

Teaching Learning and Nursing Philosophy

My approach to nursing education is guided by my intent to facilitate the development of nursing students able provide person-centred care to patients and who draw from their personal and professional knowledge, skills, and judgment in nursing. I am a constructivist at heart. I subscribe to Dewey's (1938) philosophy of teaching and learning believing that experience is continuous and that the person is in constant interaction with his/her world. I endeavour to understand their lived experiences and work with them to reveal how their past informs their current understanding of the world. Ultimately, their awareness is meant to influence their decisions and approach for the future. I believe that reflection is key to reconstructing experience and the integration of transformational learning theory in teaching and learning is essential in crafting the intentionality of the process. To this end, much of my teaching and learning activities involve aesthetic strategies to engage a deeper reflection that facilitates the capturing of tacit knowledge. Using this awareness can lead to students' understanding of who they are as nursing students and who they are becoming as future nurses.

More recently, I have come to understand more deeply and appreciate that my role is embedded in relationship. I, as an Academic educator, am in constant relation with my students. I am greatly influenced by Doane and Varcoe's (2015) work on relational practice that reinforce the need to approach situations from the perspectives of the lived-experience and critical theory. A nurse, from my point of view, needs to understand both the stories of experience her/his patient/client brings to the relationship and critically examine the context by which these experiences unfold. This concept grounds my approach to nursing and teaching and learning. I believe that I am in constant relation with learners and that my role is to develop their capacity for a) competence, b) commitment to patients and their profession, c) curiosity, d) compassion, and e) corresponding (Doane & Varcoe, 2015). I believe that experience is co-constructed and is open to constant re-discovery. I use stories to teach to make the content relatable to students. It is my intent to develop nursing students into leaders that are able to provide humanistic and scientific care to their patients and individuals that have the capacity to contribute to the betterment of the health care system and society. To this end, I am sensitive to their diversity as a student population – paying close attention to the influence of culture, age, gender, and motivation in their learning. I am committed to entering in the relational space with my strengths as a teacher-scholar in the classroom able to work with students and help them learn.

Finally, I am also influenced by Gardner's multiple intelligence theory and the theory on brain-based learning. As my teaching and learning perspective deepen, I have come to understand that my eclectic view of teaching and learning makes room for growth and difference in the learning journey. I appreciate that nursing students can be strengthened by exposure to different ways of thinking afforded by the development of multiple intelligences. This belief entails a careful and creative re-construction of existing teaching sessions that focus predominantly on the development of these intelligences. Allowing this perspective to blossom further with brain-based learning strategies such as teaching less content but allowing for more depth in understanding concepts. This could be achieved through creative group work and creating a space for risk taking and adventure.

To teach is a privilege. It involves an accountability that emerge from a passion about teaching and learning. The tools given to me by constructivism, relationality, transformational theory, multiple intelligence theory, and brain-based learning theory provided me with paintbrushes to paint a canvas that echo my heart's desire of student engagement and success.