

## LEARNED RESOURCEFULNESS: A CONCEPT SYNTHESIS

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**Key Words:** learned resourcefulness, self-transcendence, and concept synthesis

**Purpose:** To present a poster on analysis and synthesis of the concept of learned resourcefulness and to propose a research study based on the findings of the concept analysis.

**Method:** A literature search was conducted using PubMed, PsychInfo, CINAHL, and Social Science Abstracts to identify research studies involving the concept of learned resourcefulness from 1983 to June, 2004. Reference lists were reviewed for additional articles. Forty-four references were identified and 11 were selected that represented research from the disciplines of psychology and nursing. Those chosen provided a variety of settings and populations where learned resourcefulness has been examined. The analysis included: a literature review, identification and synthesis of a family of dispositions into a definition integrated with the middle range theory of self-transcendence, and development of a model depicting the synthesis.

**Findings:** Learned resourcefulness has been studied in persons with depression, the elderly, children, and those with chronic health problems. Dispositions extracted from the literature to create a definition of learned resourcefulness include capable, flexible, and persistent. Capable is described as a belief in self, self-monitoring, and self-directive. Flexible is described as adaptive and coping with adversity. Persistent is described as putting forth a work effort and staying with the efforts to solve problems. Self-transcendence is defined as the capacity to expand self-boundaries and broaden one's perspectives when faced with a vulnerable situation. A model representing learned resourcefulness in the context of self-transcendence will be presented. The model shows learned resourcefulness as the persistent capability and flexibility to manage and transcend the vulnerable events of the everyday.

**Discussion:** A gap in the literature is research describing learned resourcefulness in a population of chronically poor, uninsured women who are managing their everyday health problems. It is proposed that learned resourcefulness is lived as individuals who are faced with a vulnerable health situation are able to rely on their capability and flexibility to be persistent in successfully managing their everyday. A qualitative study using a structured interview based on the definition to examine how poor, uninsured women use capability, flexibility, and persistence to transcend and manage the everyday will be proposed.