



WHAT IS 'NEW' IN CARE?

O QUE HÁ “DE NOVO” NO CUIDAR?

¿QUÉ HAY “DE NUEVO” EN EL CUIDADO?

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Can a machine, lacking a biological body, understand human suffering? With Artificial Intelligence (AI) advances emerging almost daily, the question of whether we are replaceable becomes pressing. This doubt, however, is based on the premise that technology may one day develop emotions such as fear or love⁽¹⁾.

However, while that day has yet to arrive, and as long as we recognize ourselves as multidimensional beings—with bodies, hearts, and minds that worry and fear, that strive to find their way and their existential “signature,” just like those we care for—perhaps Florence Nightingale is still right. There must be people to accompany those who are infirm until they can move forward with their experiences, challenges, and learning. They need to be there to help restore autonomy, more conscious choices, and independence in meeting basic needs. In short, nursing is necessary!

When we feel fragile or at risk—a condition inherent to the finitude of our bodies—what loneliness could be greater than mistrusting those who are by our side? What can we expect from another person, a human being like us⁽²⁾? This is where caring challenges us, requiring us to step out of our comfort zone to get in touch with feelings and beliefs that are difficult to recognize and accept in ourselves. It requires us to use words and gestures with awareness and responsibility, becoming “medicine” through our presence, clarity of intention, and deliberate actions.

Since the beginning of our profession, all Nursing Theories have placed caring at the center of our decisions and actions. In all of them, we find care that qualifies life, prevents future damage, and regenerates past damage. Caring promotes health and well-being, until the very last moment, based on the conscious presence of the professional, the alignment between their words and actions, and their example. Caring involves attention, intention, interest, openness, respect, trust, humility, joy, good humor, responsibility, and compassion.

Caring, the essence of our profession, fosters a culture of peace and harmony, despite our countless differences and uniqueness⁽³⁾.

We know that violence against healthcare professionals, including nurses, is a global concern. Manifested through words and behaviors, this violence causes physical, emotional, and psychological damage to everyone involved⁽⁴⁾. Caring for our peers and ourselves is an intrinsic part of the challenge and learning process of nursing professionals.

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Reflecting on the prospects of our profession in light of digital tools not only teaches us about Artificial Intelligence; it teaches us about ourselves: how we think, what we value, and how we relate to humans, non-humans, and the Earth itself. Philosopher Edgar Morin reminds us that by sacrificing the essential for the urgent, we end up forgetting the urgency of the essential⁽⁵⁾.

Perhaps what is “new” in caregiving is precisely this: combining the old challenge of demonstrating effectiveness and affection with new environments, contexts, and tools. It is remembering who we really are: creatures with the power to create and anchor wisdom in a social structure that lives the fantasy of separateness.

A study cited by Aronson and Aronson in “The Social Animal”⁽³⁾ highlights the power of intention. In one experiment, newborn chicks were conditioned to follow a robot programmed to move randomly around an arena. After attachment, the chicks were placed in a cage from which they could see the robot but not reach it. The result was surprising: the robot's movement ceased to be random and concentrated on the half of the arena closest to the chicks. The hypothesis is that the focused intention of the chicks influenced the machine. This leads to the following reflection:

if the intention of chicks can alter the path of a robot, what can the clear intention of a nursing professional do for a sick human being?

Every action, thought, and feeling is motivated by an intention (more or less conscious), and that intention is an inseparable cause of its effect. By not reducing care to an illness or diagnosis, we glimpse its greatness: a human being with their own feelings and beliefs, where there is room for all Integrative and Complementary Health Practices (ICPs). The professional who truly seeks, the genuine researcher, allows themselves to expand to understand the beauty and challenge of helping to rebalance each individual. The search is constant to unveil the “best way” to anchor respect, compassion, love, and dignity. Any tool, instrument, or methodology used must assist in the reconstruction or harmony of the various dimensions of homo sapiens: from Information Technologies (ITs) to ICPs.

We care because we are also human: a group that specializes in preserving the life of its species. Let us not doubt that a small group of conscious, committed, and organized people can change the world: it is the only thing that has ever been able to do so to date!

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