

# What is the Complexity Theory?

"Complexity theory is not a cohesive theory. It is not one equation. It is really a collection of ideas about the concept of change in complex adaptive systems."

(Sanders, 2002)

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## Scope and Standards of Practice 1-6

- Standard 1: Assessment
- Standard 2: Diagnosis
- Standard 3: Treatment, Intervention/Prevention
- Standard 4: Planning
- Standard 5: Implementation
- Standard 6: Evaluation

## Application to the Scope and Standards of Practice Standards 1-6



## Edge of Chaos

All Complex Adaptive Systems (CAS) exist on the edge of chaos



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## What are Complex Adaptive Systems?

Emergence of a new global CAS occurs as components or parts of the system interact, interconnect, and integrate. Self-organizing and self-organizing systems and their interactions are the result of the system's ability to self-organize and to adapt to its environment.

- They are self-organizing
- Adaptive
- Open
- Interacting

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## Evolution through the Disequilibrium Cycle

- Emergence
- Exploitation
- Exploitation
- Equilibrium

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## Case Study

## References

Adams, J. (2010). *Complexity Theory: A Practical Guide to Understanding and Applying Complexity Theory*. New York: Springer.

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## The Complexity Theory in the White Paper

The white paper provides a comprehensive overview of the complexity theory and its application to the nursing profession. It discusses the challenges of the nursing profession and how complexity theory can be used to address these challenges.

The white paper is available for download at [www.thecasesolutions.com](http://www.thecasesolutions.com).

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## Why is the Complexity Theory Important to the CNL Role?

The CNL role is a complex and dynamic role that requires a high level of clinical judgment and decision-making. Complexity theory provides a framework for understanding the complexity of the nursing profession and the challenges of the CNL role.

- To adapt
- To evolve

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## Promotion of Evolution through the CNL Role

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# *What are Complex Adaptive Systems?*

Entity consisting of many diverse and autonomous components or parts (called agents) which are interrelated, interdependent, linked through many (dense) interconnections, and behave as a unified whole in learning from experience and in adjusting (not just reacting) to changes in the environment.

(complex adaptive system, 2015)

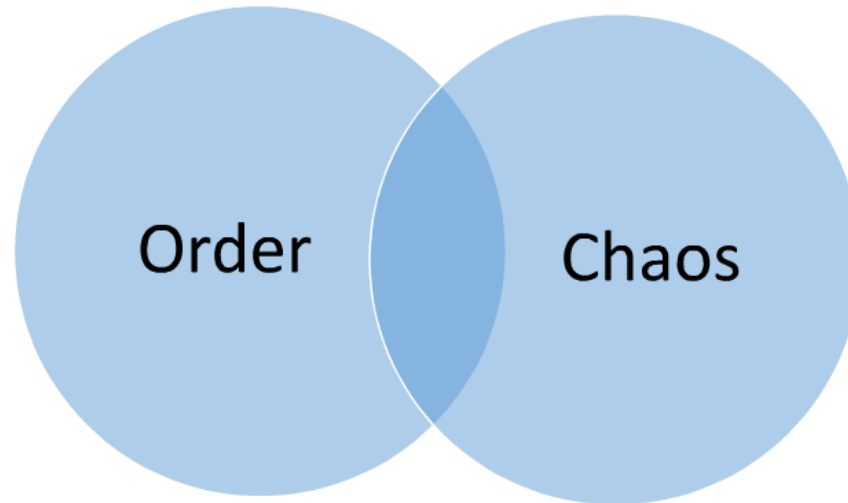
- They are self organizing
  - Adaptive
  - Dynamic
  - Co-evolving

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# *Edge of Chaos*

All Complex Adaptive Systems fall into one of three broad categories:

Order -----> Complex (Edge of Chaos) <----- Chaos



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*Evolution through the  
Disequilibrium Cycle*

Emergence

Exploitation

Equilibrium

Disequilibrium

Re-Integration/Disintegration

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## *Why is the Complexity Theory Important to the CNL Role?*

The CNL is a member and leader of health care teams that deliver treatment and services in an evolving health care system

- To lead
- To adapt
- To evolve

(CNL White Paper, 2007)

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# *Promotion of Evolution through the CNL Role*

## **Competencies and Expectation of the CNL Essential 3: Quality Improvement and Safety**

Emergence: Use performance measures to assist and improve the delivery of EBP and promote outcomes

Exploitation: Use evidence to design and direct system improvements

Equilibrium: Implement quality improvement strategies

Disequilibrium: new problems arise

Re-integrate: Perform a comprehensive micro system assessment to provide the context for problem identification and action.

(Competencies and Expectations, 2013)

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## *The Complexity Theory in the White Paper*

### **Assumption 3: Practice Guidelines are Based on Evidence**

"The preparation of the CNL must include an unrelenting demand for evidence for every aspect of practice"

(CNL White Paper, 2007)

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