

Compassion in Nursing: An Integrative Literature Review

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ABSTRACT

Purpose: There are evidence-based teaching methods to increase compassionate nursing care

Background: Nurses demonstrate compassion through being present during patient suffering and working to alleviate suffering

Methodology: An integrative literature review of 20 peer-reviewed research journal articles that were published from 2018-2023

Results: 3 themes emerged on how to teach compassionate nursing care: learning from teachers, self, and the organization

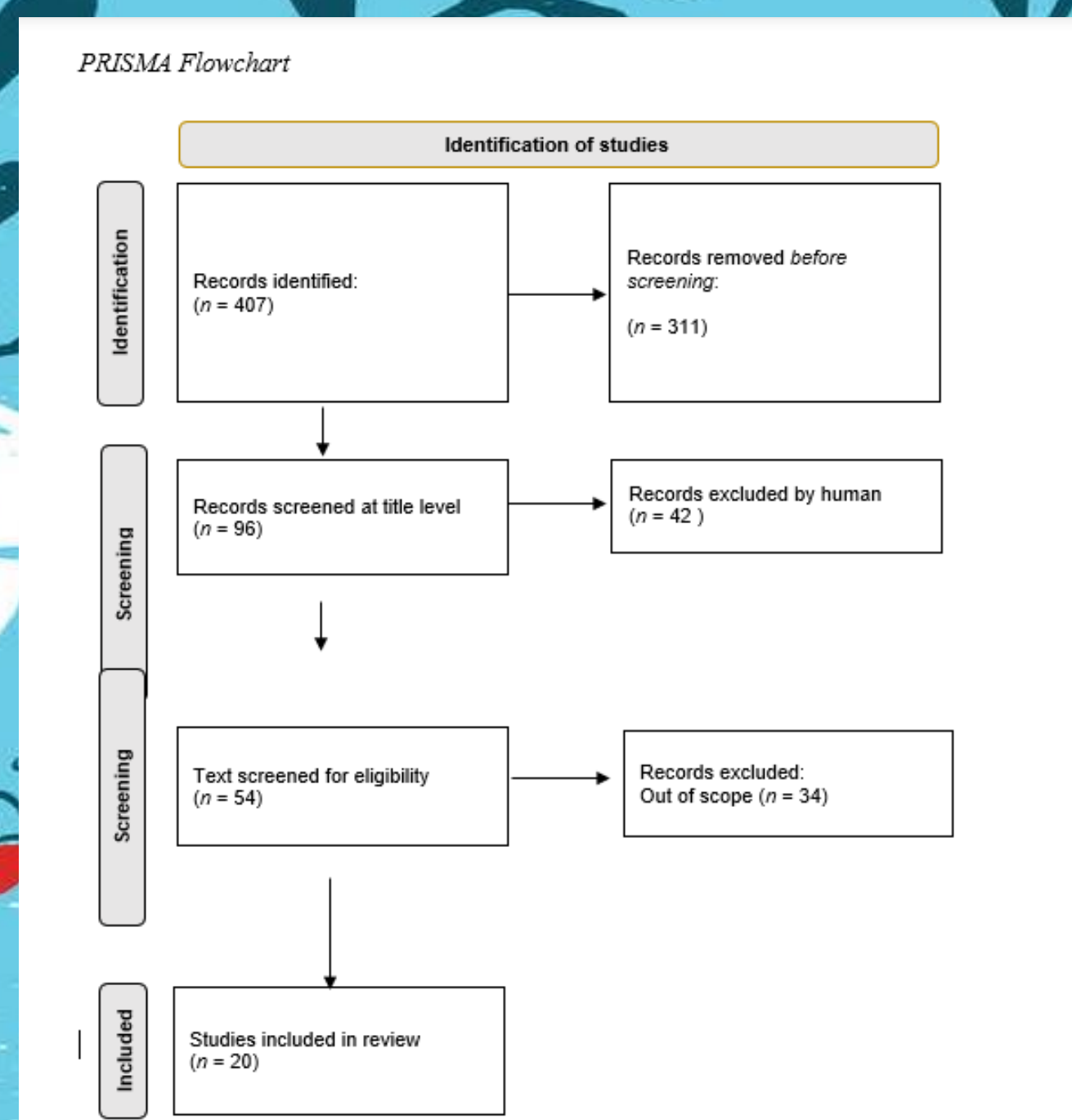
Conclusion: Compassionate nursing care can be taught, and improves patient quality of life, nurse retention, and organizational success

Keywords: compassion, modeling, nurse retention, patient outcomes

BACKGROUND

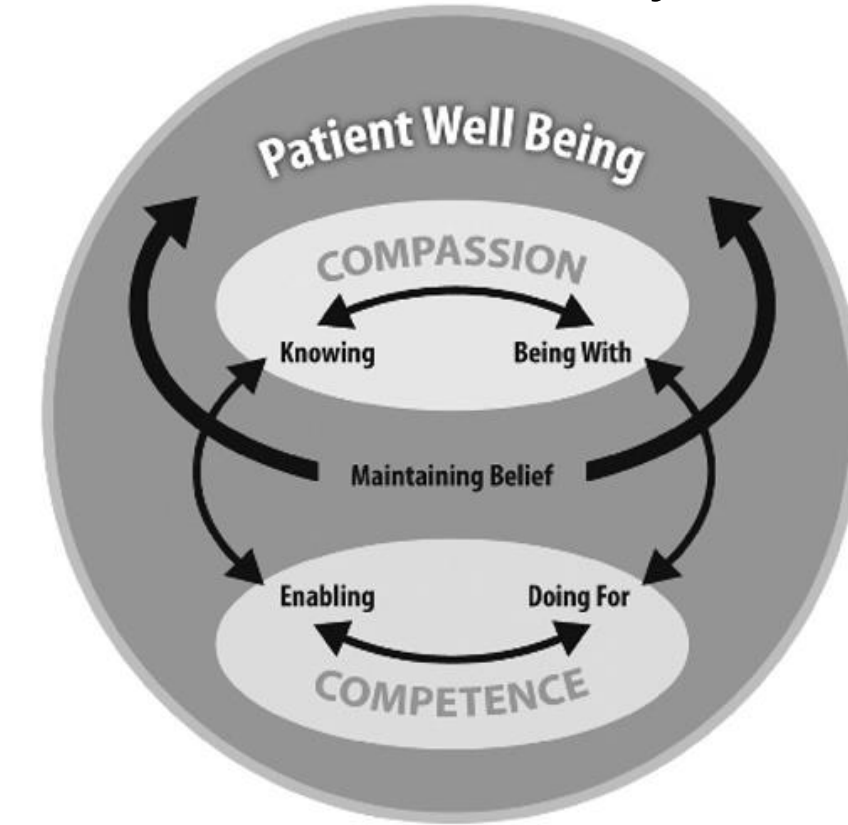
- ❖ Patients described nurses as compassionate when they listened, validated emotions, saw them as human, and communicated kindly
- ❖ Compassionate nursing care improves patient health outcomes and reduces patient recovery time
- ❖ Nurses benefit from providing compassionate care by feeling more satisfied with their work

METHODOLOGY



THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

Kristen Swanson's Theory of Caring



RESEARCH QUESTIONS

- ❖ What are evidence-based techniques to teach compassion?
- ❖ What are techniques for nurses to increase their own compassion?
- ❖ How can healthcare organizations and nursing schools promote compassionate nursing care?



THEME #1: LEARNING FROM TEACHERS

MODELING

- o Nursing students learn compassion skills by observing nurses and educators
- o Model compassion by respecting students, calling them by name, using humor, showing interest in students' personal lives, sharing personal experiences, and teaching self-care techniques (stretching and deep breathing)

SIMULATION

- o An effective, interactive teaching method for practicing clinical compassion & emotional intelligence



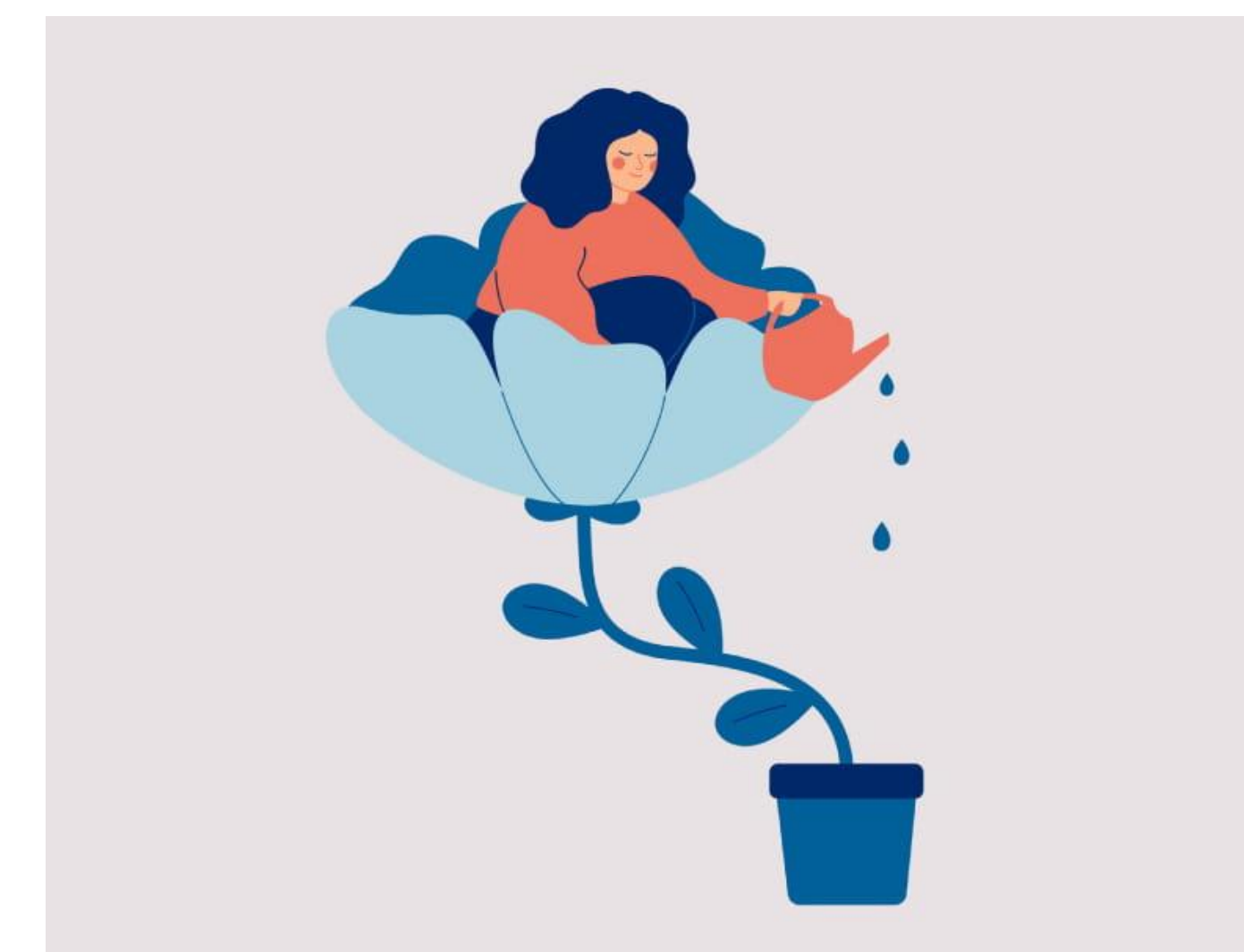
THEME #2: LEARNING FROM SELF

REFLECTION

- **Reflection:** evaluating one's own thoughts in clinical situations
 - poetry writing, service learning, cultural events, reflective writing
- **Mindfulness:** concentrating fully on the moment
 - Breathing, walking, & body scan meditation techniques

SELF-COMPASSION

- Love directed towards the self is the base of compassion for others
- Nurses with more self-compassion have less compassion fatigue and burnout



SELF-CARE

- Relaxation strategies: diaphragmatic breathing and mindfulness
- Neutralizing emotional trauma: guided imagery and therapy
- Individualized coping strategies: exercise and family support

ART

- Art can help nurses experience the perspective of others
- Artmaking reduces stress
- Art-based learning in nursing school helped students connect care theories to clinical practice



THEME #3: LEARNING FROM THE ORGANIZATION

MANAGEMENT

- ❑ **Managers** can model compassionate employee care
- ❑ Healthcare organizations can promote compassion: team debriefing after codes, monitoring and rewarding compassionate care

NURSING SCHOOLS

- ❑ Nursing schools can model compassion to faculty and students
 - ❑ Program level - diversify the students who are accepted
 - ❑ Faculty level - **nurse educators** can better model self-care with a balanced workload

SIGNIFICANCE

Shift to high-quality, patient-centered care with compassionate nursing
 Compassion can be taught and improved through evidence-based methods

CONCLUSION

Nurse educators can use these teaching methods to alleviate patient suffering and increase nurse satisfaction at a time of health disparities, chronic disease, and nurse burnout

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