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**BEING-IN-BECOMING: A GROUNDED THEORY
OF TEACHERS' EXPERIENCES IN
NURSING EDUCATION**

**A thesis presented in partial fulfilment of the
requirements for the degree of Master of Arts in
Nursing at Massey University.**

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July 1993**

ABSTRACT

The aim of this grounded theory study was to identify, describe, and generate a theoretical explanation of what it means to be a nurse educator in New Zealand in the 1990's and to be free to explore individual experiences within a broader social context. Sixteen participants from three Schools of Nursing in New Zealand were interviewed over a period of four months and a total of 36 hours of tape recorded data were collected. Constant comparative analysis of data eventuated in the identification of four conceptual categories named as *being a teacher, settling down, finding a place, and coping with change*. These conceptual categories were drawn together in the core category which was termed *being-in-becoming*.

Being-in-becoming in the context of this study means that the person is the nurse teacher simply because that person has taken on the work of a teacher. But in being a teacher the person is adapting, changing, and learning how to become a teacher. *Being-in-becoming* is a process which is on-going, never ending, and constantly changing. The essence of this study is that the teacher's experience of *being-in-becoming* is particularly influenced by personal development and the way the person comes to "know" about the world of nursing education which is also intimately connected to the way nursing curriculum is defined, and experienced by individual teachers.

These findings have implications for nursing education where there is a need for recognition of the teacher's concerns, background meanings, and problems which influence a person's experience of being a nurse educator. The expectation that feelings should be "managed" so therefore can be ignored is inconsistent in a group which claims caring to be the essence of nursing practice. Also, educational organisations need to reconsider their demands when excessive workloads are constantly cited as a major problem for workers. The organisation has the responsibility to acknowledge the human experience of those who work within the organisation, and undertake to respond in ways which can improve the situation for all concerned.

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

This research represents eighteen months of challenge and stimulation. It has been a time of intense study in which the demands have been enormous and highly personal. Many people have contributed to the experience which would not have been possible without their support.

Firstly, sincere appreciation is extended to the study participants who so willingly gave their time to share their experiences of being a nurse teacher. It has been a very special privilege to have been part of that researcher-participant relationship.

I would also like to extend my deepest thanks to Dr Irena Madjar who has travelled this journey with me as my thesis supervisor. The road has been hard and long and I will always be grateful for your guidance, sensitivity, and your ability to "lift" me to places I never realised I could reach, Irena. Thank you.

And most important of all is the love and heartfelt thanks I extend to all my family. To Brian, who shared his love, strength, and his understanding of freedom by encouraging me to develop as I needed. He waited so patiently for the days when we would return to fishing and boating together. To Michael, Andrew, and Sue, who supported me in their own special ways and who were always there when I needed them. And finally, my parents deserve a special mention. They taught me that anything was possible and that ultimate freedom lay within the self.

Also, Neil Beattie and Karen Moss deserve particular mention for their help and assistance with the "purrfect grafix". And finally, I would like to thank special friends and fellow students Louise Rummel, Maggie Cornish, and Julie Cullen for their constant interest and support during this process.

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