

Evidence Based Practice

Review of research guided by the
Theory of Human Caring

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Theory of Human Caring

by

Jean Watson

- Theory of Human Caring concepts are :
 - Transpersonal caring relationship
 - Caring occasion/caring moment
 - Clinical Caritas Process

(Kearney, 2008)

Transpersonal Caring Relationship

The transpersonal caring relationship is an intentional relationship between the nurse and the patient as a human being to human being.

Caring Occasion/Caring Moment

Caring moment/caring occasion is a unique experience between the patient and nurse that involves mutual, transpersonal and reciprocal interactions between the nurse and patient. As a result of the caring moment, the patient and the nurse enlarges their personal life histories. The influence of the caring moment extends to generation of the new patterns of life and potentiates the healing

Clinical Caritas Process

- Those aspects of nursing that actually potentiate therapeutic healing processes for both the one caring and the one being cared for (Kearney-Nunnery, 2008, p.73).
 1. Practice of loving kindness
 2. Being authentically present
 3. Cultivation of one's spiritual practices
 4. Developing a sustaining relationship
 5. Being present to positive and negative feelings as a connection with deeper spiritual meaning
 6. Creative use of self in ways to engage artistry in healing
 7. Engaging in learning experiences that attends to unity of being, within others' framework
 8. Creating a healing environment
 9. Assisting with basic needs
 10. *Soul* care for self and the one-being-cared-for

Rational for Use of Nursing Theory in Personal Practice

- Evidence proves that caring improves patient outcomes.
- By utilizing the caritas, our personal practice has been influenced by the Theory of Human Caring
- Improvements in patient outcomes and satisfaction are noted when creating transpersonal moments. Encouraging harmony results in healing.

Theory of Human Caring as Framework for Research:

Reflecting on the concepts of intentionality and caring-healing consciousness, Watson states, “We realize that patterns emerge from our practices that are dynamic, energetic, and actually potentiate the caring-healing field in a given moment” (Frisch, 2001). Based on Watson’s foundational concepts in the Theory of Human Caring, these five studies explore the impact of the caring-healing consciousness .

Research Topics Explored Utilizing Jean Watson's Theory of Human Caring:

Education

Pain control

Infection rates

Student perception of caring

Patient perception of caring

Patient Perceptions of Caring Comparison of Antepartum and Postpartum Patients

By Alyce A. Schultz, Cynthia Bridgham, Mary E. Smith,
Dianne Higgins

Reviewed by
Angie Robl

Patient Perceptions of Caring Research Findings

- A comparative study of the perception of caring behaviors between hospitalized antepartum and short-stay post partum patients.
- It was discovered that patients perceived “continuous monitoring of their condition and demonstration of clinical competency as the most important indicators of caring” (Schultz, Bridgham, Smith, Higgins, 1998).

Patient Perceptions of Caring Limitations/Credibility

- Based on Watson's Theory of Caring, the Caring Behaviors Assessment listed 63 behaviors nurses say or do that convey caring to patients during their stay in an acute care setting.
- One limitation is the small focus group, antepartum and short stay post-partum patients were used.
- "All scores were positively skewed, suggesting that patients perceived almost all the items on the scale as indicative and important aspects of caring. This positive skewness also makes it difficult to differentiate among those interventions or behaviors that are the most important to the care receivers" (Schultz et al., 1998).

Patient Perceptions of Caring

- This study supports findings of other small studies.
 - Larson (1984) found that cancer patients perceived “being accessible” and “monitoring and following through” as the most important caring behaviors.
 - Brown (1981) found that medical surgical patients in acute care settings perceived “care surveillance” and “demonstration of professional knowledge” as the most important care behaviors.
 - Cronin and Harrison (1988) found patients that had experienced myocardial infarctions perceived “monitoring of patient condition”, “demonstration of professional competence”, and “teaching” as the most important caring behavior.

Patient Perceptions of Caring Practice Implications

While all aspects of caring are important to patients, it is most important to patients that their nurses show clinical competency. Patients want to see their basic needs fulfilled before they care about fulfilling their higher needs.

Professionalism and competency must be shown first when establishing a nurse/patient relationship. Once the relationship is established the patient is open to the deeper transpersonal relationship that can address higher needs.

Caring Behaviors of Advanced Practice Nursing Students

A study by Karen Moore Schaefer, R.N., D.N.Sc.
Temple University

Reviewed by Marianna M. Burns

Brief Description

- In an attempt to further understand the caring experience, five groups of students in a graduate nursing course were invited to participate in an interactive experience on caring . The purpose of the project was to provide students with the opportunity to reflect on their caring encounters, to enhance their “aesthetic knowing” (Schaefer, 2003), and to acquire the meaning of caring in their practice.

Research Findings:

- A total of nine major caring themes were identified
- 1. Physical care provides an opportunity to assess and monitor patients' responses to illness and treatment.
 2. Communicating with patients and families empowers them in difficult, complex situations.
 3. Providing comfort and support creates a sense of calm.
 4. Being present provides time for the caring process to unfold.
 5. Knowing patients beliefs and frame of context improves the quality of patient care.
 6. Giving unconditional acceptance and graciousness shows respect for human dignity.
 7. Touching expresses concern and commitment.
 8. Working with others involves coordinating activities using a collaborative approach to care.
 9. Providing encouragement helps patients and families to deal with the ravages of suffering.

How Theory of Human Caring Framed This Research

- “Holistic nursing focuses on the interconnectedness of the mind, body, and spirit (Watson, 1999). To help students and practicing nurses maintain a holistic approach to care, educators can use the knowledge gained from this study to help them develop the art, science and ethic of nurse caring “.

Schaefer, 2003

Critique of the Research:

- Data obtained was subjective to nurses reporting caring experiences only.
- Small sample of study-68 total.
- Relies on individual categorization of data collected (by the instructor).
- Findings subjective only to the “occasions” initially studied.

Implications For Practice:

- Based on the assumption that caring is what nurses do, the science of caring can be learned.
- In practice, behaviors can be directly modeled.
- When not in practice, Leight (2002) stated that “sharing personal stories of caring and reading others’ stories of caring may help students and professionals to continue to learn the ethics and virtues of caring”.
- Awareness of patient perceived caring moments.

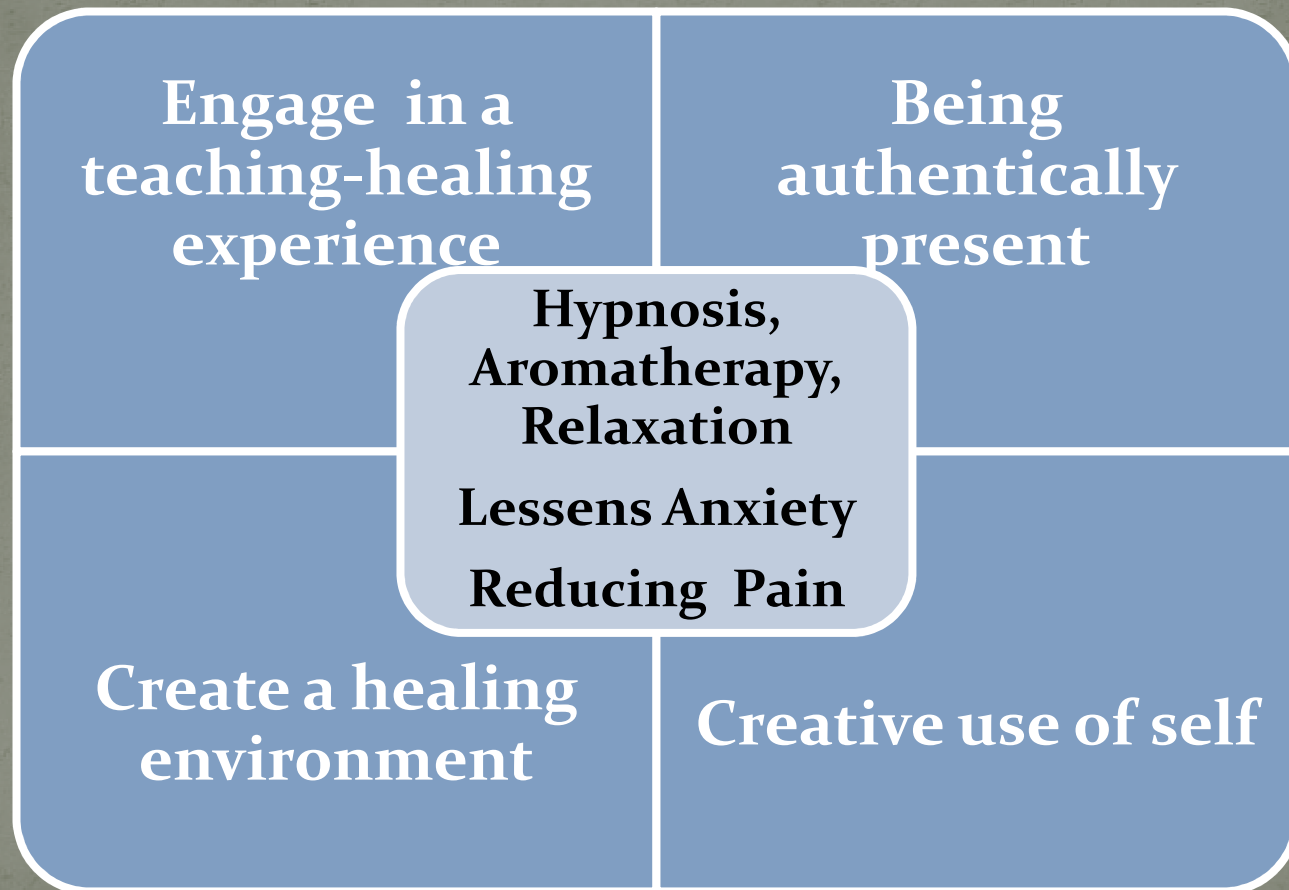
Research Focus

Minimizing Stress and Anxiety Reduces Pain and Increases Healing

Reviewed by
Mary Haverty-Robinson

**Based On the theory of Jean Watson,
research using caring-healing
modalities measured a decrease in
stress/anxiety resulting in pain
reduction.**

Watson's theory is utilized and is evidenced by the use of the following Caritas in the studies



Evidence based Practice 1

Minimizing Preoperative Anxiety With Alternative Caring-Healing Therapies



Results

Perioperative anxiety and pain was significantly lower in the group that received hypnosis compared to the control group that did not.



Evidence Bases Practice 2

Relaxation Training as a Holistic Nursing Intervention.

Teaching relaxation skills is consistent with the concept that patients who participate in their own care are more autonomous. Relaxation therapy is cost effective and has been proven to reduce the need for pain medication and shortens hospital stays.



Results

Scientist Candace Pert has offered evidence that confirm cellular physiological changes that coincide with changes in emotional states, one of the health promoting outcomes observed with relaxation processes.

The literature on relaxation has demonstrated repeatedly its appropriateness for a variety of medical situations in which psychological stress and the secretion of stress hormones such as cortisol contribute to physical distress such as pain.

Evidence Based Practice 3

Aromatherapy: Mythical, Magical, or Medicinal?



Aromatherapy means “treatments using scents”

Most essential oils have antiseptic properties, some are antiviral, anti-inflammatory, pain relieving , antidepressant or expectorant.



Massage with Lavender Oil

VS

Massage Without Oil



Results

The group receiving massage with lavender oil had reduced Pain

The results showed that the group receiving massage with lavender oil were able to reduce the amount of analgesia needed. Responses showed that sleep patterns were affected in a positive manner. 83% expressed a desire to receive further massage containing lavender oil. The group that did not receive oil did not have any significant reduction on analgesia or improvement in sleep patterns



Implications for personal practice:

1. Relaxation represents a skill that can be taught by nurses and learned in both inpatient and outpatient settings that encompasses the nurse's role as caregiver, educator, role model, patient advocate, and health promoter
2. Hypnosis just prior to and during anesthesia induction can easily be done without delaying surgery and the techniques can be taught preoperatively
3. Massage with lavender oil can be incorporated into nighttime care giving routines to improve patient sleep and reduce amounts of pain medication needed.

Limitations of these studies

Many of the results are subjective and can be difficult to reproduce

The efficacy of these modalities are dependent upon the practitioner, the day, the mood and the intentionality of the provider

Perioperative Nurse Caring Behaviors

Reviewed by
Nadezdha Litton

Caring Behaviors

- Studies done by Wolf(1994), MacNamara (1995), and Parson (1993) show that nurses provide for patient's physical needs as a way of showing caring.
- Studies indicate that attention to physical needs and comfort has both immediate and delayed effects on patient outcomes and overall surgical experience. Skin integrity, wound healing, temperature control, infection, length of stay, financial and social impacts on the patient could be affected by the caring behavior of the nurse in the operating room.

Nursing Research Studies

- **Limitations of Caring Behavior Studies:**

Small sample groups, minimal demographic variability, non-random sampling, gender limitations (only female), use of researcher developed tools.

- **Strengths of Studies:**

Comparison of results shows similarity in the behaviors identified as the most and the least caring.

Perioperative Nurse Caring Behaviors and Surgical Site Infections

- Wound infections are the most serious and common complications of surgery and anesthesia. Usually, they are detected five to nine days after surgery. According to CDC, surgical site infections (SSI) account for approximately 20 percent of all health-care associated infections in US hospitals (Klevens, 2007). It increases length of hospital stay and cost of medical care in the hospital and after discharge at home.

Perioperative Nurse Caring Behaviors and Surgical Site Infections

Factors influencing rate of SSI:

- Magnitude of contamination
- Tissue perfusion
- Immune system function
- Hemostasis
- Antibiotic therapy

Perioperative Nurse Caring Behaviors and Surgical Site Infections

Hypothermia (temperature $<36^{\circ}\text{C}$ or 96.8°F) is a common result of the anesthesia that is seen in surgical patients. It causes:

- Thermoregulatory vasoconstriction.
- Impairment of the immune system (reduces T-cell and neutrophil production).
- Affects platelets functions.
- Hemostasis
- Decreased tissue perfusion

Results

- Kurz (1996) found that 19 percent of patients in the hypothermia group had developed surgical wound infection and only six percent in the normothermia group ($36.6 \pm 0.5^{\circ}\text{C}$). In the same study, length of hospitalization had been increased due to the wound infection by six days. In another randomized study rate of SSI in normothermia group was 4-6 percent compared to 15 percent in the control group (Leaper, 2006).

Practice Implications

Perioperative nurse caring behavior

:

- Improves patient comfort
- Promotes early recovery and wound healing
- Reduces length of hospital stay
- Reduces health care costs

Jean Watson's Theory of Caring

Use in Nursing Education

Reviewed by
Patricia Kraemer

Recognized in Teaching

- Anxiety is inherent in learning
- “Mild anxiety may actually enhance learning”
- Moderate to severe anxiety decreases ability to learn

(Audet, 1995, p.23)

Anxiety



Learning



Instructor + Student



Interpersonal Relationship

Nursing Instructors must be able to

- Recognize signs of stress
- Validate the stress with the student
- Explore the cause with the student
- Design a mutually agreeable plan to overcome the anxiety

(Audet, 1995 pp.23-25)

Audet recognizes 4 factors important for establishing a caring educational environment

- Watson's carative factors
 1. Formation of a humanistic-altruistic system of values
 2. Instillation of faith/hope
 3. Cultivation of sensitivity to one's self and others
 4. The development of a helping-trusting relationship

(Audet, 1995, pp.25-26)

Theory Influencing Practice

“Transpersonal caring in nursing education occurs when nurse educators use teaching moments as caring occasions (Bevis & Watson, 1989)” (Wade & Kasper, 2006, p.163)

“The Nurse Educator will then be able to transfer caring to the educational setting”.

(Audet, 1995, p.23)

Results

Authors, Wade & Kasper draw the conclusion that “the Nursing Student’s Perceptions of Instructor Caring (NSPIC), based on Watson’s (1988b) Theory of Transpersonal Caring, is a reliable and valid measure of nursing student’s perceptions of instructor caring”. (2006,p.167) This measuring tool can be used to “validate the influence of caring interactions between students and faculty on students’ ability to care (Wade& Kasper, 2006, p. 167)”.

Framework of Study

- “NSPIC, which uses a 6-point Likert-type scale , was designed to reflect the 10 carative factors embedded in the Watson’s Theory of Transpersonal Caring (Wade& Kasper, 2006, p.156)”.

Limitations

- “Additional testing with larger and more diverse samples is needed (Wade& Kasper, 2006, p.168)”.

Implications for Practice

Authors Wade & Kasper state, “caring experiences may lead to enhanced clinical judgment, increased skills and knowledge, mobilization of caring abilities, enhanced empathy, and a love of nursing. Nurses who experience noncaring may become ‘hardened oblivious, depressed, frightened and worn down’ (Swanson, 1999, p.54)” (2006).

Caring Instructors



Caring Students



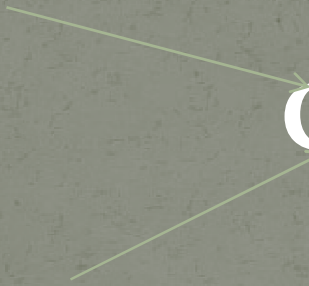
Caring Nurses



Caring co-workers and environment

Improved

Caring for Patients



Critical Reflection:

- The importance of integrating research into nursing practice is reflected daily within any nurse-patient interaction. By utilizing past outcomes, evidenced based research initiatives are carried out to the benefit of both patient and nurse.
- The use of theory in conducting the research guides one within a certain framework, focusing on the given model. Without this guide, the research has no focus, and can become too large for specific outcomes.

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