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Nurse as Patient: Individual and System Implications

**KAREN J. FOLI, PHD, RN, ANEF, FAAN, PROFESSOR
PURDUE SCHOOL OF NURSING, WEST LAFAYETTE CAMPUS**

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LEARNING OUTCOMES

Participants will be able to..

1. Critique the assumptions that are associated with seeing nurses as patients.
2. Describe the three Es of trauma and the seven nurse-specific traumas.
3. Propose at least one intervention based on nurse narratives that describe nurse-specific traumas.
4. Synthesize the implications of nurse-as-patient at the individual and system levels.

Thesis Statement and Assumptions

How are nurses currently viewed?

- Trustworthy, ethical, honest by society (Saad, 2022)
- Expense on health organizations' budgets
- Viewed “en masse” as a body/group; female dominated – Objectification?
- Other....



Thesis Statement

- Viewing nurses as patients, as persons, in need of mental health support and services, creates a new discourse. This discourse allows practitioners, educators, researchers, and policy makers to articulate strategies and interventions that focus on supporting nurses with mental health needs and concomitant benefit to organizations.
- Further, the unique genesis of nurses' mental health needs may be examined within this discourse.

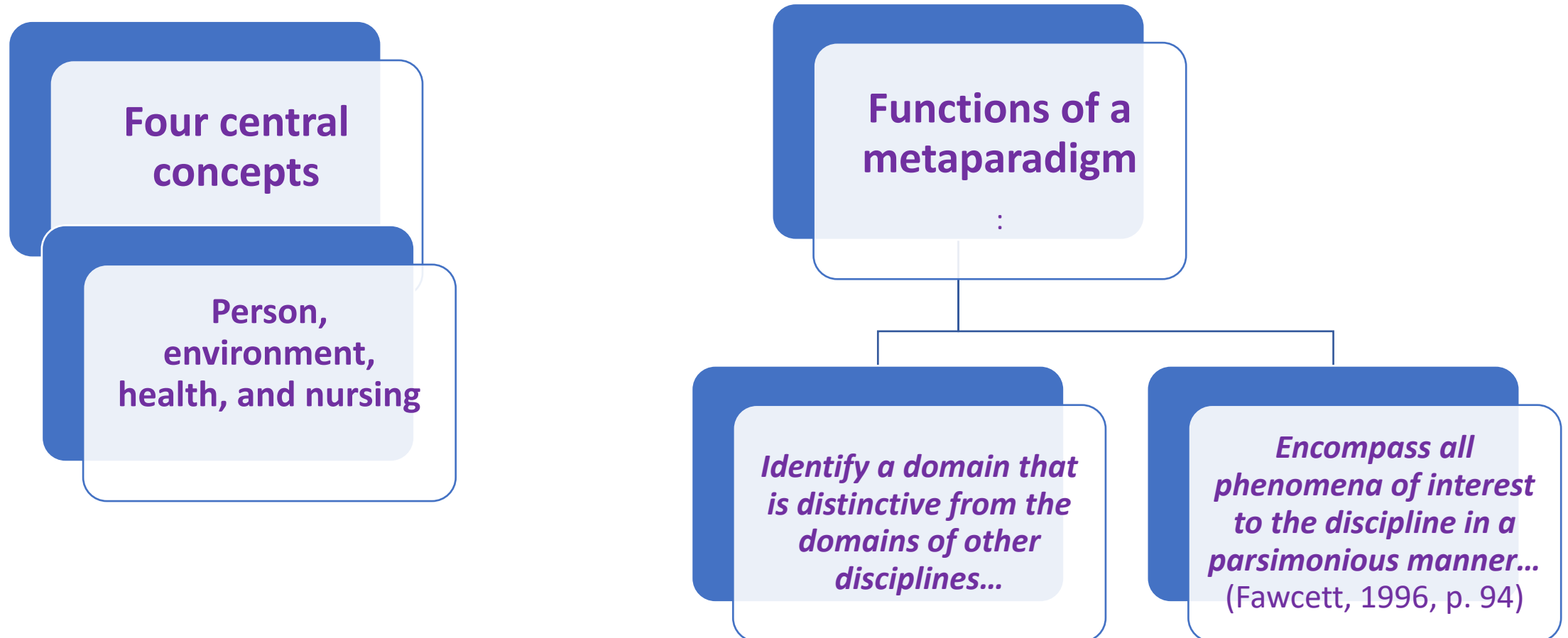
Assumptions:

Situating nurses as persons/patients allows us to...

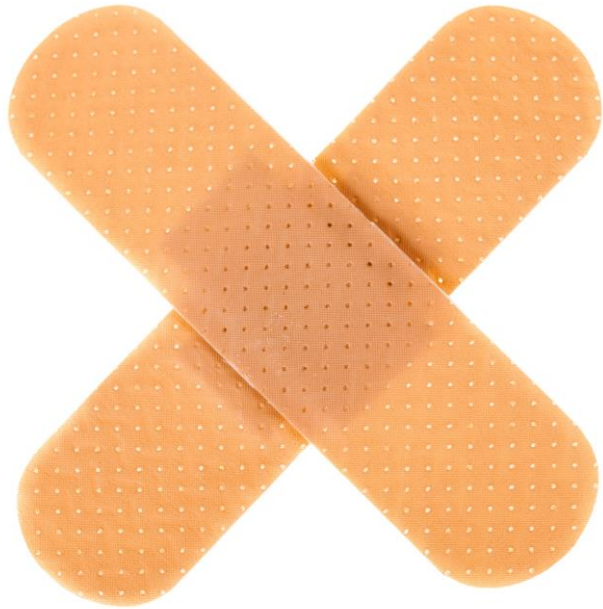
- Individual Level: provide a plan of care for the person/nurse.
- Individual Level: account for the roles nurses take on: bedside provider, supervisors (middle and executive), students, and faculty.
- System Level: recognize and respond in informed ways to support retention of nursing professionals; re-examine the quadruple aims (Berwick et al., 2008; Bodenheimer & Sinsky, 2014).
- System Level: as nurse leaders, nurse innovators, and nurse policy makers to address the needs of nurses in new contextualized ways and focus efforts cognizant of those needs and contexts.

Fawcett's Metaparadigm + Theories w/ Focus on Nurse as Person (Patient)

Fawcett's Metaparadigm (1984; 1996)



Conti-O'Hare: Wounded Healer (1998; 2002)



- Nurse theorist who attempts to bridge person and nurse into one conceptual “being.”
- Conti-O'Hare is clear about the nurse as being a wounded person due to being a nurse AND one who seeks healing through profession
- Led to “confessions” of nurses in dual roles (caregiver/healer and care receiver/wounded); at risk for judgment and stigma (MacCulloch & Shattell, 2009, p. 135)

Foli (2021; 2019): Middle Range Theory of Nurse-

- Humankind and nurse-specific traumas influence the nurse's ability to offer care and well-being
- Trauma is defined as: "Individual trauma results from an event, series of events, or set of circumstances that is experienced by an individual as physically or emotionally harmful or life threatening and that has lasting adverse effects on the individual's functioning and mental, physical, social, emotional, or spiritual well-being." (Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration [SAMHSA], 2014, p. 7)



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Seven Nurse-Specific Traumas (Foli, 2022; Foli & Thompson, 2019)

1. Vicarious and Secondary Trauma – change in worldview; co-living suffering
2. Historical Trauma – intergenerational trauma; racism in nursing
3. Workplace Violence – physical and verbal assaults from patients and families
4. System-Induced Trauma – harm or potential for harm from treatments (i.e., restraints, ventilators)
5. Second Victim Trauma – medical error and the aftermath, including guilt
6. Insufficient Resource Trauma – not enough personnel, supplies, etc.
7. Trauma from Disasters - triaging patients and offering care based on those decisions; rationing resources

Situating Nurse as “Person/Patient”

How do we define “person/patient”?

“Person” refers to the recipient of nursing, including individuals, families, communities and other groups;... (Fawcett, 1996, p. 95)



Nurse as mental health patient



- Compassion fatigue, burnout
- “Quiet quitting” (Ellis & Yang, 2022): “we just don’t have the staff.”
- Depression
- Anxiety
- Trauma/PTSD
- Substance/alcohol use
- Suicide

Stigma and Other Barriers

Nurses' mental and emotional health has been significantly degraded during the pandemic, exacerbating long-standing barriers to accessing support and resources. Stigma surrounding mental and emotional health has intensified nurses' reluctance to seek services and resources (Rushton & Boston-Leary, p. 11)



Student and Young Nurses as Mental Health Patients

- Adverse childhood experiences: 40% of nursing students reported an ACE score of 4 or more (Clark & El-Makarim Aboueissa, 2021)
- Substance use – performance enhancing substances + alcohol (Foli et al., under review)
- Younger nurses leaving disproportionately (data collected January 2022)
 - *A statistically significant relationship exists between age and the emotional health of nurses. For all nurses, 30% said they are ‘not emotionally healthy’ or ‘not at all emotionally healthy.’ For nurses under 25, that number is 46%, and for 55 or older, 19%... (American Nurses Foundation, 2022, n.p.).*

Interventions Created by Discourse of Nurse as Person/ Patient

Interventions - Examples

- Practitioners/Managers/Leaders:
 - Quality improvement projects focused on nurse well-being; get “voice of the consumer” (nurses); track cost savings through decreased call-off/sick time, retention, hold managers accountable
 - Push for organizational transparency in staffing with nurse representation
- Educators:
 - Debrief with student emotional well-being in mind
 - Ways of knowing (Chinn & Kramer, 2018); tend to emphasize empirical knowledge; social justice FOR nurses
 - Encourage trauma-informed language and behaviors infused within the organization

Interventions

- Researchers:
 - Continue to push for funding agency recognition of nurse as patient: outcome variables such as compassion fatigue, burnout, stress and trauma, and substance use
 - Lead teams as the content expert in how global health depends on nurses' health
- Policy Makers:
 - Within organizations, examine ideology of “throw away” nurses (due to substance use) and approve humane policies for nurses who struggle with chronic physical and mental health conditions
 - Innovators diffuse evidence-based practices to support recovery from COVID-19 traumas/other mental health needs; they support adaptive coping (discourage “margarita breakfasts”, implement flexible staffing, evaluate effectiveness of employee assistance programs)

Accomplishments Offered by the Discourse of Nurse as Person/Patient

What is accomplished by seeing nurses/student nurses as persons/patients?

- Practice

- Nurse as person/patient allows peers, mentors, and leaders to consider effect of nurse suffering on patient outcomes and nurse retention. Economic considerations. Create a “moral community” and “mattering” (Epstein et al., 2020)
- Triple Aim:
 - Improving the health of populations
 - Enhancing the patient experience of care
 - Reducing the per capita cost of health care (Berwick & Nolan, 2008)
 - “the goal of improving the work life of health care providers, including clinicians and staff” (Bodenheimer & Sinsky, 2014).

What is accomplished by seeing nurses/student nurses as persons/patients?

- Education

- Students graduate with an understanding of how to build resilience and emotional well-being with the recognition of organizational context
- Students are able to mitigate stigma of mental health needs by having it normalized by faculty and peers
- Students learn self-care and adaptive coping mechanisms to deal with stressors and trauma
- Faculty can recognize own mental health status without judgement (available 24/7 mentality; secondary traumatic stress, vulnerability to second victim traumas due to student errors, and so forth)

What may be accomplished by seeing nurses/student nurses as persons/patients?

- Research:
 - Funding streams become available (National Institute of Nursing Research [NINR], 2022).
 - With funding, randomized control trials can test interventions targeted to nurses' mental health, with comparison/control groups, for translating evidence-based practices in organizations through implementation science
 - Legitimizes efforts to create multidisciplinary teams, with nurse leaders, that measure a wide variety of outcomes such as nurse emotional health, improved patient outcomes, and cost savings

What is accomplished by seeing nurses/student nurses as persons/patients?

- Policy:
 - Micro and macro levels of policy formation
 - Micro – internal organizational policies that are created through shared governance – “Where do I start” (nurse leader); need to ensure we are communicating to those with power
 - Macro – legislative efforts are getting traction (staffing, MAT therapy, etc.)



Conclusions

Conclusions: Journey from Abstract to Concrete



- Nursing is in crisis – resignations, “quiet quitting,” demoralized. Younger nurses leaving at faster rate than other age groups. Promises from COVID-19 made by organizations have been inconsistent and waning.
- Conceptualizing the nurse as person/patient offers potential interventions and solutions to this crisis; by implementing interventions in practice, education, research, and policy formation goals may be achieved.

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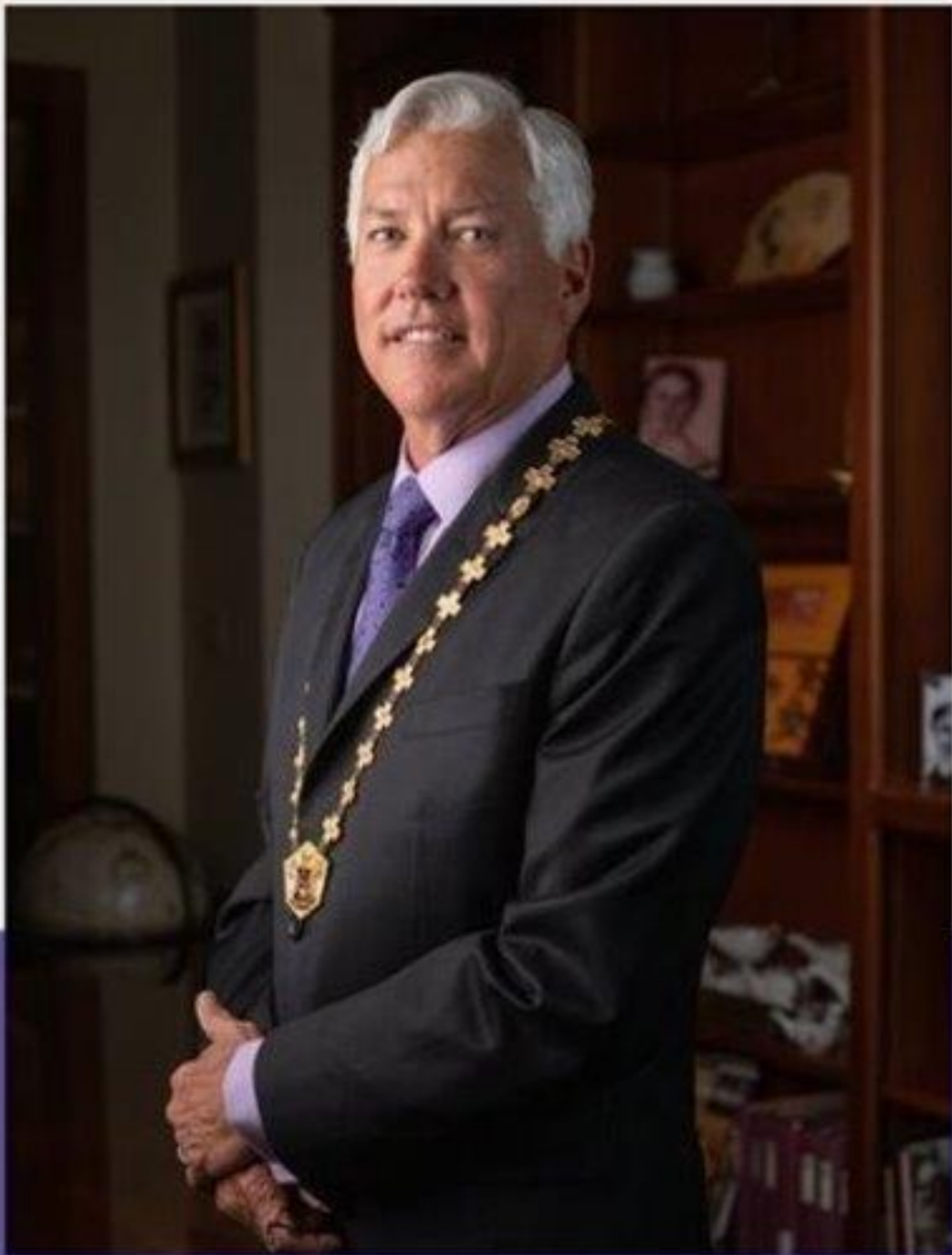


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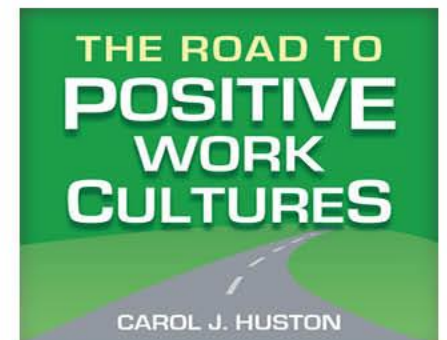
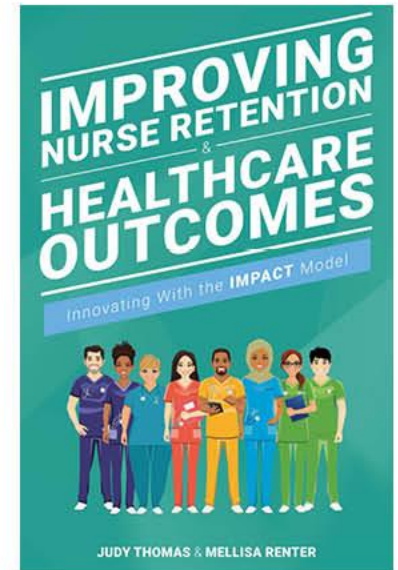
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