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Underlying Framework: Watson's Caring Theory

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Watson's Caring Theory

The Theory of Human Caring is a middle-range explanatory theory within Jean Watson's Philosophy and Science of Caring. Watson's Theory of Human Caring presents caring as the core essence of nursing and as a healing modality. Jean Watson theorized that nurses can create a caring and healing environment that promotes the satisfaction and well-being of the patient while enhancing the self-actualization of the nurse (Watson & Woodward, 2020). According to Watson's Theory of Human Caring, care entails ten carative factors (ten caritas processes) designed to meet human needs (Norman et al., 2016).

The two concepts of Watson's Theory of Human Caring are human care and health. The proposition is that human care (Concept A) promotes health (Concept B). Initially, Watson's theory described human care as a "dynamic human-to-human interaction and transaction" (Pajnkihar, McKenna, et al., 2017). This definition was later expanded to describe human care as a deeper human-to-human involvement and connection with transpersonal dimensions, aimed at protecting, enhancing, and preserving human dignity and wholeness (Pajnkihar, McKenna, et al., 2017; Pajnkihar, Štiglic, et al., 2017). The second concept, health, is defined by Watson's theory as an optimal level of social, mental, and physical functioning, that brings harmony within the body, mind, and spirit; and the absence of infirmity or disease (Norman et al., 2016).

Grand theories in nursing refer to highly abstract conceptual frameworks that provide concepts and propositions within a broad scope. The Watson's Caring Theory is classified as a grand theory as it presents a general framework pertaining to concepts of health and illness (Pajnkihar, McKenna, et al., 2017). Just as it is typical of other grand nursing theories, Watson's Caring Theory stemmed from a theorist's personal nursing experience.

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