Enhancing Nursing through Educational Research

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UNIVERSITY OF STIRLING
LECTURE THEATRE W1
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Title

‘Realising and developing students’ potential for spiritual care’
Nursing – a relationship of ‘willing care’

‘By far the greatest consolation an individual can have when experiencing a spiritual concern is knowing that someone is there for him or her in this time of need. Presence means being with the individual in a physical and psychological sense’


Why Bother with Spiritual and Emotional Education?

Existential loneliness afflicts people in times of life’s crisis; illness, relationship troubles and breakdown and particularly impending death prompt a need to consider existential questions, issues and problems.

Our busy secular lives often cause spiritual issues to be buried deep. Our spirits can be tired and requiring of peace, balance, resolve and acceptance.
Underpinning knowledge, understanding and personal qualities

- concept analysis of qualities such as hope, peace, faith, forgiveness and joy.
- grief theories, communication theories, music therapy, family care.
- aesthetic and ethical knowing
- recognising and assessing spiritual discomfort, distress and needs.
- personal, spiritual reconciliation
- presence, belonging and belongings
- emotional labour

Teaching Strategies

- The mediums we use to help students learn about spiritual care and spiritual conversations including poetry, music, film and literature.
- How we use symbols to learn about emotional and spiritual care including the 'belongings chest'.
Artefacts for Teaching

The presence of objects of belonging is often a crucial spiritual comfort in times of stress and need. Meaningful objects are often photographs or keepsakes, memory linked items. Possessions often help us define self and create a sense of identity.

Objects found at the bedside of hospice patients recreated their ‘home’, reflected the desire for entertainment, distraction and social contact but also almost all patients had at least one ‘personally unique object’ (Kellehear et al, 2009).

The ‘Belongings Chest’

This chest contains the sort of objects that people have, on their person, in their locker, their purse/wallet, sometimes in their wash bag.
References and Further Reading

- Ogilvy, Angus (2012) *Lights in the Constellation of the Crab* Hermit Crab Edinburgh