**Metaphor Articles**

  Holistic nursing is a personal expression of the practitioner's philosophy that includes participating in the caring process of self and others. Certified holistic nurses (HNCs) are individuals who encompass the knowledge and skills of holism and integrate them into a mutually participatory relationship. Metaphors are a personal expression of an experience or situation. The application of encouraging HNCs to express their practice as a metaphor is a natural progression in qualitative research. The aim of this paper is to present the concept of utilizing metaphors as a qualitative research methodology and to describe the holistic nurse’s practice as a metaphor. Qualitative data from interviews with 10 experienced certified holistic nurses (HNCs) provided for the descriptive metaphorical expression of being a holistic nurse. The metaphorical language provided useful insights into the reflective process of being a holistic nurse.

  Metaphors are individualized representations of self as well as a vivid, expressive, everyday dialogical format. Holistic nursing is a personal philosophy that includes participating in the healing-caring process of self and others. Exploring metaphors of nurses offers a unique opportunity of understanding how they describe, prioritize, and internalize their practice. The aim of this article is to present metaphors of holistic nurses.

  Metaphors are a personal expression and form of self-awareness, providing a way of describing an experience with dissimilar concepts to convey meaning. Metaphors create new meaning and provide a deeper insight into the human spirit. They are grounded in reality and day-to-day life experiences. Reflective practitioners incorporate and integrate their vast knowledge base of experience, skills, and attitudes to assist in formulating their practice as a metaphor. It is through this experience and reflection that nurses can creatively express their images of self and nursing.

  Gathering metaphors of holistic nurses provides for an exploration of how that metaphor is captured in real-life experiences. Metaphors are a way of describing an experience or a perceived notion as a personal expression of thought. The metaphoric understanding of what practicing as a holistic nurse means is discussed with reference to the personal, emotional, and spiritual component of being a holistic nurse. Capturing the superfluity and vividness of these beautiful expressions embedded in participants’ metaphors produced insight and a deeper apprehension of the connectedness in nursing. This study used a qualitative exploratory approach to collect data from 75 holistic nurses. Data were collected using participants’ own expression of the metaphor of holistic nursing and correlating critical incident reports of how that metaphor was expressed in practice. Metaphors were not analyzed but correlated by themes. The critical incident reports were analyzed to uncover and isolate key aspects of commonalities. The results capture the abundance and diversity of metaphorical expressions embedded in participants’ metaphors produced insight and a deeper appreciation of the connectedness in nursing.
Sharoff, L. *Metaphors: A Way of Being for Holistic Nurses.*
Metaphors are a personal expression and self-awareness of one’s life. It is a way of describing an experience and dissimilar concepts to convey one’s meaning. Metaphors create new meaning and provide a deeper insight into the human spirit. They are grounded in reality and day-to-day life experiences. Identifying metaphors can provide nurses with a “better understanding of their skills, knowledge and attitudes, and of how to incorporate those characteristics and behaviors into their lives and practice to further enhance themselves and others, as well as provide for an opportunity to express their thoughts and feelings in a creative way” (Sharoff, 2007, p. 17). Metaphors are a personal expression of self as well as a vivid, expressive everyday dialogical format. Nurses’ metaphorical images provide a “window into the complexities and ambiguities with nursing practice” (Hartrick & Schreiber, 1998, p. 420).