

Nursing Philosophy: The Nursing Metaparadigm and Personal Beliefs

Sarah Minacci

Lakeview College of Nursing

N314: Introduction to Professional Nursing

Professor Shelby Bosch

September 22, 2023

Nursing Philosophy: The Nursing Metaparadigm and Personal Beliefs

The Nursing Metaparadigm

The nursing metaparadigm is considered to be the foundation for nursing practice (Johnson, 2023). It is a broad set of main themes and unifying ideas that help to form the backbone of being a nurse (Johnson, 2023). The four main themes that compose the nursing metaparadigm are, person, environment, health, and nursing (Johnson, 2023). These four concepts are all tied together and are vital aspects in ensuring individuals receive holistic and patient-centered care (Johnson, 2023). In a general sense, the nursing metaparadigm is comprised of the over-arching principles that help to define the nursing practice and can be influenced by and adapted to an individual's own world views (Johnson, 2023).

The first component of the nursing metaparadigm is “person” and it refers to the individual who is receiving care from a nurse (SimpleNursing, 2023). A nurse should strive to understand their patient from a holistic point of view and not just as a set of signs and symptoms (SimpleNursing, 2023). This means the nurse should not only understand a patient's physical needs, but recognize their social, emotional, and spiritual needs as well (SimpleNursing, 2023). The component of “person” also considers the patient's family and friends because nurses should understand the importance of maintaining personal connections for individuals (SimpleNursing, 2023). The ultimate goal of the “person” aspect of the nursing metaparadigm is to help empower each patient and assist them in taking charge of their own health and wellbeing (SimpleNursing, 2023).

The next component of the nursing metaparadigm is “environment,” which is the context in which nursing care takes place (SimpleNursing, 2023). This includes not only the physical

surroundings that can affect a person's health, but the social and cultural factors that play a role in health as well (SimpleNursing, 2023). Nurses should strive to consider how the environment could impact their patient's health and work to adapt to it (SimpleNursing, 2023).

"Environment" can be considered a large encompassing aspect of the nursing metaparadigm because it encourages nurses to consider local, regional, national, and even global cultural and economic conditions that can affect patient health (SimpleNursing, 2023).

Next, is the core concept of "health." "Health" is much more than just the absence of disease or illness and instead "health" encompasses total physical, social, mental, and emotional wellbeing (SimpleNursing, 2023). Nurses should aim to promote health, prevent illness, and support patients in regaining their health and achieving wellness (SimpleNursing, 2023). They should also consider where their patient is on the "health-illness" continuum and critically think about ways to help patients achieve their optimal level of wellness (SimpleNursing, 2023).

The last component of the nursing metaparadigm is "nursing." This core theme involves the actions and responsibilities of a nurse (SimpleNursing, 2023). It includes the knowledge, skills, and attitudes that are necessary to provide quality care to patients (SimpleNursing, 2023). A nurse assumes many roles including educators, advocates, caregivers, and more (SimpleNursing, 2023). The component of "nursing" highlights the importance of theoretical understanding, skills gained in education and practice, and the necessity of ongoing learning in delivering good patient care (SimpleNursing, 2023). Equally important, the "nursing" component also considers the ability to demonstrate effective communication, empathy, and compassion during patient care (SimpleNursing, 2023).

Within all four components of the nursing metaparadigm, it is important to reflect on oneself and consider how our own upbringing, personal beliefs, and values reflect on our

approach to nursing (SimpleNursing, 2023). It is also just as important to consider the varying backgrounds, cultural beliefs, and other significant influences on our patient's lives and how that too can affect care (SimpleNursing, 2023). This reflection and the integration of all components of the metaparadigm help to ensure a holistic approach to nursing (SimpleNursing, 2023).

While the nursing metaparadigm provides a solid backbone to the nursing practice and experts state the importance of professional nursing values as a foundation to the nursing practice, there often a lack of clarity as to the exact meaning of such concepts and values (Schmidt & McArthur, 2017). Even though these concepts do not always have clear definitions, the literature has shown that there are common professional values to nursing that are seen throughout the world (Schmidt & McArthur, 2017). Nurses should critically reflect on their professional values and promote such behaviors in order to provide better care (Schmidt & McArthur, 2017).

What Does it Mean to be a Professional Nurse?

For me personally, I think being a professional nurse means being a part of something bigger than yourself. As a professional nurse you are a healing hand that has a passion for serving others. As a nurse you do not just care for a person physically, but you seek to heal them mentally and spiritually as well. To be a professional nurse means you are also an advocate for your patient and you speak up for them when they may not be able to speak up for themselves. Being a professional nurse means you can build trust and relationships with your patients and not only care for them, but for their loved ones as well. I believe that the professional nurse must also possess many attributes in order to provide the best patient care possible. Schmidt & McArthur (2017) found that the most commonly listed values and attributes considered most vital to professional nursing are, human dignity, integrity, altruism, and justice. I agree

wholeheartedly with these values and believe that a true professional nurse carries out all of these values in their work. To add to their findings, I also personally believe that the professional nurse should be open-minded, adaptable, and a creative problem solver so that they can adjust to the needs of any patient.

As a whole, I see the nursing profession as one that will always be in demand and one that could never be replaced by technology due to the critical importance of human interaction during patient care. Even though I know that it can be a very draining profession, overall, I see it as very fulfilling and extremely rewarding. I also see the nursing profession as an opportunity to always keep learning and full of endless paths to explore and go down.

Values and Beliefs Impacting my Nursing Practice

Of course, the nursing values that I discussed above such as integrity and altruism will certainly impact my nursing practice. I will strive to carry out those values in my actions every day that I go to work. Moreover, I believe that every individual deserves quality care and a space that is free of judgement and ridicule. I personally want to work really hard to establish a good rapport with my future patients and make them feel safe and heard. Because really everyone just wants to be heard and I know from personal experience how much of a difference it can make when you truly feel heard and supported by your nurse.

I am also very avid about the concept of true “healthcare” where a band-aid is not just placed over the signs and symptoms of an illness, but rather the root of the illness is healed so that individuals can work towards true wellness. I believe strongly in holistic health because the body systems all work together, not in isolation, and each person’s body works slightly differently. Therefore, holistic, and individualized care is very important for achieving true wellness.

Additionally, I am very passionate about patient education and the importance of increasing and promoting health literacy for patients. When patients have a higher health literacy and a better understanding of how to manage their health, I believe that this leads to many positive outcomes such as increased communication between the patient and healthcare providers and overall increased satisfaction with healthcare settings. I think that this in turn often leads to better adherence to medical recommendations and an overall improved quality of life. I have always enjoyed teaching and I know that that will definitely impact my nursing practice.

In the year 2030, I would like to be working somewhere in women's health. I think that I would want to be working in a smaller clinic or outpatient setting because I am not sure if I will love the fast pace of working in a hospital. I love the idea of working with a smaller facility where I can really get to know everyone that works there. I would also like to have become more specialized in a particular area of nursing by 2030. I am really interested in genetics, so I think that I would enjoy working in fertility and reproductive medicine. I have also always had very maternal instincts so I can see myself becoming a certified midwife or lactation consultant as well. As mentioned previously, I really enjoy patient education, so in 2030 I see myself in a career where I not only provide care to women but where I play a crucial role in helping to teach women about their health too.

References

- Johnson, F. M. (2023, February 3). 2.2: *The nursing metaparadigm*. Medicine LibreTexts.
[https://med.libretexts.org/Bookshelves/Nursing/Nursing_\(Ulutasdemir\)/02%3A_Choosing_Your_Philosophical_Slat/2.02%3A_The_Nursing_Metaparadigm](https://med.libretexts.org/Bookshelves/Nursing/Nursing_(Ulutasdemir)/02%3A_Choosing_Your_Philosophical_Slat/2.02%3A_The_Nursing_Metaparadigm)
- Schmidt, B. J., & McArthur, E. C. (2017). Professional nursing values: A concept analysis. *Nursing Forum*, 53(1), 69–75. <https://doi.org/10.1111/nuf.12211>
- SimpleNursing. (2023, June 27). *What are Nursing Metaparadigms?*. Simple Nursing.
<https://simplenursing.com/nursing-metaparadigm/#:~:text=What%20is%20the%20Nursing%20Metaparadigm,holistic%20and%20patient%2Dcentered%20care.>