



Part I

The Nurse in Role Transition

Chapter 1

Returning to School



Learning Objectives

By the end of this chapter, you should be able to:

1. Discuss phases students experience throughout the education process.
2. Explain four learning styles.
3. Discover your individual learning style.
4. Identify specific time-management skills.
5. Identify study skills to assist in the education process.
6. Discuss ways to balance home, work, and school responsibilities.



Key Terms

- Abstract random (AR)
- Abstract sequential (AS)
- Concrete random (CR)
- Concrete sequential (CS)
- Conflict phase
- Honeymoon phase
- Learning style
- Resolution phase
- Returning to School Syndrome (RTSS)
- Time management



Chapter Scenario

You are an LPN and working full time, a parent/child/spouse/significant other/family member/friend, an active member in the community, and now you are going back to school.

→ **Think about it!**

- Is the timing right? Is it realistic?
- What is it that you really want to accomplish?



Introduction

- Taking the plunge into becoming an RN!



Developing a Positive Attitude

- Return to School Syndrome (RTSS)
 - Honeymoon phase
 - Conflict phase
 - Resolution phase



Critical Thinking

How does the RTSS describe your current feelings and situation?

Coping Skills

Honeymoon phase

Increase awareness of purpose

Confidence to achieve

Conflict phase

Introduced to new and different concepts

Causes student to expand

Experiences uncertainty
self-doubt
anger
Feeling overwhelmed
fatigued

Options

Disintegration

(turns anxious feelings inward)

Becomes depressed, withdrawn

Reintegration

(experiences feelings of frustration)

Acts with hostility toward others,
especially faculty, nursing program,
and education process

Resolution phase

Student's choices

False acceptance

Gives appearance of accepting
the experience, yet does
not value or embrace
positive aspects of
education process

Chronic conflict

Student constantly angry
Fails to see value of education
Spends extensive emotional effort
in angry, hostile, aggressive behavior

Biculturalism

Meshes cultures of school,
work, and personal life
Understands demands of
academic experience
Adjusts with new coping
skills
Realizes previous knowledge
and experience is foundation
for solid, expanded education

Figure 1-1 Returning to School Syndrome (Shane, 1983)



Basic Skills

- Computer skills
- Math
- English



Discovering Your Learning Style

Gregorc's Four Learning Styles:

- Concrete sequential (CS)
- Concrete random (CR)
- Abstract sequential (AS)
- Abstract random (AR)



Concrete Sequential (CS)

- Practical, organized, and structured
- Calm, collected, precise, and perfectionist
- Work step by step with instructions
- Prefer structured, orderly presentations
- Emphasize hands-on experience
- Poor tolerance of distractions
- Memorize. Like workbooks



Concrete Random (CR)

- Creative, independent, and curious
- Make quick, impulsive, and intuitive decisions
- Ideas people ~ like to express themselves
- Curious and competitive
- Prefer independent study



Abstract Sequential (AS)

- Prefer abstract ideas and pictures
- Appear flighty or absent minded
- Love to gather facts, find answers, and debate issues
- Respected for intellectual ability
- Prefer lectures and few distractions



Abstract Random (AR)

- Sensitive and flexible
- Base decisions on intuition, emotions, and instincts.
- Daydreamers
- Prefer unstructured presentations followed by reflection
- Want to belong ~ work well with others
- Noncompetitive
- Enjoy background music



Critical Thinking

Once your personal learning style has been identified, think about and share ideas of how to apply the learning style in a classroom environment that may vary from that style.



Time Management

- Daily, weekly, and monthly
- Academic schedule and personal schedule
- Daily “to do” list



Study Strategies

- Time-saving tips
- Class preparation
- Effective note taking
- Study time
- Paper writing
- Exam preparation
- Grade games



Balancing Home, Work, and School

What personal adjustments may need to be made while in nursing school?



Chapter Summary

The stresses of returning to school for an RN degree can be eased as a student develops effective time-management and study skills, and strikes a balance between home, work, and school responsibilities.



Chapter Reflections

1. As you reflect on this chapter and the opening scenario, how does your own life compare to Megan's? Are there challenges or changes that you may need to face as you begin school again?
2. What study skills and learning strategies will assure your ability to be successful in obtaining this degree?
3. Do you have the necessary support system?
4. How do you feel your attitude will impact your educational journey?