

THE MEANING OF NURSING THEORY IN DAILY NURSING PRACTISE

(EDITORIAL)

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The postmodern perception of the world, the breakdown of the determinative model, quantum mechanics, chaos, complexity, cybernetics and deep ecology, have lead to the understanding of a physical pluralism. The physical pluralism existed before, but unfortunately as a shadow waiting for the change of the position of the sun; as did the physical wait with a surplus of patience. In fact, the time came that the shadow vitalized, organized and developed by itself in order to extend, not only the physical and social sciences, but, also the sciences of life.

Approximately fifteen years have passed since I first read about Nursing Theories, and still I remember the few introductory notes of the lesson. I clearly recall how The Structure of Scientific Revolutions, written by Thomas Kuhn, was used to introduce Greek nursing students to Nursing Theories. Kuhn's work was lengthy compared to the few developed nursing theories, since each of the nursing theories were explained in less than 30 written lines. Nevertheless, most of the nursing theories maintained secretly or visibly the idea, that Nursing is not a Science, because the nursing profession was deprived of prestige, power, financial negotiation and theoretical pedestal. The pure ideology of the scientific community that constituted the body of Nursing Science in my country (Greece) – and maybe in many other countries - insisted on applying the same attitude, the same rationale toward the detained perception about Science, resulting in a revolution, a paradigm shift, and discovery of a new language in order to express and to conquer that, which rightfully belonged to nursing.

Surely, there are still problems, especially, in developing countries and in countries using stereotypes to characterize the socialization of women – especially since the majority of nursing professionals are women. Societies usually demand women to be passive and obedient personalities, not leaders.

Fortunately the “regular” science of Thomas Kuhn eluded its predicted direction and with steady rhythms developed new laws; new interactions thus resembling an open system to the environment. The society of Man, responding to feelings of hurt from the promises of the felicity of the modern technological civilization, turned inward to use introspection to re-evaluate the promises, thus the result was expanded fundamental conclusions leading to a non-deterministic evolutionary route.

The Science of Nursing moved from a deterministic to a postmodern philosophical approach without a transitional period. Thus, to the expert observing the nursing

profession two dogmas emerged, one related to healing of the body and the second to healing both mind and body. Unfortunately neither dogma incorporated the spirit.

Globally, the majority of Nursing Schools still insists on training Nurses directed to the curing approach of “the body” and omitting, deliberately in my personal perception, the mind and the psyche of the patient. Maybe emphasizing the curing of the body resulted from either the strict theocratic character beneath which Nursing Science has existed in developed countries or to the weakness of professors, to embody the new knowledge and the paradigm shift.

From the theory of Martha Rogers to the theory of Jean Watson, students and theoreticians struggled to reach a Cartesian translation, which was clear, predictive, and generally true, thus duplicating the science of Mathematics with $A + B + C + X = Y$. In addition, nursing theorist emphasized in daily clinical practice, the patient and the environment; thus recognizing the nurse’s understanding of the patient’s energetic interactions with the referent environment, for example “to take care the plants of the hospital environment”.

I would like to be in that country (heaven), as the great composer Manos Hadjidakis said, where, “people will listen to only one song which will include every song” and to meet and converse with Martha Rogers, to ask her: How does she interpret the Science of Unitary Human Beings, which is translated by many professors teaching Nursing Theory as “ $x = a + b + c + \dots$ ”

The great Nobel laureate Greek poet Odysseus Elytis in one of his last works wrote:
“These in my language. And others other things in other (languages).
But the Truth only compared to death is given”.

The splitting of problems into smaller pieces facilitated detailed searching of the subject of our observation in any scientific field. The Scientist’s success in establishing multiple, infinitesimal partitions of the entirety resulted in forgetting to join all of its parts together again. Thus, the WHOLE was effortlessly ignored while the parts were strengthened.

In this country (Heaven), as I said before, where all the people will listen to only one perfect song, in this country where every human being will receive the part of the truth which falls to one’s share, I will end in: Once upon a time, I, who today in the Intensive Care Unit, attentively cared for the functional necessities of the body of one brain dead patient; I, who advocated for the preservation of the homeostasis while ignoring the mental and spiritual domain of the patient was invited to receive the part of the truth which falls to my share.

Walking in the road of time the human tribe is confirming either its past, or its future. In my country (Greece), the cradle of the civilization and culture, where we still live,

remembering our glorious past and maintaining the memorable deeds of our ancient past, but unfortunately we know only a few precepts of the classical tradition. On the other hand, countries with less historical past than Greece are easily designing futures and inventing structures, however, the futures cannot sustain the fundamental building of Humanity, because the historical contributions of past civilizations have not been incorporated into the newly designed futures. The past civilizations greatly influence the evolving thought and direction of the present as well as the future. The vast horizontal road of time, which includes the past and the future, owes to re-determine, to follow the vertical path of the revolution, in order to lead us to a new consideration of things.

The distinguished professor and Nursing Theorist Jean Watson, in “Postmodern Nursing and Beyond” described an ontological transpersonal model of caring-healing. The model expressed the agreement of Nursing known from the archetypal feminine picture.

Carl Jung connects care, compassion and mental prominence as consequences of the female archetype, which surpass logic, helpful instincts and impulses. Jung’s approach places the female archetype into direct agreement with the space of transformation and regeneration. However, regeneration cannot be observed in some ways, and cannot be counted or expressed with statistical results. Regeneration is Being beyond the sensory perception; is a spiritual process and has a direct relationship with the shift of the cosmological paradigm, in which we live, move and act. Regeneration is Being in progress with a new registration of what we call oneself, or the self-idea of every one of us. Regeneration with transformation needs revolutionary practices, which must attribute to the substance of Nursing Science for the impulsion and the direction of this revolution.

Maria Demetriou (2001), Nursing Professor, critiqued the first publication of the “Holistic Conceptual Model”. In the “Cyprus Nursing Chronicles” journal, Ms Demetriou stated, “The idea led to the creation of a theoretical conceptual Development model, and its aim is to develop the nurse and to upgrade the level of health of the man (sic) as an entirety”.

In my opinion, the Science of Nursing has reached a critical point in time requiring the profession to re-establish and reconstruct from its historical foundations and its accomplishments. As a conclusion to this preface, I want to resurrect the writing of Herman Hesse, and to send a message to the leaders of the Nursing profession, saying: “I appreciate much more the man (sic) who is ready to be entirely given to the most ingenuous ideals in the world, than the man (sic) who can speak smartly for aims and ideals but he is unable to do a little sacrifice for any of these ideals”.