

Importance of Theory

Theory is important to the field of nursing, because it provides structure for the nursing field. "Nursing theories evolve from extant nursing reality, as seen through the mind of a theorist who is influenced by certain historical and philosophical processes and events" (Meleis, 2011). Older theories have influenced the nursing practice in great ways, they have set standards and guidelines for our practice. These theories are still being referred to and used today. There have been many developmental milestones in nursing theory that have shaped the nursing field. These milestones have been developed by Florence Nightingale to J. Fawcett. Also the milestones paved the path for the newer theory age of Nurse Empowerment. Theory allows nurses to be innovators, to develop their own thoughts and theories about nursing.

A lot of practitioners follow a particular theory whether they do it consciously or unconsciously. Whichever theory is chosen by a practitioner it generally guides his/her approach in providing care. It is important for practitioners to be knowledgeable of the different theories, they help practitioners listen, reflect, and diagnose properly. Theory makes sure that we are working towards a desired outcome, set by both the client and the practitioner. Meleis states that "theory is a tool that renders practice more efficient and more effective and helps in identifying outcomes" (2011). If for no other reason this is why we should bother with theory.

Reference

Meleis, Afaf (2011). *Theoretical Nursing: Development and Progress*. 5th Ed. Philadelphia, PA: Wolter Kluwer/Lippincott Williams & Wilkins