THEORETICAL BASIS for Nursing
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FOURTH EDITION

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To Kaitlin and Grant—You have helped me broaden my thoughts and consider all kinds of possibilities; I hope I’ve done the same for you.

Also for Helen and Keith—Our children chose well. Besides, you have given us Madelyn, Logan, Brenna, Liam, Lucy, and Andrew; they are gifts beyond words.

Melanie McEwen

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Frequently, nursing students respond with a cringing expression or a resounding “ugh!” when faced with the requirement of taking a course on theory. Indeed, many fail to see theory’s relevance to the real world of nursing practice and often have difficulty applying the information in later courses and in their research. This book is the result of the frustration felt by a group of nursing instructors who met a number of years ago to adopt a textbook for a theory course. Indeed, because of student complaints and faculty dissatisfaction, we were changing textbooks yet again. A fairly lengthy discussion arose in which we concluded that the available books did not meet the needs of our students or course faculty. Ultimately, we determined to “build a better mousetrap.” Our intent was to write a book that was a general overview of theory per se, stressing how it is—and should be—used by nurses to improve practice, research, education, and management/leadership.

As in past editions, an ongoing review of trends in nursing theory and nursing science has shown an increasing emphasis on middle range theory, evidence-based practice, and situation-specific theories. To remain current and timely, in this fourth edition, we have added a new chapter discussing evidence-based practice, highlighting how it relates to theory in nursing, and presenting several evidence-based practice models commonly used by nurses. We have also included new middle range nursing theories and added a significant section discussing situation-specific nursing theories, describing how they relate to evidence-based practice. Updates and application examples have been added throughout the discussions on the various theories.

Organization of the Text

_Theoretical Basis for Nursing_ is designed to be a basic nursing theory textbook that includes the essential information students need to understand and apply theory.

The book is divided into four units. **Unit I, Introduction to Theory,** provides the background needed to understand what theory is and how it is used in nursing. It outlines tools and techniques used to develop, analyze, and evaluate theory so that it can be used in nursing practice, research, administration and management, and education. In this unit, we have provided a balanced view of “hot” topics (e.g., philosophical world views and utilization of shared or borrowed theory). Also, rather than espousing one strategy for activities such as concept development and theory evaluation, we have included a variety of strategies.

**Unit II, Nursing Theories,** focuses largely on the grand nursing theories and begins with a chapter describing their historical development. This unit divides the grand nursing theories into three groups based on their focus (human needs, interactive process, and unitary process). The works of many of the grand theorists are briefly summarized in Chapters 7, 8, and 9. We acknowledge that these analyses
are not comprehensive; rather, they are intended to provide the reader with enough information to understand the basis of the work and to whet the reader's appetite to select one or more for further study.

Chapters 10 and 11 cover the significant topic of middle range nursing theory. Chapter 10 presents a detailed overview of the origins and growth of middle range theory in nursing and gives numerous examples of how middle range theories have been developed by nurses. Chapter 11 provides an overview of some of the growing number of middle range nursing theories. The theories presented include some of the most commonly used middle range nursing theories (e.g., Pender's Health Promotion Model and Leininger's Culture Care Diversity and Universality Theory) as well as some that are less well known but have a growing body of research support (e.g., Meleis' Transitions Theory, the Theory of Unpleasant Symptoms, and the Uncertainty in Illness Theory). The intent is to provide a broad range of middle range theories to familiarize the reader with examples and to encourage them to search for others appropriate to their practice or research. Ultimately, it is hoped that readers will be challenged to develop new theories that can be used by nurses.

Chapter 12, which discusses evidence-based practice (EBP), is new to this edition. This chapter explains and defines the idea/process of EBP and describes how it relates to nursing theory and application of theory in nursing practice and research. The chapter concludes with a short presentation and review of five different EBP models that have been widely used by nurses and are well supported in the literature.

Unit III, Shared Theories Used by Nurses, is rather unique in nursing literature. Our book acknowledges that “shared” or “borrowed” theories are essential to nursing and negates the idea that the use of shared theory in practice or research is detrimental. In this unit, we have identified some of the most significant theories that have been developed outside of the discipline of nursing but are continually used in nursing. We have organized these theories based on broad disciplines: theories from the sociologic sciences, behavioral sciences, and biomedical sciences, as well as from administration and management and learning. Each of these chapters was written by a nurse with both educational and practical experience in her respective area. These theories are presented with sufficient information to allow the reader to understand the theories and to recognize those that might be appropriate for her or his own work. These chapters also provide original references and give examples of how the concepts, theories, and models described have been used by other nurses.

Finally, Unit IV, Application of Theory in Nursing Practice, explains how theories are applied in nursing. Separate chapters cover nursing practice, nursing research, nursing administration and management, and nursing education. These chapters include many specific examples for the application of theory and are intended to be a practical guide for theory use. The heightened development of practice theories and EBP guidelines are critical to theory application in nursing today, so these areas have been expanded. The unit concludes with a chapter that discusses some of the future issues in theory within the discipline.
Key Features

In addition to numerous tables and boxes that highlight and summarize important information, *Theoretical Basis for Nursing* contains case studies, learning activities, exemplars, and illustrations that help students visualize various concepts. New to this edition is a special feature called Link to Practice.

- **Link to Practice**: All chapters include at least one “Link to Practice” box, which presents useful information or clinically related examples related to the subject being discussed. The intent is to give additional tools or resources that can be used by nurses to apply the content in their own practice or research.
- **Case Studies**: At the end of Chapter 1 and the beginning of Chapters 2 to 22, case studies help the reader understand how the content in the chapter relates to the everyday experience of the nurse, whether in practice, research, or other aspects of nursing.
- **Learning Activities**: At the end of each chapter, learning activities pose critical thinking questions, propose individual and group projects related to topics covered in the chapter, and stimulate classroom discussion.
- **Exemplars**: In five chapters, an exemplar discusses a scholarly study from the perspectives of concept analysis (Chapter 3); theory development (Chapter 4); theory analysis and evaluation (Chapter 5); middle range theory development (Chapter 10); and theory generation via research, theory testing via research, and use of a theory as the conceptual framework for a research study (Chapter 19).
- **Illustrations**: Diagrams and models are included throughout the book to help the reader better understand the many different theories presented.

New To This Edition

- New Chapter 12, *Evidence-Based Practice and Nursing Theory*
- More detailed explanation of EBP and its relationship to theory in nursing
- Enhanced attention to situation-specific theories and how they relate to EBP
- Numerous recent examples of application of theories in nursing practice, nursing research, leadership/administration, and education
- NEW instructional support

Student Resources Available on thePoint

- **Literature Assessment Activity** provides an interactive tool featuring journal articles along with questions that will encourage students to think critically about the literature. Students can print or e-mail their responses to their instructor.
- **Case Studies** with applicable questions guide students in understanding how the various theories link to nursing practice.
- **Learning Objectives** for each chapter help focus the student.
- **Internet Resources** provide live web links to pertinent sites so that students can further their study and understanding of the various theories.
- **Journal Articles** for each chapter offer opportunities to gain more knowledge and understanding of the chapter content.
Instructor Resources Available on thePoint

- **Instructor’s Guide** includes application-level discussion questions and classroom/online activities that Melanie McEwen uses in her own teaching!
- **Strategies for Effective Teaching of Nursing Theory** provide ideas for instructors to help make the nursing theory class come alive.
- **Test Generator Questions** provide multiple-choice questions that can be used for testing general content knowledge.
- **PowerPoints with audience response (Iclicker) questions**, based on the ones used by Melanie McEwen in her own classroom, help highlight important points to enhance the classroom, experience.
- **Case Studies** with questions, answers, and related activities offer opportunities for instructors to make the student case studies an exciting, fun, and rewarding classroom/online experience.
- **Image Bank** provides images from the text that instructors can use to enhance their own presentations.

In summary, the focus of this learning package is on the application of theory rather than on the study, analysis, and critique of grand theorists or a presentation of a specific aspect of theory (e.g., construction or evaluation). It is hoped that practicing nurses, nurse researchers, and nursing scholars, as well as graduate students and theory instructors, will use this book and its accompanying resources to gain a better understanding and appreciation of theory.

*Melanie McEwen, PhD, RN, CNE, ANEF*

*Evelyn M. Wills, PhD, RN*
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