

Theory of human becoming



Rosemarie Rizzo Parse is a noted nursing scholar and prolific author. The humanbecoming school of thought presents an alternative to both the conventional bio-medical approach and the bio-psycho-social-spiritual approach of theories of nursing. The humanbecoming school of thought posits quality of life from each person's or group's own perspective as the goal of nursing. Rosemarie Rizzo Parse first published the theory in 1981 as the " Man-living-health" theory.

The name was officially changed to " the human becoming theory" in 1992 to remove the term " man," after the change in the dictionary definition of the word from its former meaning of " humankind" (Delis, 2012, p. 145). Parse was educated at Duquesne University in Pittsburgh and earned her master's and doctoral degrees from the University of Pittsburgh. She went on to become dean of the College of Nursing at Duquesne and is currently Professor and Niehoff chair at Loyola University in Chicago (McEwen & Wills, 2011).

Parse's Theory of Human Becoming stems from principals and concepts from Roger's Science of Unitary Human Beings and incorporated concepts from existential phenomenological thought as expressed by Heidegger, Sarte and Marleau-Ponty. The theory comes from her experience in nursing and from a synthesis of theoretical principals of human sciences. Human Becoming Theory The humanbecoming theory purports that humans not only are " indivisible, unpredictable, and everchanging," (Smith, 2010, p. 216) they are to be honored. Within this framework, nursing practice focuses on bearing witness to the journey of each individual's unfolding health patterns.

Parse synthesized the nine assumptions of humans and becoming into three broad statements, “ Human becoming is freely choosing personal meaning in situations in the intersubjective process of living value priorities, human becoming is cocreating rhythmical patterns of relating in mutual process with the universe and human becoming is cotranscending multidimensionally with the emerging possibles” (McEwen & Wills, 2011, p. 193). Nurses guide individuals and families in choosing possibilities in changing the health process by intersubjective participation with the clients.

Practice focuses on illuminating meaning, and the nurse acts as a guide to choose possibilities in the changing health experiences. Practitioners using Parse’s method do not focus on changing an individual’s behavior to fit a defined nursing process and do not attempt to label them with possibly erroneous nursing diagnoses. Rather, they practice from the understanding that the human-universe process involves the nurse’s true presence with the person and the family. The nurse adapts to the person and family as they move through the experience. Usefulness Parse’s theory has been a guide for practice in health care settings throughout the world.

Parse’s method for research, a qualitative method of inquiry, titled “ the human becoming hermeneutic method”, has been selected by nursing scholars in Australia, Denmark, Finland, Greece, Italy and Japan (McEwen & Wills, 2011, p. 194). The authors concluded that there were positive patterns of change in nursing practice after implementing the guidelines; nursing care was more client-centered and more considerate of the individual and family experiences (McEwen & Wills, 2011). Sandra Maxwell Smith, RN, PhD, used

Parse's theory to evaluate the home health setting as an RN with her patients.

One of the characteristics of this particular home health network that interested her was its philosophy of honoring patients and their wishes. She was encouraged to take the time each patient and family desired when she visited and to respond quickly to their between-visit phone calls. However, in late summer as the network's parent company's economic woes became shared with the network, the agency became more strident regarding their productivity ratio and the availability of nurses to respond to patient emergencies and phone calls.

The focus appeared to shift from doing the right thing by and for the patient to doing things right by and for the agency. Sandra ended up terminating her employment with home health and realized that she had much to be grateful for from the many varied and cocreated experiences shared with patients and families; and that those experiences had provided her with the opportunity to integrate nursing theory in her nursing practice.

Moreover, the ideas within the humanbecoming theory encouraged her to believe that she was doing the right thing when she took the time to be fully present with patients and families, even when the agency's push was for shorter patient visits (Smith, 2010). Although there were nursing skills to be performed with every assigned nursing visit, her visits were much more than the performance of those skills and the documentation of the visits for billing purposes. Her visits were for the purpose of bearing witness to the unfolding health journey of the individuals she encountered. Conclusion

Rosemarie Rizzo Parse was a very influential nursing theorist. The principal value of the human becoming perspective is the worldview that sees humans as intentional beings, freely choosing to live within paradoxical ways of being. Nurses live the art of human becoming in true presence with the unfolding of illuminating meaning, synchronizing rhythms, and mobilizing transcendence (Delis, 2012). Research guided by human becoming sheds light on the meaning of universal humanly lived experiences such as hope, taking life day-by-day, grieving, suffering, and courage (Delis, 2012).

It is a unique way to view health and gives insight into how individuals create their own destiny. I chose to use my references based on the human becoming theory and their insights and experiences with them. Pamela Coombs Delis RN, MSN, wrote *Illumination of Parse's Theory of Humanbecoming : Modern Literature as Situation Study*. This literature formed the basis for an educational session for graduate nursing students in a nursing theory course, in this case on Parse's humanbecoming theory.

The response to this teaching methodology suggests popular literature can be used successfully in teaching nursing theory. Sandra Smith wrote *Humanbecoming: not just a theory—it is a way of being*. She described how for one nurse working with homecare patients humanbecoming was much more than a theory; it was a way of being. She was able to identify the unique healthcare patterns and how they lived is what was important to them. I also used McEwen and Wills, *Theoretical Basis for Nursing* book from the course. It gave a basic understanding of Parse's theory, concepts, usefulness and application to nursing.