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Lessons from transcultural care: Considering implications for the global nursing crisis, for ourselves and each other

There is a global crisis in nursing in which we are struggling to provide adequate person-centered, sensitive care for an ageing population. Patients have more complex needs but still judge and appreciate nurses based on the quality of our relationships with them. But nursing shortage means, it is hard for nurses to spend quality time with patients. The nursing population is ageing too and when we lose colleagues to retirement it is difficult to recruit enough candidates to replace them, then it is difficult to retain our younger colleagues. The more committed the nurse, the less they can cope with disappointment in their ability to care to the high standard set and the more likely they are to leave the profession. Burnout is sadly common, it seems nursing is sick too. While we come from different cultural backgrounds, we share a culture of nursing. But it is always difficult to reflect on one's own cultural values until we see ourselves from an outsider's perspective. Either that or by becoming an outsider ourselves! Many nurses have moved from one homeland to another and their insights offer us a way to explore our own cultural values. The nature of how we perceive person-centeredness may vary between nurses of different professional backgrounds, but for each of us, our personhood includes aspects of the different cultures to which we belong. The ability to be truly person-centered depends upon having our own cultural and personhood needs met. Transcultural nursing principles and practices have the potential to help nurses look after each other and themselves. Catharine Jenkins will argue that this is essential for the well-being of our future patients and an investment in the future of our profession.

Biography

Catharine Jenkins worked for many years as a Community Mental Health Nurse and team leader of an outreach team. Catharine's teaching responsibilities are focused around the care of older people with mental health problems and her main area of expertise is dementia care. She also teaches on diversity issues and transcultural mental health nursing. Catharine is interested in creative approaches to active learning for nurse education and has presented at international conferences about teaching and research. Catharine's research examines the training needs of nurses working in nursing homes, approaches to teaching dementia care in order to change practice and retention of recently qualified nurses.

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