**King’s Goal Attainment Theory**

**Background**

At times, it is prudent to view nursing as a calling than a career. Nursing is a profession where the well-being of the patient becomes the duty and the objective. A nurse is always ready to help patients retain or regain their good health. To ensure that the patients receive the most effective of care, a nurse ought to set out care goals, which when achieved offers a sense of accomplishment and becomes beneficial to the patient. King happened to appreciate that point too well to the extent of theorizing it and putting it into practice. Born in 1923, King grew to become one of the essential brains in the nursing profession (Williams, 2017). Not only did she feature prominently in the scholarly arena, but she was also a distinguished practitioner. She developed the theory, which is named after her, with the aim of creating guidelines and directions on how nurses could create relationships with their patients with the purpose of attaining good health. The theory was introduced into practice in the 1960s. Mainly, her theory focuses on the development of a personal relationship between the patient and the nurse

**Analysis of Basic Components**

According to King the whole process of nursing centers on the actions, reaction, and interactions between the nurse and the patients. Through the process, both manage to control the methods of reaching towards the desired outcomes. The theory is made up of both assumptions and realities.  Firstly, the theory assumes that the nursing profession centers on the care of human beings (King, 1981). Secondly, the primary objective of the nursing profession is the delivery of the effective health care services to individuals and the society. Thirdly, King assumes that the patient and the nurse, as human beings, can communicate with each other and set up the desired goals (1981). Also, the theory assumes that it is human nature to be interactive. Besides, the patient views the healthcare environment as the creation of transactions with him and the individuals. King divides the interactive segment into three facets, which she classifies as personal, interpersonal, and social systems.

**General Propositions**

The propositions of the theory are merely the outcomes that would be realized if the ideals of the theory are to be observed. The general propositions are a chronology of events and outcomes that both the nurse and the patient would achieve if they would adhere to the assumption postulated by King in her theory. First, the theory proposes that transactions occur when there is an actual nurse-patient interaction. The transaction becomes the stepping-stone towards the achievement of the goals. Thus, when the patient and the nurse interact, they end up making transactions that lead to the achievement of their goals (King, 1971). As such, the theory demands that the patient’s and the nurse’s roles ought to be congruent such that their interactions would avoid conflict. That calls for an initial perception of the two parties on their roles in the healthcare system. Therefore, a knowledgeable nurse will converse with his or her patient so that they can set up mutual goals, which are destined to occur.

**King’s Interacting Systems**

King’s conceptual system is based on three interacting systems. The personal system revolves around the self; upon which an individual focuses on his or her awareness. Thoughts and feelings are critical in the system since there are responsible for the development of an individual’s potential into self-actualization (Frey, Sieloff, & Norris, 2002). Thus, the personal system conceptualizes on the body, space, and time.

 On the other hand, the interpersonal system is formed through interactive segments. It integrates more than one individual making it more complicated than the personal level. King explains the system as the interaction of people in an interactive way to the extent that their relationship can manifest physically (Frey, Sieloff, & Norris, 2002). As such, critical components of the concept are communication and interaction where the role is defined and understood, then ultimately transacted.

Finally, King posits that the culmination of the interpersonal system leads to the development of a shared pool of people sharing the same ideologies thus making a social system. Here, the fundamental concepts are an organization, status, and decision-making (Frey, Sieloff, & Norris, 2002). King conceptualizes the attainment of health care goals as a culmination of individual concepts fomenting to social ones (1981). All the concepts from personal through interpersonal to social lead to goal attainment.

**The Relevance of the Theory in Practice**

King’s theory has shaped the procedures in the nursing practice. The various elements of the theory are essential in the nursing industry. The assumption of such critical components can be detrimental to the overall program. As earlier mentioned, communication is a critical component in theory. It has to be there for the attainment of goals. King’s theory enhances effective communication, which is critical in harmonizing the roles and responsibilities in the emergency rooms. A nursing environment calls for the timely response of the nurses to the patient’s needs while at the same time the patient should be ready to communicate in an interactive segment. According to King (1981), the nurse is sensitized to manage the impressions they create towards their patients. Admittedly, when a nurse creates a cordial and confidential impression towards the patient, it is easy for them to develop a good relationship leading to effective handling of health care problems. Therefore, to enhance communication within the nursing industry it is prudent to follow the propositions forwarded by King in her goal attainment theory.

**Strengths and Limitations of the Theory**

The conceptual framework of the theory appears invaluable in case of an emergency. The assessment of the patients is the foundation of all the operations in the emergency room. After the primary survey, it is imperative to enhance the personal system of Kin’s theory in the emergency room. The patient’s feelings and perceptions are critical in his or her recovery course especially in cases of trauma.  Often, a traumatized patient such as a rape victim may have lost their self-esteem yet it is very imperative in the healing process. Besides, patients who sustain severe injuries may develop indifference towards their person. After administering the primary care, King’s theory posits that the nurses should venture in restoring the patient’s esteem.

In such a case, both the patient and the nurse work mutually towards attaining the goal – which is the restoration of self-esteem. Otherwise, some patients become concerned that they may not be having any control over their lives once they are placed within the emergency care. Often, traumatized patients will oppose some of the moves by the nurses such as placement in the oxygen kits (Williams, 2017). Moreover, others have the feeling that they no longer need another person’s intervention to solve their chronic health problems. Such issues are prevalent in cases where patients have terminal illnesses. Unfortunately, the patients would lose their sense of self-hood resisting the need to take drastic measures. Unless the nurse understands the various systems of King’s goal attainment theory, it would be difficult for them to resolve the impending emergency case.

Although the interpersonal system is very critical in any health care system, all the systems are fundamental. In fact, King emphasizes the importance of the system as the pillar of her theory. She notes that the interpersonal components help in bringing together two strangers together in an organization where they mutually set up their goals to help and to be helped (King 1981). Besides, she emphatically pinpoints the interrelation between the systems. King suggests that “the nurse and the client communicate, identify their roles by interpreting their exchanges” (King, 1981, p. 144). Hence, all the systems are closely related.

**Summary**

It is evident that King has fundamentally contributed to and shaped the course of the nursing practice. A close look at the applications of the theory, and its strengths and limitations shows that it can be universally utilized in nursing organizations. Although her theory dates back to 1960, its conceptual framework is salient to the contemporary nursing issues. Besides, the practicality of the theory as illustrated in the discussion validates the claim of her propositions.

**References**

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