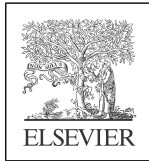




Since January 2020 Elsevier has created a COVID-19 resource centre with free information in English and Mandarin on the novel coronavirus COVID-19. The COVID-19 resource centre is hosted on Elsevier Connect, the company's public news and information website.

Elsevier hereby grants permission to make all its COVID-19-related research that is available on the COVID-19 resource centre - including this research content - immediately available in PubMed Central and other publicly funded repositories, such as the WHO COVID database with rights for unrestricted research re-use and analyses in any form or by any means with acknowledgement of the original source. These permissions are granted for free by Elsevier for as long as the COVID-19 resource centre remains active.



Academic caring pedagogy, presence, and Communitas in nursing education during the COVID-19 pandemic

Roberta Christopher, EdD, MSN, ARNP, NE-BC, CAIF CHTS-CP^{a,b,1*},
Lila de Tantillo, PhD, MS, ARNP, FNP-BC^a,
Jean Watson, PhD, RN, AHN-BC, FAAN, LL (AAN)^{b,c}

^aKeigwin School of Nursing, Jacksonville University

^bWatson Caring Science Institute

^cUniversity of Colorado Denver, College of Nursing

ARTICLE INFO

Article history:

Received 23 April 2020

Received in revised form

22 July 2020

Accepted 15 August 2020

Available online September 25,
2020.

Keywords:

Caring

Presence

Education, Distance

Nursing

Empathy

Teaching

Pedagogy

Pandemics

COVID-19

Coronavirus

ABSTRACT

Background: Strong faculty academic human caring presence is paramount during the exponential use of asynchronous, remote learning during the COVID-19 pandemic.

Purpose: The purpose of this article is to provide a holistic, theoretical foundation for evidence informed-caring pedagogical practices.

Methods: Watson's (2008; 2018) Unitary Caring Science theoretical approach offers one pedagogical caring framework for advancing teaching-learning in the digital age.

Discussion: Examples to humanize the virtual classroom and remote or online teaching include narrative, theory-guided pedagogical approaches, such as creation of caring spaces and other modalities to transcend physical distancing and nurture Communitas (caring community) among of faculty and students.

Conclusion: A theory-guided, holistic caring pedagogical approach supports the needs of both faculty and nursing students.

Cite this article: Christopher, R., de Tantillo, L., & Watson, J. (2020, November/December). Academic caring pedagogy, presence, and Communitas in nursing education during the COVID-19 pandemic. *Nurs Outlook*, 68(6), 822–829. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.outlook.2020.08.006>.

Introduction

Strong academic leadership, faculty presence, and flexible policies are paramount as a result of COVID-19.

Physical separation and social distancing, intertwined with new expectations of asynchronous remote learning, impact student psychological well-being and learning through heightened stress, fear, and anxiety (Center for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) 2019;

Declarations: This publication did not receive any specific grant from funding agencies in the public, commercial, or not-for-profit sectors. The contributing authors declare that there is no conflict of interest.

*Corresponding author. Jacksonville University, 2800 University Boulevard, North, Jacksonville, FL 32211.

E-mail address: rchrist6@ju.edu (R. Christopher).

¹ Personal Permanent Home Address: 94120 Fiddlers Walk LN, Fernandina Beach, FL 32034.

0029-6554/\$ -see front matter © 2020 Elsevier Inc. All rights reserved.

<https://doi.org/10.1016/j.outlook.2020.08.006>

Gritsenko et al., 2020). Human caring has long been established as a central value in nursing education (Tanner, 1990; Hills & Watson, 2011, 2021) and can be considered an essential practice. Thus, optimizing caring pedagogical practices in a remote learning environment may foster further expressions of caring presence. The purpose of this article is to provide theoretically based, evidence-informed caring practices that nursing faculty may use to augment remote learning pedagogy.

Caring Pedagogy

According to Duffy (2018), caring pedagogy is the art of teaching which integrates caring factors through a student-centered learning environments and genuine relationships. Motta and Bennett (2018) added that caring pedagogy nurtures time-spaces for co-creation of knowledge, and faculty embracing the whole student and their unique learning needs. Therefore, caring pedagogy includes a) the engagement in reciprocal, transpersonal caring relationships, b) the sustainment of safe, culturally responsive, and structurally accessible learning spaces, c) the use of inclusive and strength-based teaching practices, and d) ultimately, the cultivation of flourishing and meaningful student learning (Levinas, 1969; Motta & Bennett, 2018; Chinn & Falk-Rael, 2018; Duffy, 2018; Hills & Watson, 2011, 2021; Soto, 2005).

Hills and Watson's (2011, 2021) germinal works in the caring science curriculum provide global best practices for academic leaders and faculty to use as a guide to optimize caring pedagogy during this unprecedented time and beyond. Schools of nursing, such as Florida Atlantic University and the University of Victoria, are further examples of full integration of caring science throughout the school's philosophy, curriculum, and academic policy. Though full integration of caring pedagogy throughout the curriculum may take years to enculturate, caring pedagogical practices may be implemented at the course level in real-time. Watson's (2008, 2018a, 2018b) Unitary Caring Science theoretical approach offers a framework for advancing pedagogy through a caring science lens. This involves humanizing physical distancing, while ensuring a caring presence in remote teaching, learning, and leading.

Caring Presence

When transitioning to remote learning, faculty who have traditionally taught face to face may feel disconnected from their students, while those accustomed to teaching online may desire to nurture their connection further to support students during the pandemic. Moreover, not only may students feel physically distanced from faculty and peers, but also socially

distanced (keeping space between oneself and others). Thus, teaching presence, or immediacy, nurtures psychological closeness and caring through communications, as well as course structure and processes (Ekmekci, 2013).

Ekmekci conceptualized presence as "being there" (2013, p. 29). Grumme, Barry, Gordon, and Ray (2016) described three key attributes of virtual caring presence: (1) physical, (2) spiritual and transcendental, and (3) sociopolitical. Plate and Asselin (2014) identified social presence as vital in demonstrating caring in remote learning. Blending the conceptualizations of presence for use in the virtual classroom may provide students the awareness that though faculty and classmates are not physically and socially with them, their connectedness to both faculty and classmates transcends close physical proximity. Therefore, the use of caring practices and processes when designing or redesigning instruction during times of crisis promotes student wellbeing through virtual presence.

Caring science and *Caritas-Veritas* processes (Watson, 2018a) provide a theoretical framework for humanizing the remote learning experience through caring pedagogy. The key terms used throughout this paper have been summarized in Table 1. Watson (2008) defines *Caritas* as "to cherish, to appreciate, to give special, if not loving, attention to" (p. 39), where love is "the greatest source of healing in the world" (p. 40). *Caritas*, therefore, conveys a deeper convergence between caring and love, whereby pedagogy is heart-centered, and the faculty-student transpersonal relationship is transformed through caring consciousness. Watson (2018a) further adds that the *Caritas* Processes are "underpinned and motivated by our humanistic-altruistic value system" (p. 49). Thus, each *Caritas* Process is aligned with a corresponding moral value, or *Veritas*. Table 2 provides for descriptions of each *Caritas* process that will be used throughout the offered strategies. Watson proposed that by "affirming the oneness of being-belonging, awakening to the reality that what we do to others we do to ourselves, and working from a moral *Veritas* value system of caring and Love, we live joy" (Watson, 2018a, p. 49). Hence, caring pedagogy offers the opportunity for joy in teaching and learning through caring consciousness and the *Caritas-Veritas* Processes, both during the COVID-19 pandemic and beyond into the new normal.

Watson's (2018a) fourth *Caritas* process (CP4) of sustaining trusting and caring relationships is paramount during times of crisis. Treating students with compassion, loving-kindness, and equanimity exemplifies Watson's first *Caritas* process (CP1). As instruction and pedagogy are adapted to remote learning approaches, faculty may use creativity and solution-based approaches (CP6), while creating and sustaining caring learning environments.

Watson (2002) further noted the power of transpersonal virtual caring communities, or *Communitas*, in fostering transformative learning. Within Watson's metaphysics of virtual caring framework, the

Table 1 – Key Conceptual Definitions

Concept	Definition/Attributes
Caring pedagogy ^a	a) engagement in reciprocal, transpersonal caring relationships b) sustainment of safe, culturally responsive, and structurally accessible learning spaces c) use of inclusive and strength-based teaching practices d) cultivation of flourishing and meaningful student learning
Caritas ^{d,e}	“Caritas” comes from the Latin word meaning cherish, to appreciate, to give special attention, if not loving, attention to: connotes something that is very fine, that indeed is precious.
Celeritas ^b	Latin word translated as swiftness or speed (symbolized as the c in Albert Einstein’s $E=mc^2$)
Communitas ^{c,e}	Creating a community and culture of caring; Sharing of experiences without the need of formal structures for togetherness, caring, and joy
Narrative Pedagogy ^b	An interpretive pedagogy where narrative caring stories are used via a variety of methods and mediums to foster a learning environment where faculty and students engage in dialogue, shared experiences and interpretations, reflection, problem solving, and analytic thinking.
Transpersonal ^{d,e}	“Human-to-human connection, transcend time, space and physicality; transpersonal conveys connections the personal, physical and unites deeper, more spiritual, transcendent, even cosmic connections in the wider universe.”
Veritas ^e	Timeless, eternal, universal Moral values; underpin Caritas

Sources:

^a Bennett (2018), Chinn and Falk-Rael (2018), Duffy (2018), Hills and Watson (2011), Soto (2005).

^b Diekelmann (2005).

^c Turner (2012).

^d Watson (2002, pp. 42–43).

^e Watson (2018a, 2018b).

collective group and resulting presence within the virtual caring *Communitas* potentiates (*celeritas*) caring consciousness and the human *Caritas* field. Though in this example, caring *Communitas* is used in the virtual learning environment, such caring communities may also extend to face-to-face classroom experiences. According to Watson, the caring *Communitas* radiates high energy, positive streams which produce powerful transformative learning paradigms. Thus, during times of crisis and physical distancing, the choice of faculty and students to co-create and engage in high energy caring practices may help to mitigate lower energy levels resulting from the COVID-19 pandemic.

Rodgers (2002) noted that it is the *in the moment* process of active reflection that results in presence. Thus, caring presence is furthered by listening (CP2; CP5) and speaking without judgment (CP8), heart-centered teaching (CP1), and suspending role and status to generate the transpersonal connection (CP4) and energetic *Caritas* field (CP8). In their comprehensive review of virtual presence, Grumme et al. (2016) noted that caring in the online environment requires extending the traditional conceptions of space, place, and time. Thus, the *Caritas* field (CP8), in the context of caring presence requires faculty to extend relationships formed through face-to-face caring moments to connections with students across these new virtual dimensions (Watson, 2002).

Incorporating video communication in the virtual classroom may provide additional opportunities for faculty to connect with students to cultivate a sense of caring and closeness during remote learning (de Tantillo & Christopher, 2020). For asynchronous, typewritten narrative or video discussions, faculty can create short videos to introduce the week’s learning focus. Such videos permit students to see and hear the faculty as another medium of caring presence and connection. A variety of web-based and smartphone-based applications may be used to create the videos, or they may be created in the learning management system (LMS). Platforms, such as Canvas, have video discussion functionality available directly in the discussion board forum. Other asynchronous video discussion tools, such as Flipgrid (<https://blog.flipgrid.com/news/remoteteaching>), provide a virtual and secure password protected environment for critical caring dialogue. Both faculty and students can see each other’s body language and hear each other’s voices as added context not available in traditional discussion boards without video.

Caring Narrative Pedagogy, Spaces, and Communitas

Faculty Engagement

Research suggests that student learning and satisfaction in online learning are associated with faculty engagement, conceptualized as being there and caring presence, through posts in the discussion forum. A study by Claywell et al. (2016) found that faculty who used strategies to foster presence and student engagement yielded improved student evaluation scores in understanding course material, interest, meeting learning objectives, increased knowledge, and overall effectiveness of faculty. Additionally, Claywell et al. detected differences between RN-BSN and MSN student mean evaluation scores related to levels of faculty posts in online discussions. For the RN-BSN group, low levels of faculty posts in discussions corresponded to lower mean faculty effectiveness scores, medium

Table 2 – Caritas Processes

Number	Abbreviation	Description
Caritas Process 1 (CP1)	Embrace Loving-Kindness	Humanistic—Altruistic Veritas Timeless Values—Practice of Loving-Kindness and Equanimity with Self and Other
Caritas Process 2 (CP2)	Inspire Faith-Hope	Enabling Faith and Hope, through Authentic Presence
Caritas Process 3 (CP3)	Trust (Transpersonal Self)	Sensitivity to Self—Others, Ongoing Spiritual Development
Caritas Process 4 (CP4)	Nurture (Relationship)	Developing Authentic Trusting Caring Relationships
Caritas Process 5 (CP5)	Forgive (All)	Allowing Expression of Positive-Negative Feelings: Listening to Another's Story
Caritas Process 6 (CP6)	Deepen (Creative Self)	Creative Problem-Solving 'Solution –Seeking' Caring Process: expanded Epistemology—all ways of knowing
Caritas Process 7 (CP7)	Balance (Learning)	Relational Teaching- Coaching Inner Subjective Meaning Life World
Caritas Process 8 (CP8)	Co-Create (Caritas Field)	Creating Healing Environments Being / Becoming the Caritas Field
Caritas Process 9 (CP9)	Minister (Humanity)	Assistance with Basic Needs—Sacred Acts
Caritas Process 10 (CP10)	Open (Infinity)	Open to Existential—Spiritual Unknowns: Allow for Mystery & Miracle

Sources: [Watson \(2018a, 2018b\)](#). Adapted with permission.

levels of faculty posts yielded higher mean faculty effectiveness scores. Conversely, for the faculty who were rated as high-level discussion board posters, their mean faculty effectiveness scores decreased. For the MSN students, mean faculty effectiveness scores directly reflected the level of posting in the discussion board. Thus, faculty presence may be adapted to the unique student learning needs through caring pedagogy.

Caring Through Narrative Pedagogy

Narrative pedagogy was developed by [Diekelmann \(2005\)](#) as an interpretive pedagogy, where narrative cases are used via a variety of methods and mediums to foster a caring, learning environment. Faculty and students engage in dialogue through shared experiences, interpretations, reflection, and problem solving. In narrative pedagogy, the faculty facilitates converging conversations and serve as facilitators. [Scheckel and Ironside's \(2006\)](#) findings support the use of narrative pedagogy to enhance interpretive and analytic thinking through reflection, sharing, and finding meaning. Further, the authors suggested re-envisioning learning spaces to allow for student interpretive thinking of caring moments from practice and clinical experiences. [Ironside's \(2015\)](#) review of 15 years of narrative pedagogy literature found continued evidence to support for such practices.

[Phillips, Bassell, and Fillmore \(2017\)](#) discovered that the use of storytelling and reflective pedagogy, in the online or e-learning platforms, fostered transformative learning through perspective transformation. According to Phillips et al., storytelling and reflection are used for scholarly discourse during virtual lectures to provide students a safe space to question assumptions related to clinical practices and caring. As part of the scholarly discourse process, faculty and students use authentic listening during the progression of the narrative story to interpret and reinterpret each

other's stories, which sparks the transformative process (CP2; CP4; CP5; and CP6). Additionally, Caritas processes may be employed to nurture deep contemplation and clarity ([Watson, 2018a](#)).

[Haines and Maurice-Takerei \(2019\)](#) found that use of collaborative learning and caring spaces, *Communitas*, transformed instruction to a more learner-centered and heart-centered facilitative approach. The use of storytelling and caring pedagogy in the online *Communitas* nurtures knowledge development and caring presence. Moreover, narrative pedagogy provides rich details that humanize the context of the critical caring dialogue in the virtual classroom. Frameworks, such as [Hart's \(2016\)](#) model for facilitating higher-order learning in graduate discussions, may be adapted to operationalize this approach from an assessment perspective.

Caring Hours and Spaces

[Covington \(2005\)](#) found that faculty ways of being included being available, authentic, open, and going beyond. An example of authentically being with would be faculty hosting virtual office or "caring" hours that allow students to be with faculty through the relational connectedness of being seen and feeling seen ([Rodgers & Raider-Roth, 2006](#)). Ways of behaving noted by [Covington \(2005\)](#) included listening, reassuring, and nonjudgment allowing for a safe caring space where students feel validated, comforted, and nurtured (CPs 1-9).

[Watson's \(2018a\)](#) integration of Levinas' (1969) ethics of belonging grounds caring spaces as sacred spaces for faculty-student connectedness. Caritas micro-practices (praxis) when used by faculty foster a) ethics of face, b) heart-centeredness, and c) virtual touch (Caritas hands). [Table 3](#) provides suggested Caritas micro-practices within each area of Caritas praxis that have been adapted for use by nursing faculty. Caring Space, open discussion forums, may be created for students

Table 3 – Caritas -Communitas Micro-Practices (Praxis) Adapted for Nursing Education**Caritas Ethics of Face Micro-Practices (Praxis)**

“The only way to sustain our humanity at this point in human history, is through the face- to- face connection. . .when we look into face of another it mirrors the infinity and the mystery of the human soul and reflects back our own soul” (Levinas, 1969; Motta & Bennett, 2018), as cited in Watson, (2018b). Through face to face connection, we “see” the “other.”

Hold live lectures so you and your students may synchronously “see” each other

1. Offer complete presence and compassion when listening and speaking with students
2. Seek ‘to see’ the student as a person—Ask about their lives and families before starting the formal lecture
3. Hold the still point during presence through eye to eye (*Ethics of Face*) and the heart to heart connection (*Caritas Heart*)

Caritas Heart Micro-Practices (Praxis)

Before engaging in a virtual encounter with students through face-to-face live streamed lectures:

1. Centering self: The centering process serves as the pause that allows for authentic presence of self by the student and educator. Pause—Stop—Center “Ground self”
2. Take deep cleansing breaths
3. Heart focused breathing—Imagine your heart is warm and radiating love and light
 - a). Feel your heart—Through your breathing, experience the high vibration feelings in your heart, feel your gratitude, compassion, caring, and loving- kindness for your students and for yourself

Caritas Hands/Touch Micro-Practices (Praxis)

Once you are heart-centered and enter into the virtual face-to-face learning and caring space:

1. Read the energetic field of the class—Is the class unusually quiet or are they enthusiastic and conversing amongst themselves?
2. Authentically be there—Ensure caring presence
3. Identify yourself and encourage students to do the same
4. Address students by name
5. Hold silence and allow time for thoughtful contemplation
6. Compassionately listen to students by quieting your mind and opening your heart
7. Accurately detect others’ feelings and energetically comfort, soothe, or calm as appropriate
8. Stay within other’s frame of reference
9. Hold another with kindness and dignity
10. Intentional use of virtual loving touch—Send a loving air hug or a joyful emoji via the learning platform’s chat feature
11. Radiate loving—heart presence through discussions, presentations, and narrative pedagogy
12. Approach skills as caring—healing acts
13. ‘See’; ‘hear’, honor other’s subjectivity

Caritas-Communitas Ethics of Belonging Micro-Practices (Praxis)

To foster and create Communitas and belonging within the virtual space, several structures and Caritas Processes may be used.

1. Cultivate a community of dialogue and collective identity
2. Virtual chat rooms
3. Caring spaces to provide students safe space to share of experiences without the need of formal structures for togetherness, caring, support, encouragement, and joy
4. Support spontaneous student created *Communitas*, such as class Facebook groups or use of other social media platforms
5. Promoting shared Veritas values while recognizing and honoring diversity and inclusivity
6. Improvisation-based pedagogy through student collaboration and involvement in an unfolding co-creation activity that fosters engagement and belonging

Sources: Watson (2003, 2018a, 2018b). Adapted with permission.

to be and belong. The Caring Space discussion forum fosters caring capital (consciousness) through mutual empathy, connectedness, and potentially resilience (Aldrich & Meyer, 2015; Watson, 2018b). Faculty may facilitate the Caring Space using loving-kindness (CP1) to inspire hope (CP2), while honoring the student’s dignity and expression of self, whether positive or negative (CP5). This protected caring space, within the internal confines of the secure LMS, is therefore transformed through caring pedagogy and presence infrastructure, and creates a healing environment (*Caritas field*, CP8). Faculty may address student needs (CP9) by offering words of hope, love, and support. Faculty may also role model and recommend strategies for self-care, resilience, meditation, and openness to the

existential-spiritual unknowns (CPs 7–10). A helpful video created by Dr. Watson (*Care for the Journey*) helps to remind both faculty and students of the sacred nature of nursing practice and is available at <https://www.watsoncaringscience.org/portfolio-item/theory-of-caring-meditation/>.

Caring Communitas

To evolve caring pedagogy a step further, faculty may intentionally design safe and engaged, caring educational cultures. Such cultures foster not only transpersonal relationships among faculty and students, but generate an academic caring community, or

Communitas, that is limitless and has global reach (Watson, 2018a).

Communitas is described by Turner (2012) as a sharing of experiences, without the need of formal structures, for togetherness and joy. Pedagogical *Communitas* may therefore, evolve through *Caritas-Veritas* processes, the ethics of belonging, methodological wholeness, and emancipatory pedagogy (Hills & Watson, 2011, 2021; Watson, 2018a). Thus, creation of unstructured caring and relational *Communitas* spaces, within the structured and ritualistic virtual classroom, promotes inspired fellowship, inclusivity, and emancipatory nursing praxis (Bevis & Watson, 1989; Hills & Mullett, 2000; Hills & Watson, 2011, 2021; Turner, 2012; Watson, 2000).

Caring *Communitas*, as conceptualized by Hills and Watson (2011, 2021), may also be fostered within the virtual classroom by use of critical caring dialogue. Faculty present ambiguous issues or problems that require students to challenge assumptions, critically think and reflect, and discover personal meaning. Critical caring dialogue within the classroom Caring *Communitas* results in the development of new knowledge. Hills and Watson (2011), emphasize that authentic listening is central to such an emancipatory learning process.

One example, proposed by Hills and Watson (2011, 2021), is the use of role-play and dialogue (2011, p. 90). Using Hills and Watson's format, the learning activity would invite students to engage in role-play focused to illuminate critical aspects of authentic presence (CP2), and the corresponding *Veritas* to inspire faith and hope while honoring others. Students are then asked to have critical dialogue within *Communitas* pairs or larger size groups. Tools, such as Blackboard Collaborate, allow faculty to divide the class into breakout groups, within the LMS platform, during the live virtual (remote) class lectures. Faculty are able to enter and leave each group, during the dialogue and role-play, without being intrusive. The participants in the breakout groups would identify an issue upon which they do not agree and about which they feel passionate. Students utilize *Caritas* micro-practices (Table 3), such as centering-self, for quiet contemplation on the selected issue. During contemplation, they are asked to recall how they felt during the last discussion of the issue. Next, the student attempts to convince another student in the group of the merits of their perspective on the issue. Following the critical caring dialogue, each student shares how they felt being part of this type of discussion. The student then shares their sense of authentic presence (CP2) during the dialogue and whether they felt their perspective was considered and honored (CPs 3-5). The classroom *Communitas* comes together to further elucidate commonalities and differences in the aspects of authentic presence and caring they experienced.

Chinn and Kramer (2018) suggest that praxis is an integrated expression of emancipatory knowing through the continuous interface between action and

critical reflection. The Model of Knowing and Knowledge Development, proposed by Chinn and Kramer, may be used to further frame critical dialogue in the virtual Caring *Communitas* classroom. For example, faculty may pose a critical question, such as, "Should healthcare be a right in the United States?" Ethical knowledge questions may be situated in a social context, including social economic status and social determinants of health. Students then engage in the creative processes of clarifying and exploring, with the use of dialogue and justification. Dialogue compels the *Communitas* to explore formal expressions of ethical principles and codes. Moral and ethical values are clarified to understand alternative points of view more fully through dialogue and justification.

Dialogue and justification may be framed through the *Caritas* processes and micro-practices, such as ethics of face and hands (Watson, 2003, 2018b). Watson (2003, 2018b) surmised, from the work of Levinas, 1969, that it is during the face to face connection that we "see" the "other" and when one looks into face, it mirrors the infinity of human soul and reflects back one's own soul. Additionally, Watson (2003) derived from the work of Logstrup that such ethics are not only framed from a perspective of face, but also hands. From a nursing perspective when we care for another, the other's trust is "placed in our hands" (Logstrup, 1997, p. 19). Watson (2003) further noted that metaphorically, "facing and holding another in our hands" connects one to another through love (p. 3). Thus, framing dialogue and justification through the ethical lens of heart, face, and hands is foundational to transpersonal caring and informs clinical reasoning (Watson, 2003) (See Table 2). Knowledge authentication ensues resulting in an integrated expression in caring praxis by way of moral and ethical comportment (Chinn & Kramer, 2018).

Conclusions

As learning is transitioned to the remote methodologies and platforms, healing and caring for both faculty and students, may be produced (CP8) through use of the Theory of Transpersonal Caring and Unitary Caring Science (Watson, 2018b). By doing so, faculty may be authentically present and engaged to offer hope (CP2) that the COVID-19 pandemic will resolve in the near future. Moreover, caring presence (CP2) in nursing education is most visible in a faculty's pedagogy, both as science and art. Thus, academic practices may be adapted, to ensure ongoing caring presence, as instruction is transitioned to remote learning methodologies during the pandemic and beyond.

Caring micro-practices (praxis) help to center faculty on their heart-centered calling and *Caritas* field created in their remote classroom *Communitas*. Like students, faculty are also exposed to the negative influences of the pandemic through their own lived experiences. As

pedagogy is adapted or reconceptualized to remote learning, caring approaches may be accomplished through the suggested *Caritas-Vertias* processes and intentional, transpersonal relationship attunement. Caring instruction may be furthered viewed as a reciprocal, mutual exchange through conversations with students versus lectures to students. Face to face, synchronous and asynchronous caring touch points, through virtual live lectures, promote belonging, support, and the *Caritas* field that is much needed during the COVID-19 pandemic. Classroom dialogue may be grounded in the ethics of face and hand, and *Caritas* heart (Logstrup, 1997; Watson, 2003, 2018a, 2018b). Further, classroom and faculty-student interactions attend to the learning process and include not only observation, analysis, and response, but also caring and active reflection. Otherwise, connectedness and the transpersonal caring moment is compromised. Caring Spaces are offered for unstructured *Communitas* to encourage social support and resilience through collective caring consciousness—the *Caritas* field. In conclusion, caring pedagogy, despite the required physical distancing demanded of nursing faculty and students during this global crisis, supports the holistic needs of the nursing education *Communitas*.

REFERENCES

- Aldrich, D. P., & Meyer, M. A. (2015). Social capital and community resilience. *American Behavioral Scientist*, 59(2), 254–269. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0002764214550299>.
- Bevis, E., & Watson, J. (1989). Illuminating the issues: probing the past, a history of nursing curriculum development—The past shapes the future. In E. Bevis, & J. Watson (Eds.), *Toward a caring curriculum: A new pedagogy for nursing* (New York: National League of Nursing).
- Chinn, P., & Kramer, M. (2018). *Knowledge development in nursing theory and process* (10th ed.). St. Louis, MO: Elsevier.
- Chinn, P. L., & Falk-Rafael, A. (2018). Embracing the focus of the discipline of nursing: critical caring pedagogy. *Journal of Nursing Scholarship*, 50(6), 687–984. <http://dx.doi.org/10.1111/jnu.12426>.
- Claywell, L., Wallace, C., Price, J., Reneau, M., & Carlson, K. (2016). Influence of nursing faculty discussion presence on student learning and satisfaction in online courses. *Nurse Educator*, 41(4), 175–179, doi:10.1097/NNE.0000000000000252.
- Covington, H. (2005). Caring presence: Providing a safe space for patients. *Holistic Nursing Practice*, 19(4), 169–172, doi:10.1097/00004650-200507000-00008.
- de Tantilillo, L., & Christopher, R. (2020). Transforming graduate nursing education during an era of social distancing: Tools from the field. *Nurse Education Today*. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.nedt.2020.104472>.
- Diekelmann, N. (2005). Engaging the students and the teacher: Co-creating substantive reform with narrative pedagogy. *Journal of Nursing Education*, 44(6), 249–252.
- Duffy, J. R. (2018). *Quality caring in nursing and health systems: Implications for clinicians, educators, and leaders* (3rd ed.). New York, NY: Springer Publishing Co.
- Ekmekci, O. (2013). Being there: Establishing instructor presence in an online learning environment. *Higher Education Studies*, 3(1), 29–38, doi:10.5539/hes.v3n1p29.
- Gritsenko, V., Skugarevsky, O., Konstantinov, V., Khamenka, N., Marinova, T., Reznik, A., et al. (2020). COVID-19 fear, stress, anxiety, and substance use among Russian and Belarusian university students. *International Journal of Mental Health Addiction*, 21, 1–7, doi:10.1007/s11469-020-00330-z.
- Grumme, V. S., Barry, C. D., Gordon, S. C., & Ray, M. A. (2016). On virtual presence. *Advances in Nursing Science*, 39(1), 48–59. <https://doi.org/10.1097/ANS.000000000000103>.
- Haines, K. J., & Maurice-Takerei, L. (2019). The impact of new collaborative learning spaces on tertiary teacher practice. *Journal of Learning Spaces*, 8(2), 12–24.
- Hart, Leigh (2016). Designing a graduate discussion board rubric to facilitate higher-order learning. *SoTL Commons Conference*, 53. <https://digitalcommons.georgiasouthern.edu/sotlcommons/SoTL/2016/53>.
- Hills, M., & Mullett, J. (2000). Community-based research: Collaborative action for health and social change. In B. C. Victoria (Ed.), *Community health promotion coalition*. Victoria BC: University of Victoria.
- Hills, M., & Watson, J. (2011). *Creating a caring science curriculum: An emancipatory pedagogy for nursing* (1st ed.). NY: Springer Publishing Company.
- Hills, M., & Watson, J. (2021). *Creating a caring science curriculum: An emancipatory pedagogy for nursing*. (2nd ed.). NY: Springer Publishing Company.
- Ironside, P. M. (2015). Narrative pedagogy: Transforming nursing education through 15 years of research in nursing education. *Nursing Education Perspectives*, 36(2), 83–88, doi:10.5480/13-1102.
- Levinas, E. (1969). *Totality and infinity*. Pittsburgh, PA: Duquesne University Press.
- Longstrup, K. (1997). *The ethical demand*. Notre Dame, IN: University of Notre Dame Press.
- Motta, S. C., & Bennett, A. (2018). Pedagogies of care, careful epistemological practice and ‘other’ caring subjectivities in enabling education. *Teaching in Higher Education*, 23(5), 631–646. <https://doi.org/10.1080/13562517.2018.1465911>.
- Phillips, C., Bassell, K., & Fillmore, L. (2017). Storytelling and reflective pedagogy: Transforming nursing education through faculty development. *AJHS*, 8, 7–18.
- Plante, K., & Asselin, M. E. (2014). Best practices for creating social presence and caring behaviors online. *Nursing Education Perspectives*, 35(4), 219–223.
- Rodgers, C. (2002). Defining reflection: Another look at John Dewey and reflective thinking. *Teachers College Record*, 104(4), 842–866, doi:10.1111/1467-9620.00181.
- Rodgers, C., & Raider-Roth, M. (2006). Presence in teaching. *Teachers and Teaching: Theory and Practice*, 12(3), 265–287, doi:10.1080/13450600500467548.
- Scheckel, M. M., & Ironside, P. M. (2006). Cultivating interpretive thinking through enacting narrative pedagogy. *Nursing Outlook*, 54, 159–165, doi:10.1016/j.outlook.2006.02.002.
- Soto, N. E. (2005). *Caring and relationships: Developing a pedagogy of caring*. Retrieved from <https://digitalcommons.law.villanova.edu/vlr/vol50/iss4/11/>.
- Center for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC). (2019). *Stress and coping*. Retrieved from <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/daily-life-coping/managing-stress-anxiety.html>.

- Tanner, C. A. (1990). Caring as a value in nursing education. *Nursing Outlook*, 38(2), 70–72.
- Turner, E. (2012). *Communitas: The anthropology of collective joy*. Palgrave MacMillan.
- Watson, J. (2000). Transformative thinking and a caring curriculum. In E. O. Bevis, & J. Watson (Eds.), *Towards a caring curriculum: A new pedagogy for nursing* (pp. 51–60). Sudbury, MA: Jones and Bartlett.
- Watson, J. (2002). Metaphysics of virtual caring communities. *International Journal for Human Caring*, 6(1), 41–45.
- Watson, J. (2003). Love and caring. Ethics of face and hand – an invitation to return to the heart and soul of nursing and our deep humanity. *Nursing Administration Quarterly*, 27(3), 197–202.
- Watson, J. (2008). *Nursing. Philosophy and science of caring* (New revised 2nd edition). Louisville, CO: University Press of Colorado.
- Watson, J. (2018a). *Caring science – Caritas theory and practice*. Retrieved from <https://www.ecolelasource.ch/wp-content/uploads/Watson.pdf>.
- Watson, J. (2018b). *Unitary caring science: The philosophy and praxis of nursing*. University Press of Colorado.