Foundations of

Nursing Practice

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Edited by

Richard Hogston and Penelope M. Simpson

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PENELOPE M. SIMPSON

Introduction:

What is Nursing?

This text is designed to be used as a study guide to support many aspects of your learning throughout the common foundation programme. Each chapter has been written by an enthusiastic subject specialist, and we hope that their passionate interest is infectious. The chapters are not meant to be read in any particular order but to be tackled when they feel relevant to your progress and experience. The interactive style is intended to make you think, with various activities to enliven the text and enable you to apply your knowledge in practice settings. Constant reference is made to complementary texts, current evidence and further reading. Objectives give you an idea of what you can achieve by working through each chapter, and a running glossary within the chapters will enhance your vocabulary and understanding. Cross-referencing within and between chapters increases the coherence of the text. Client case studies draw on all four branches of nursing and feature a range of settings to encourage you to reflect upon your reading and its application to clients. At the end of the chapters, review questions enable you to check your knowledge gain.

Each of the chapters discusses a particular topic. In Chapter 1, the five stages of the problem-solving approach to care known as the nursing process will be used to help you to focus on the example of the client in pain. You will be enabled to map your own concept of health and, through Chapter 2 on health promotion, identify the concept of health gain. Nurses tend to deal with uniquely vulnerable clients, and nursing can carry risks to nurses, so Chapter 3 will identify some of the many safeguards, legal and otherwise, available to protect you and your clients. Eating and drinking, normal enough activities, can pose particular problems for clients so you will be encouraged in Chapter 4 to look at your own knowledge and habits, aiming to help clients to achieve optimum nourishment for their changing needs. Logically, elimination follows

and Chapter 5 will help to dispel some taboos and myths, with a healthy emphasis on achieving and attaining relative normality across the life span. Chapter 6, on respiration and circulation, will explore the nurse's role in assessing and implementing the care of clients with difficulties in breathing and maintenance of the circulation. Other body systems, their purpose and functioning, and what can go wrong will be explored in Chapter 7, covering the musculoskeletal system, the skin, lever systems and movement. The role of the nurse and professional responsibilities, including accountability, will be clearly explained in Chapter 8, on wound care. Working in a team is a key part of nursing, and social behaviour and professional interactions will enhance your skill in therapeutic and other communication; this topic is covered in Chapter 9. Knowing yourself better, the subject of Chapter 10, will enable you to give of yourself to clients and colleagues without being diminished. The image of nursing that you started out with is likely to be much changed as you progress, and reflective practice, explained in Chapter 11, will be one tool for this. As nursing takes place in a political arena, nurses should be political, and The Politics of Health Care (Chapter 12) will help you to understand the climate in which current developments were conceived. Interprofessional practice (Chapter 13) will be a clear focus for the future, as will challenges to professional practice (Chapter 14), enabling you to look forward to the next part of your programme. The chapter contents reflect the authors' views and in no way commit the Department of Health.

We hope you enjoy the book, finding it stimulating and thought provoking, and we wish you well in your nursing career.