

Profile of faye glenn abdellah in nursing



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Faye Glenn Abdellah was a true leader in the field of nursing. Her theory provided a basis for determining and organizing nursing care for the patient. Her theory also provided a way to organize appropriate nursing strategies. Ms. Abdellah's patient centered care approach to nursing was created from her practice and is considered a human needs theory. The theory was created to help with the education of young nurses. Her theory not only aids in providing care in the hospital setting, it also has many uses in the community setting as well.

Faye Glenn Abdellah was born March 13, 1919 in New York City. When she was 18 years old, she watched as the German Airship named the Hindenburg plummeted to the ground in New Jersey in 1937, where she and her brother ran to help people on the ground, although she did not know how to help them. From this experience, she knew that she wanted to become a nurse to be able to help people. In 1940 she graduated from the Fitkin Memorial Hospital's School of Nursing with her diploma in nursing. Because she believed that nursing care should be about research and not on how many hours of care given, Ms. Abdellah went on to obtain three degrees from Columbia University, her Bachelors of Science degree in Nursing, a Masters of Arts degree in Physiology, and lastly, a Doctor of Education degree.

With her degree, Ms. Abdellah went in to teaching. Her first role as a professor landed her in Yale University School of Nursing where she taught the class " 120 principles of nursing practice", using a standard textbook from the National League of Nursing. Unfortunately, most of the 120 principles from the book had no scientific reasoning behind them. The students in her class demanded answers and challenged Ms. Abdellah to its

reasoning. After a year, she decided to rid the students of the book. She burned them all in the courtyard of the school. This led to the creation of her theory, 21 Nursing Problems.

Faye Glenn Abdellah believed that nursing should be research based, and pushed for higher education in nurses. In 1957, she headed a research team that would later lay the ground work for progressive patient care. In this, the patient went through three steps, the intensive care unit, followed by an intermediate care unit, followed by home care. She believed that the hospital or health care facility should provide patient specific health care to each individual patient. Although the first two ideas of this approach were very popular with health care professionals, the last segment, homecare, was not as easily accepted. Although she tried desperately to show people that teaching self care would help the patient gain their independence back and possibly prevent the return of the patient to the health care center, still many people thought that having home care meant having a maid on a full time basis.

Although Ms. Abdellah spoke of the patient-centered approaches, she wrote of nurses identifying and solving specific problems. This identification and classification of problems was called the typology of 21 nursing problems. (Tomey & Alligood, Nursing theorists and their work 4th ed., p. 115). This typology was then divided into three areas of patient care. The first area dealt with the physical, sociological, and emotional needs of the patient. How was their illness affecting them in their daily lives, were they able to care for themselves or do they need help? Did they have support from family and friends or were they alone? The second area of her focus was the different

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types of interpersonal relationships between the nurse and the patient. How did each interact with the other? Where there things that could be done to facilitate a more meaningful interaction with the patient and their nurse? The last area dealt with the common elements of patient care. Was pain controlled, were the patients comfortable? Ms. Adbellah and some of her fellow colleagues at the time thought that the typology could provide a good method to evaluate a nursing student's experiences and it could also be used as a method to evaluate a nurse's strengths and weaknesses based on the outcome measures.

Faye Glenn Abdullah's 21 Nursing problems still hold true today. The care that is given in today's health care system is a patient centered approach. The needs of the patient always come first. Nurses are taking more time to know their patients, and in turn are able to provide more of a "tailored" approach to care. Patients are allowed and encouraged to do what they can for themselves. Patients are not the only ones taken care of in the hospital or any other health care setting. Families of the patient are also cared for right along with the patient. Home health care was laughed at just 40 years ago, is now a very important part of healthcare. Home health nursing is helping individuals to be able to live at their homes for a longer period of time. Nursing homes are there for patients who cannot stay home with the help of a nurse.

With all that has changed in the nursing profession, many of the ideas of Faye Glen Abdullah still hold true today. Whether it is something as a patient with a long term illness or an emergent health issue, many of Ms. Abdullah's ideals are found in every aspect of nursing. Her theory will guide future

nurses in creating an even more patient centered health care approach.

More and more nurses are furthering their education, and the percentage of higher degree nurses continue to climb.

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