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## The Human Context: Why Nursing is Engendered in Caring Practice

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Received: 02 November 2020

Published: 06 November 2020

**Keywords:** *Caring Practice; Nursing; Human Context*

We cannot define the term ‘nursing’ without mentioning the word ‘caring’, for caring and nursing have always been thought of synonymously. That, the notion of ‘caring’ has been explored throughout the history of nursing [1]. However, to espouse that the philosophy of nursing was developed from caring practice would entail us to look at the history of nursing.

Inevitably, we go back to Florence Nightingale who is considered as a pioneer of nursing. She is credited for her enormous contribution in the establishment of a public health care system and the training programs for nurses which gave basis to the nursing standards that ultimately, made nursing a profession today [2,3]. Her concern and compassion for others were evident in her actions, which is the very definition of caring as showing of concern for others or having compassion for others. Watson (1998) [4] acknowledged that although Nightingale did not talk in terms of transpersonal human caring, her life’s work and writings reflect both the timelessness and manifestation of such a concept and philosophy for holistic nursing.

Nightingale’s assertion of placing the person or human being in the best possible condition for nature to act upon, served as a stepping stone for the theoretical development of nursing. The person (patient), his integrity, his wholeness, and his connectedness to other person which is at the center of Nightingale’s model of nursing, is central and basic to nursing theories (Parker, 2005) [5] in the same way it is central and basic to the caring theories of Jean Watson, Madeleine Leininger, Simone Roach, and many others. Watson (2008) [6] suggested that it is the human-to-human connection that brings out the person’s ability, or the nurse’s ability for that matter, of being compassionate and caring to others.

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Therefore, the person or human context, to include the human-to-human engagement, is one area in the philosophy of nursing that makes nursing grounded in the caring practice.

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