health instruction acts	Support
Health maintenance acts	Surveillance
Helping behavior	Tenderness
Interest	Touching
Involvement	Trust
Love	(1981, p 13)



Nursing is the health science of caring.

The expression of caring varies across cultures. The priority of a caring behavior, its form of expression, and the needs that the behavior satisfies may differ from culture to culture.

Caring nurses recognize that persons have strengths as well as needs and that they possess worth and potential to grow. Rather than seeing persons as helpless because they need care, caring nurses respect them as autonomous in their own right. Caring nurses assist a person because of a desire to foster growth and independence. They want to enhance their clients' abilities to manage their own health needs as a result of the care received. As Mayeroff said, "To help another person grow . . . is to help that other person come to care for himself" (1971, p 10).

### Definitions of Nursing

Thoughts on the caring nature of nursing are reflected in many of the definitions of nursing put forth by nursing leaders. Table 1–2 summarizes definitions of nursing from Nightingale, Henderson, Levine, King, Roy, Orem, and Martha Rogers. This summary shows that the theme of helping or caring is inherent in each of their definitions. Likewise, other common themes in these writings are the nature of persons, environment and health, the concepts on which this text is based.

Since nursing is a profession experiencing growth of its own, we think there is no single definition of nursing. You might develop a new definition of your own while reading this text. Whatever your definition, we hope that the element of caring for or nurturing persons is a motivation for your interest in nursing.

None of these thoughts on the definition of nursing is new. Nurses have always valued the idea of caring for persons; this is what attracts many nurses to the profession. Unfortunately, nurses sometimes lose sight of this goal in the reality of practice. For example, beginning students may find at times that they are so concerned about their own nursing skills that they forget that the person for whom they are caring may have anxieties. Even experienced nurses may become so overwhelmed by the complex technology involved in nursing care, or by institutional demands, that they lose sight of the person who is the object of their activities. Nursing texts frequently focus on concepts or techniques without considering how those techniques will relate to the persons who will benefit from them. For this reason, this text uses the term *person-centered nursing* as a reminder that caring for persons is the organizing focus for all aspects of nursing. Each of the concepts in the text is presented within this context. We have attempted to emphasize the person in each of our discussions, whether person means the nurse or the client.

### Elements of Person-Centered Care

What is person-centered care? Carl Rogers provides us with many thoughts that can be applied to nursing. Rogers was a psychotherapist who challenged the manner in which traditional psychology is concerned with human behavior, particularly behavior that is considered abnormal. Rogers thought that rather than emphasizing what is wrong with a person, psychotherapists would do better to concentrate on strengths in order to facilitate personal growth toward one's highest potential. He believed that all persons are in the process of "becoming" — that is, moving toward their potential — rather than representing finished products. He also believed that persons move in a basically positive direction toward growth. Related to this belief is an appreciation of the value or worth of each person. Rogers stressed that facilitating optimal growth requires a strong interpersonal relationship between the therapist and the client. Through his experiences in psychotherapy, he came to believe



**TABLE 1 – 2**  
**DEFINITIONS OF NURSING**

Definition	Thoughts on Caring	Related Nursing Concepts
<b>Nightingale</b>		
It is quite surprising . . . how many behave as if the scientific end were the only one in view or as if the sick body were but a reservoir for storing medicines into and the surgical disease only a curious case the sufferer has made for the attendant's special information (1859, p 70). What nursing has to do . . . is put the patient in the best condition for nature to act upon him (p 75). Nursing . . . ought to signify the proper use of fresh air, light, warmth, cleanliness, quiet, and the proper selection and administration of diet—all at the least expense of vital power to the patient (p 6).	The patient, rather than the disease process, should be the primary focus of health professionals.	Maintenance of a healthful environment is a primary concern for nursing. Health is achieved by enabling natural processes to work.
<b>Henderson</b>		
Nursing is primarily assisting the individual (sick or well) in the performance of those activities contributing to health or its recovery (or to a peaceful death) that he would perform unaided if he had the necessary strength, will, or knowledge. It is likewise the unique contribution of nursing to help the individual to be independent of such assistance as soon as possible (Harmer, 1955, p 4).	Caring is assisting persons in performance of activities they would accomplish independently given the necessary resources.	The person is a unique individual. Nursing as a profession makes a unique contribution to society.
<b>Levine</b>		
Patient-centered nursing means individualized nursing care . . . every man is a unique individual, and as such he requires a unique	Caring recognizes the uniqueness of individuals. Nursing is an interpersonal process.	Nursing care maintains or supports persons' adaptations through active participation in their environment.