

Modern Ideas of Caring in Nursing Practices

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Abstract: For effective nursing practice, it is essential to have a strong foundation in ethical principles and a shared understanding of nursing and caring concepts. Emphasizing compassion in nursing is crucial. This study aimed to elucidate the core ideals of compassion, ethics, and care in nursing practice. Nurses can foster a deeper sense of personal significance in their caregiving relationships by demonstrating attentiveness, openness, and respect and treating each patient as an individual. Through self-reflection, nurses can develop a greater understanding of nursing, compassion, and ethical principles within the caregiving context. This reflective practice enables nurses to connect more profoundly with their patients, enhancing the quality of care. By integrating these core ideals into their practice, nurses not only improve patient outcomes but also find greater personal fulfilment in their professional roles. Thus, cultivating compassion and ethical awareness is fundamental to the holistic and effective practice of nursing.

Keywords: Nursing; Patients; Ethical principles; Caregiving; Compassion

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1. Introduction

As patient care becomes more complex and time becomes limited, there is a potential danger that nursing practice may prioritize technical aspects over the essential element of compassion^[1]. Caring necessitates nurses who prioritize the connection with the individual by perceiving, comprehending, and assuming accountability. A comprehensive comprehension of nursing, compassion, and conscious recognition of ethical intrinsic principles are necessary for professional nursing practice^[2]. It is crucial to emphasize the concepts of compassion in nursing, as this can enhance nurses' introspection on ethical principles and foster a more profound comprehension of compassion care in nursing practice^[3].

To comprehend the evolution of nursing, it is crucial to acquaint oneself with the thinkers who have historically played a significant role in shaping this progression^[1]. Florence Nightingale pioneered modern nursing by developing a theory that emphasized the importance of ventilation, warmth, light, food, cleanliness, and noise control^[4]. Various categories of theoretical works have emerged in the field of nursing, including conceptual nursing models, nursing theories, and nursing philosophies^[5]. These have played a crucial role in advancing the practice of nursing. Theoretical writings on nursing have played a crucial role in both education and nursing practice. The field of nursing has transitioned from emphasizing the role of nurses in nursing to emphasizing the

importance of knowledge in nursing. In order to avoid the nursing profession becoming excessively technical in the current era of efficient and advanced healthcare, it is essential to maintain a fundamental focus on compassion and a caring mindset. An effective strategy to foster the concept of compassion in nursing practice is to emphasize the perspective of care as proposed by Eriksson ^[6].

The objective of this paper was to elucidate the core principles of nursing, compassion, and ethical ideals within the context of nursing practice. The initial section focuses on elucidating the concepts of nursing and nursing practice, the phenomena of caring, the ethical ideals associated with caring science, and the use of caring in nursing practice. In the concluding section, this paper sheds light on the concept of care in nursing practice, drawing inspiration from Eriksson's perspective.

2. Caring and ethical values of nursing

It is crucial to comprehend nursing and nursing practice from a theoretical standpoint to enhance nurses' understanding of caring in nursing practice. This includes examining caring as a phenomenon and the ethical principles associated with caring science.

2.1. Nursing practice

Florence Nightingale stated that the objective of nursing is to provide a suitable environment to the patient to facilitate the natural healing process, as depicted in **Figure 1** ^[7]. The environment was regarded as the primary cause of disease, whereas nursing was seen as the practice that fostered health and well-being and empowered the patient to utilize their resources to the maximum extent feasible ^[4,7]. Nightingale asserts that the term "nursing" carries a degree of ambiguity and encompasses multiple interpretations. The term "nursing" refers to the provision of care between individuals and the assistance provided to patients who need help. Within the realm of health care, the practice of nursing is not exclusive to the nursing profession and can be performed by other professional groups. Nevertheless, nurses are responsible for providing competent care. The theory is analogous and entails providing assistance to both individuals in good health and those who are in disease. The presence of real professional values is crucial, in addition to knowledge of diseases, medicine, technology, and communication in nursing ^[7].

The International Council of Nurses (2002) defines nursing as the independent and collaborative care of individuals of all ages, as well as families, groups, and communities, in a variety of health conditions and settings ^[8]. Nursing involves promoting well-being, preventing disease, and providing care for the sick, disabled, and dying ^[9]. Essential nursing responsibilities include advocacy, ensuring a safe environment, conducting research, contributing to health policy development, managing patient care and health systems, and providing education ^[10]. The nursing field involves various processes, dynamics, and interactions, which are most effective when integrating the five patterns of knowing: empirics, ethics, aesthetics, personal knowing, and liberating awareness ^[10,11].

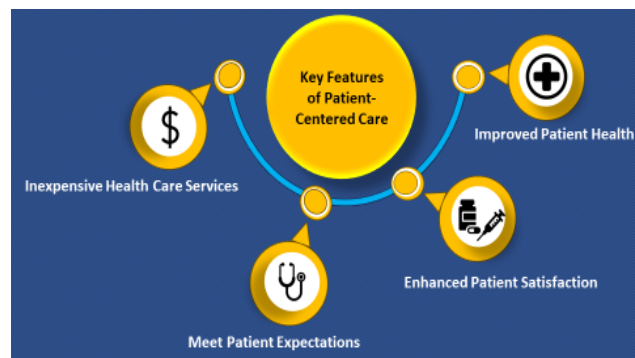


Figure 1. Principle characteristics of patient care

Nursing can be defined as a fundamental scientific discipline, with nursing practice being regarded as an artistic expression^[12]. The connection between nursing and providing care may not be readily apparent. It differentiates among the three viewpoints: (1) compassion nursing, (2) nursing with care and (3) professional nursing. Compassion nursing encompasses a fundamental essence of compassion that views the patient without bias and prioritizes their pain and requirements. The concept of “nursing with care” is closely tied to the nursing process and has the objective of methodically addressing the needs of patients. In order for “nursing with care” to be deemed exemplary, it must include the essence of compassion, as mere technical proficiency does not guarantee a sympathetic approach. Professional nursing is based on the nursing process and the methodical organization of patient care. Without a fundamental element of compassion, there is a potential for nursing to devolve into a bureaucratic and mechanistic framework. Collectively, these three viewpoints might be seen as indispensable for providing excellent nursing care^[13].

2.2. Nurse-patient relationship

90% of theories explicitly or indirectly acknowledged the significance of the nurse-patient connection^[14]. Orlando’s Nursing Process Theory (1961) emphasized the significance of the nurse-patient interaction in helping the nurse understand the patient’s need for assistance^[15]. In contrast, Henderson’s 14 components of nursing care emphasized the significance of centering on the patient, implying rather than explicitly stating the importance of the nurse-patient connection^[16].

The nurse’s internal emotions were important in their delivery of care and connection with the patient^[17]. Essentially, the idea focused on the internal motives and attitudes that nurses should have while providing care. It identified certain motivations/attitudes as crucial for delivering high-quality care^[18]. This broad category encompassed the need for nurses should have genuine attitudes and behaviour. Boykin A and Schoenhofer S (2015) define caring as the deliberate and genuine presence of a nurse with another individual who is acknowledged as a person engaged in caring and developing caring^[19]. This is an aspect that the framework does not expressly cover.

Several studies have been identified that necessitate nurses to possess self-awareness in their nursing profession^[3]. McCormack B and McCance TV (2006) provide an example in their theory of person-centred care, where they outline various requirements for nurses, one of which is the concept of “knowing self”^[20]. The framework does not explicitly mandate the requirement for nurses to possess self-awareness in their nursing profession^[21]. In the context of relationships, it is advised that nurses assess their interactions with patients. This may involve reflecting on and being conscious of their own actions and behaviours. However, this aspect is not as clearly defined as some of the other nursing theories^[22].

There are six theories that outline the ways in which a nurse should act as an advocate for the patient^[23]. Peplau HE (1988) delineated seven distinct nursing roles, namely stranger, resource, teaching, counselling, surrogate, active leadership, and technical expert^[24]. The surrogate role specifically entails the nurse advocating for the patient. There was significant divergence in the beliefs concerning the nurse’s role in establishing collaborative relationships with patients^[25]. Certain views proposed a significant influence on the nurse in either changing the environment or interpreting patient behaviour, while others emphasized the importance of establishing collaborative partnerships^[26]. The framework does not explicitly emphasize the necessity of advocating for the patient. The framework acknowledges the need to recognize and respect patients’ ideas and beliefs, as well as collaborate with them to establish goals^[27]. However, it does not explicitly include the concept of advocacy.

3. Caring as a phenomenon

The primary focus of research in caring science is on the phenomena of caring rather than the specific profes-

sion involved. In an academic field, caring science explores and develops new insights into the concept of care, providing a foundation for care delivery across various settings and situations. Caring science is a scientific discipline dedicated to the study of human beings. To advance this field, it is essential to deeply understand the fundamental nature of caring. The interplay between systematic and clinical caring research is intriguing, given the diverse contexts and unique human care scenarios, each with its own distinct characteristics. Despite this diversity, there may be commonalities in the overarching understanding of caring science that can enhance comprehension in specific individual circumstances ^[28].

Caring science, as a branch of human science, requires adopting a specific viewpoint and comprehending the body of knowledge that investigates the human experience in many situations pertaining to life and death, well-being and affliction ^[29]. Martinsen's philosophy of care views caring as a relational, practical, and moral concept ^[30]. The concept of caring involves a necessary relationship between two individuals, where one person provides care for another who is experiencing suffering ^[28]. Practical care entails tangible actions that may be acquired and honed through repeated practice ^[13]. Moral in caring entails perceiving and acknowledging others in the context of their circumstances ^[30]. The fundamental driving force in the field of caring science is *caritas*, with ethos serving as the underlying force that sustains and unifies the caring phenomenon in different situations ^[31].

3.1. Caring science and ethical values

At an ontological level, ethical concerns pertain to the understanding of the individual or the patient and the manner in which nurses interact with themselves, the patient, and the patient's role in receiving care ^[32]. Ethical caring is manifested through the physical contact between the patient and the nurse, demonstrating a deep understanding and consideration for the other person's susceptibility, which fosters a nurturing connection ^[33].

The ethos of caring science seeks to uncover the genuine, the virtuous, and the aesthetically pleasing, recognizing that the human being is a holistic entity comprising of the physical, mental, and spiritual dimensions ^[10]. This indicates an ethical framework in which the inherent worth of the human being is seen to be absolute. This argument posits that ethics pertains to both living a virtuous life and engaging in morally upright behaviour while presupposing a sense of self-awareness and existence ^[34]. Ethics assumes the presence of a sentient and receptive human being who is capable of perceiving and understanding the world through commitment and receptiveness ^[35]. It entails experiencing and expressing emotions, both in relation to one's own circumstances and towards others.

Ethics and ethos are intrinsically linked and encompass a collection of principles that establish a framework for how individuals engage and assume accountability ^[36]. The concept of "good" is encompassed within ethical values and asserts that genuine care is synonymous with good care ^[37]. An individual achieves a state of wholeness and harmony when they are connected with their inner thoughts and values. Ethos pertains to a dwelling that offers protection and repose, serving as a refuge where individuals can seek security and resilience ^[38]. Ethos also cultivates the human capacity to be attuned to the guidance of one's inner voice. The human's intrinsic moral aspect, the deepest core, might be referred to as a dwelling ethos ^[38]. Individuals who have a strong connection with their personal values and beliefs experience a sense of belonging and possess the bravery to heed the guidance of their inner conscience ^[39]. Nurses who possess a strong sense of self are more inclined to establish sympathetic connections with patients ^[40].

The concept of *caritas* permeates the field of health science, providing significance to the ethos ^[41]. Nurses adopt a sympathetic stance in their caregiving role, feeling a sense of responsibility and a desire to assist while also demonstrating their presence and support for the patient ^[42]. Genuine compassion is commendable and can be likened to the benevolent actions performed by nurses ^[43]. Responsibility, the fundamental principle of ethics, empowers love to flourish via nurturing. If ethics lacks a foundation in ethos, it becomes increasingly formal,

leading to a noticeable lack of concern or consideration ^[34]. There are several difficulties that can hinder nurses from observing or delivering care, but typically, the barriers originate from within the individual ^[44]. Caritative care is a genuine form of care that is based on love and is provided in collaboration with others ^[45]. This refers to actively engaging in the act of nurturing, which involves being part of a community where both stillness and movement are naturally present. Caring involves attending to, engaging in activities with, and acquiring knowledge about the patient, which can foster trust, fulfil the patient's requirements, promote both physical and spiritual well-being, and cultivate a sense of personal growth to facilitate the health processes ^[1].

3.2. Caring in nursing practice

The essence of nursing practice can be comprehended as the act of caring. The notion of "caring" emphasizes on the fundamental essence of nursing, whereas the term "nursing" pertains to the tangible tasks and responsibilities of nurses within the profession ^[46]. Ethos and *caritas* serve as the fundamental driving force that sustains the nurturing phenomenon across various situations ^[47]. Ethos refers to the inherent principles and ideals that guide one's behaviour and actions, which are expressed through a unique language of their own ^[48]. In order to establish a care system that is both ethical and evidence-based, it is necessary to possess knowledge that is firmly rooted in the principles of compassion and empathy ^[49].

Purely possessing theoretical knowledge is insufficient in the field of nursing. It is necessary to additionally possess self-knowledge and be cognizant of one's own values and attitudes towards others. One can wholeheartedly perform acts of goodness. The concepts of good and evil are intricately connected to human freedom since freedom entails the responsibility of avoiding the infliction of suffering. In the context of nursing care, the fundamental aspects of caring include connections, actions, attitudes, acceptance, and adaptability ^[49].

Various occupations are engaged in the act of providing care, which might obscure the genuine reality, often referred to as "Maya's veil." "Maya's Veil" obstructs the perception of the genuine world by human beings ^[50]. In the realm of actual reality, there are several frameworks dictating the proper execution of care, such as through certain methodologies ^[50]. However, the prescribed ways can impede nurses' perception and obscure the genuine truth. It is crucial for nurses to recognize that the fact is progressively becoming more technologically advanced and may obscure the fundamental aspect of providing care ^[51]. Nurses can cultivate a mindset that is guided by a deliberate ethical framework and a genuine concern for others, enabling them to embody a sympathetic and accountable approach driven by the force of love ^[52].

A fundamental element in professional nursing practice is the presence of a core of caring, which is essential for creating a nurturing environment and ensuring optimal care for the patient ^[1]. Moreover, it is necessary to have a shared comprehension of compassion, distress, well-being, the ecosystem, and the individual as a sentient entity ^[53]. The nursing profession requires a heightened awareness of the interplay between care actions and the surrounding environment ^[54]. The ethos, manifested as internal ideals, should be an essential aspect of nursing practice that promotes and sustains care. The act of observing patients in nursing practice involves recognizing their vulnerability and providing them with the opportunity to express their true selves and aspirations ^[54,55].

4. Closing reflections

This study seeks to elucidate the core ethical values and principles that underpin nursing practice and the importance of caring in the field of nursing. Implementing Eriksson's perspective on caring can enhance the advancement of nursing practice by including a sympathetic essence. Nurses must possess a theoretical comprehension of care in nursing practice to fully grasp the concept of nursing ^[56]. Caring nursing encompasses a fundamental essence of compassion that regards the patient as a human being without bias and prioritizes their

pain and needs ^[1]. Nurses' self-awareness of their own inner values allows them to be fully present in specific and individual situations with the suffering individual in nursing practice. It involves being dedicated, having a willingness to allocate resources to the interaction with the other person, and prioritizing their well-being. It necessitates a concentration on both dedication and attentiveness ^[57].

Eriksson's ethical care mantra, "I was present, I observed, I bore witness, and I assumed responsibility", can be beneficial for contemplating the act of nursing the patient ^[58]. Nurses who are there in the caregiving scenario witness and perceive the individual's distress and comprehend their duty to act in the individual's utmost welfare. When nurses directly interact with patients in a sympathetic manner, it has the potential to reduce the patient's distress. Observing the patient's countenance might serve as a means to encounter their susceptibility and distress ^[57].

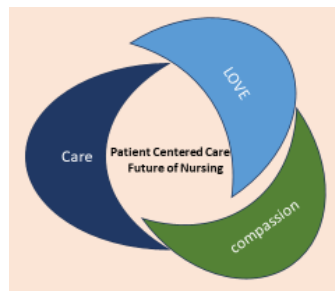


Figure 2. Components of patient care in future nursing

An individual's integrity is susceptible and responsive to external influence. Viewing humans as mere objects might lead nurses to seem unfamiliar and devoid of significance, thereby eroding privacy. Preserving integrity can be achieved by considering human beings as active participants. Providing care in nursing homes that support individuals' independence and involvement might indicate an understanding of their vulnerability, recognition, and trustworthy connections ^[59]. Demonstrate that in the current healthcare context, caring may be defined as actively participating in mutually beneficial relationships, accepting the fundamental nature of caring, fostering moments of care, and embodying care in practical actions ^[57]. In the field of nursing, providing optimal care for patients often involves the ability to reassess and diverge from established procedures ^[13].

5. Conclusion

To ensure the patient's well-being in today's rapidly advancing and intricate healthcare system, it is crucial to prioritize their human needs. In order to truly perceive the patient as a distinct individual and establish a sympathetic connection, nurses must possess self-awareness as human beings and be cognizant of their own internal values. Gaining insight into one's intrinsic fundamental principles necessitates self-awareness and understanding of one's attitude towards the patient. Nurses who possess a deep understanding of the intrinsic principles of nursing are more likely to perceive and comprehend the patient as an individual within their unique circumstances and subsequently assume the duty of providing nursing care that is tailored to the patient's requirements. By adopting this approach, patients are empowered to embody their own identity. Otherwise, there is a potential danger that, similar to Maya's Veil, the progressively sophisticated and intricate level of care may hinder nurses from perceiving the actual situation. Nurses can cultivate an environment of compassion and accountability for patients by being aware of their own intrinsic principles. The cultivation of openness, attentiveness, and respect for the patient as an individual can foster a sense of personal significance for both nurses and patients within the caring dynamic of nursing practice. Nurses can employ self-reflection to cultivate an understanding of nursing

and compassion, as well as ethical principles inherent in caregiving. The benefits include nurses acquiring a more profound comprehension of caring within the field of nursing.

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