**Philosophy of Nursing Paper**

Hasina Stainrod

School of Nursing, Old Dominion University

NURS 401: Professional Development

Instructors: Cheryl Honeycutt, MSN, RN, CNE

Holly Tenaglia, DNP, APRN, AGCNS-BC, OCN

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“I pledge to support the Honor System of Old Dominion University. I will refrain from any form of academic dishonesty or deception, such as cheating or plagiarism. I am aware that as a member of the academic community, it is my responsibility to turn in all suspected violators of the Honor Code. I will report to a hearing if summoned.”

My personal philosophy on Nursing is that it is both an art and a science, where we take on the roles of healers and advocates. As nursing students, we set out on a transformative journey, much like adaptable chameleons, adjusting to the continually changing healthcare environment. Our path involves navigating a complex labyrinth of knowledge, empathy, and ethical considerations, where the realms of science and compassion intersect. It involves the art of caring for individuals, families, and communities. For us, nursing is not merely a profession; it's a profound calling to be the often-uncelebrated heroes on the front lines of patient well-being.

**Core Values**

Professional nurses must embody a combination of characteristics, including independence, assertiveness, self-esteem, and confidence, to make informed decisions and advocate for patients, while also demonstrating compassion, acceptance, consideration, and kindness to build trust and therapeutic relationships. These qualities, when integrated with essential values, such as commitment and social responsibility, sensitivity to diverse patient needs, and a strong sense of self-accountability, enable nurses to provide patient-centered care, contribute to their communities, and maintain ethical conduct, ultimately reflecting their profound impact on the healthcare system and society at large.

**Compassion and Empathy**

Compassionate and effective nursing encompasses a range of core values, including integrity, excellence, compassion, altruism, respect, empathy, and service. These values are essential for providing patient-centered care and promoting the well-being of both patients and healthcare professionals. Leading experts in the nursing field, like Dr. Patricia Benner, have emphasized the significance of a strong desire to help patients and colleagues, the importance of collaboration and communication in delivering culturally sensitive care, the need for healthcare professionals to work together in team-based models, and the direct connection between a nurse's personal well-being and the quality of care they provide. These principles underpin the foundation of compassionate healthcare, fostering a commitment to excellence, and enhancing the overall patient experience.

**Integrity and Accountability**

Integrity in nursing practice is characterized by a set of fundamental principles. It begins with honesty, urging nurses to be forthright with themselves and others, owning up to mistakes and embracing truth even when it might be uncomfortable. Dependability is another key aspect, emphasizing the importance of being a reliable and punctual member of the healthcare team. Treating everyone with respect, regardless of their circumstances, showcases both professional and personal integrity. Holding oneself accountable for errors and taking the initiative to correct them is essential. Recognizing and appreciating the efforts of peers and patients fosters positive relationships and better outcomes. Adherence to company policies and rules, along with a commitment to care for and respect the property and equipment of the organization, demonstrates integrity. Offering assistance to colleagues and addressing workplace conflicts with respect are additional hallmarks of nursing integrity, ultimately contributing to a culture of trust and professionalism in healthcare.

**Advocacy**

Patient advocacy is an essential component of nursing. My philosophy emphasizes the importance of advocating for the best interests of my patients. One instance that strengthened my belief in advocacy was when I stood up for a patient's right to make an informed decision about their treatment plan. I ensured that the patient had access to all relevant information, empowering them to take charge of their healthcare journey. The pivotal trust relationship between nurses and their patients has always been acknowledged as a crucial element in healthcare. Patients' positive perceptions of this bond are intrinsically tied to their views of the nursing profession. According to a 2020 Gallup poll, Americans consistently rank nurses as the most honest and ethical among 15 diverse occupational groups, marking the 19th consecutive year of this esteemed recognition.

**Holistic Care**

In my personal philosophy on nursing, I embrace the holistic approach to patient care. Holistic care recognizes that patients are not merely a collection of symptoms, but complex beings with physical, emotional, social, and spiritual needs. I believe in taking a comprehensive approach to patient assessment and care, addressing all aspects of their well-being. By focusing on the whole person, I aim to promote healing, improve outcomes, and enhance the patient's overall quality of life. In the realm of medicine, the term "holistic" signifies a comprehensive approach to healthcare, emphasizing the treatment of the entire individual by considering not only the symptoms of a disease but also mental, social, and spiritual factors. Holistic care represents an all-encompassing strategy in healthcare, dedicated to meeting the physical, emotional, social, and spiritual needs of the patient. Its focus is on elevating an individual's overall well-being and quality of life rather than merely addressing illness, embodying a patient-centered philosophy that strives to improve the holistic health and welfare of each person.

**Lifelong Learning and Professional Development**

Nursing is an ever-evolving field, and I am committed to continuous learning and professional development. My philosophy emphasizes the importance of staying updated with the latest research, evidence-based practices, and emerging technologies. My experiences in academic and clinical settings have reinforced the value of lifelong learning, and I am dedicated to improving my skills and knowledge to provide the best care possible.

**Cultural Competence**

Cultural competence is an essential aspect of nursing, especially in our increasingly diverse world. I believe in respecting and valuing the cultural backgrounds, beliefs, and traditions of all patients. I strive to provide culturally competent care, ensuring that patients receive care that is sensitive to their unique cultural needs. This approach fosters trust and mutual respect between the healthcare provider and the patient, leading to better health outcomes.

**Ethical Dilemmas and Decision-Making**

Nursing frequently involves ethical dilemmas, and my personal philosophy encompasses ethical decision-making. I recognize that ethical principles are essential in resolving complex situations, and I am committed to upholding these principles in my practice. An example of an ethical dilemma I encountered involved a patient's refusal of a life-saving treatment due to religious beliefs. By respecting the patient's autonomy and engaging in ethical discussions, I learned the significance of balancing respect for a patient's values with the duty to provide the best possible care.

My personal philosophy on nursing reflects my commitment to core values, holistic care, lifelong learning, cultural competence, and ethical decision-making. It serves as a guiding light, shaping my approach to patient care and the nursing profession as a whole. As I continue my journey in nursing, I will remain dedicated to these principles, ensuring that I provide the highest quality of care to my patients and uphold the values that define this noble profession. Nursing is not just a job; it is a calling, and I am privileged to be part of it.

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