

Artigo de opinião

**Nursing Now and Future**

***Caring Science: The Disciplinary Foundation for Nursing NOW and future***

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Dr. Watson received her Bachelor of Science in Nursing in 1964, a Master of Science in Nursing in Psychiatric and Mental Health Nursing in 1966 and a PhD. in Educational Psychology and Counseling in 1973, all from the University of Colorado.

She has earned ten honorary doctoral degrees and in 2013, she was awarded the American Academy of Nursing's 'Living Legend' award, its highest honour. She is best known for her Theory of Human Caring and Ten Caritas Processes, which serve as a blueprint for professional nursing practice.

Dr. Watson created the Theory of Human Caring between 1975 and 1979 from her personal views of nursing. Her hope at the time was that her theory would help distinguish nursing science as a separate and important entity from medical science. Her work was influenced by her teaching experience and was created as a way to find common meaning among nurses from all over the world.

Watson's theory was first published in 1988. Since that time, she has produced more than 20 books on caring, and her teachings are used by clinical nurses and academic programs all over the world.

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**Introduction**

Philosophies, ethics, and theories of nursing science have continued to evolve over the past three or four decades. However, during the past decade there has been special attention to theory-

guided practice models and caring and healing relationships as the core of professional nursing. Concurrently, educators, students and practitioners are seeking more clarity re: the disciplinary foundation of nursing, as the mature guide for professional practices. Further, there continues to be a call for authentic

discipline - specific, academic and clinical care practices, giving meaning and purpose to nurses' professional lives and work, allowing nurses to work at their full scope of preparation as a distinct healing/health professional.

Both practitioners and health systems, as well as academic nursing, now realize radical change from within is an essential and necessary requirement to reverse limitations of institutional practices; practices embedded often in robotic, technical, distant, non-caring, industrial practice.

The public as well as practitioners experience or witness these broken parts of our hospitals and health care today. The underlying dissatisfaction with healthcare continues to include system cultures and routines which inhibit the ability of nurses to practice their own profession; the dominance of medical – institutional-techno-cure foci; the quantity of time demands over the quality of direct-care, person-centered relationships; and also caring and healing processes and practices. This tension continues in spite of marketing logos and slogans about “caring institutions” (Watson, 2006).

Ultimately, the ability to resolve the conflict between the disciplinary foundation of what nursing is, (embedded within its ethics, philosophy, timeless values, knowledge, and theories), and constraints imposed by institutional practices, may be the most critical challenge for the

discipline and for the profession's survival. Nursing's covenant with humanity/caring/healing/health is in contrast to the tumultuous world in crisis for lack of human caring/healing and healthcare.

This fundamental conflict may well impact all of humane health care, both nationally and internationally (Watson, & Foster, 2003). A values-based, philosophically-theory-guided approach to human caring and health care illuminates the need for a major shift to occur.

As we all know, 2020 is designated by the World Health Organization as the International Year of the Nurse and Midwife. This designation highlights the authentic changes needed, for nursing and human caring and health to be recognized and actualized in a shrinking world, depleted of nursing, human caring and healthcare.

2020 also is the Bi-centennial of Florence Nightingale, a time for restoring the vision and wisdom of Nightingale: nursing participates with humans across the Sacred Circle of Life. It is a lifetime journey of offering caring and healing and health for all. Nurses, across time, space, cultures, religions, borders and boundaries of location, seek to understand and preserve the wholeness of human existence, and to offer compassionate, informed, knowledgeable human caring and health care to all, for betterment of society and humankind.

## **Caring Science as Disciplinary Foundation for Nursing**

Caring Science has evolved to encompass the Ethic of Belonging as starting point for a new view of science. That is, we all 'Belong' to the universal energy of infinite Love, which holds the sacred circle of life - death in which nurses and humanity dwell. (Watson, 2006, 2008, 2019). Such a values-guided, expanded epistemology and relational-ontology for a caring ethic are embodied in Caring Science as the unitary, disciplinary ground for nursing, now and the future. The advancement of nursing theory within Caring Science, embraces wholeness of person and society and our Mother Earth. It includes both ideals and practical human caring and health care guidance. Thus, Caring Science, with its moral, philosophical values - and unity orientation to humanity and our environment/globe, positions nursing as the human caring/healing and health profession for our world.

Nevertheless, there remains much work to be done. New transformative, human-spirit inspired approaches are required to reverse institutional and system lethargy and darkness. To create the necessary cultural change, the human spirit has to be invited back into our health care systems.

New horizons of possibilities have to be explored to create space whereby Caring Science and discipline-specific, theory-guided practices can be actualized for

healthcare for all. This includes new unitary models of science which embrace compassionate, intentional, heart-centered human-to-human caring/ healing relationships. Such authentic, personal/ professional practice models of Caring Science are capable of leading us, locally and globally, toward a moral community of caring/healing and health for all. This global nursing community of over 20.7 million strong, are the hope to restore healing and health at a level that honors and sustains the dignity and humanity of practitioners and patients alike.

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