



City Research Online

City, University of London Institutional Repository

Citation: Hurley, G. (2022). Hermeneutic Phenomenological research on how Nurse Educators make meaning of compassion and understand its role in their professional practice in a Higher Education Institution in the United Kingdom. Paper presented at the NET/NEP 2022 8th International Nurse Education Conference, 19-22 Oct 2022, Barcelona, Spain.

This is the presentation version of the paper.

This version of the publication may differ from the final published version.

Permanent repository link: <https://openaccess.city.ac.uk/id/eprint/29542/>

Link to published version:

Copyright: City Research Online aims to make research outputs of City, University of London available to a wider audience. Copyright and Moral Rights remain with the author(s) and/or copyright holders. URLs from City Research Online may be freely distributed and linked to.

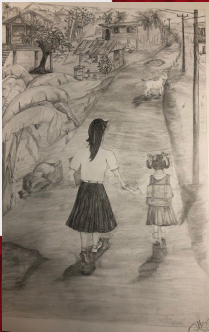
Reuse: Copies of full items can be used for personal research or study, educational, or not-for-profit purposes without prior permission or charge. Provided that the authors, title and full bibliographic details are credited, a hyperlink and/or URL is given for the original metadata page and the content is not changed in any way.

Points of Focus

- Context and rationale for the study: clarifying my personal and professional perspectives
- Reflexivity through poetry
- The research questions
- Brief summary of the contextual literature review
- Choosing Hermeneutic phenomenology as a research methodology:
 - *Interpretation informed by Heideggerian and Gadamerian philosophical notions*
- **Unconcealment (Findings): the meaning of compassion brought into the 'clearing'**
- The findings related to extant research
- Contribution to new knowledge
- Implications

Context and Rationale

- From a National and International Perspective, compassion is regarded as pivotal to nursing practice.
- Whilst compassion is said to be at the heart of nursing, in the United Kingdom (UK) there are publicised examples of care without compassion, including neglect and abuse (Francis, 2013).
- The impetus for the study originates from my personal and professional experiences (nurse /nurse educator)
- In the United Kingdom (UK), whilst nurse educators are responsible for developing compassion through providing high quality education, there is limited literature exploring how their lived experience of compassion is interpreted in nurse education.
- Interpreting compassion is complex, and the lack of consensus on the meaning of compassion in education may inconsistency on how it is facilitated and in students' and educators' support.



Methodological Approach

- Interpretivist/Constructivist qualitative paradigm
- Hermeneutic Phenomenology (HP) was the most suitable methodological approach because I was trying to interpret meanings from the participants' everyday experiences that might have otherwise gone unnoticed (Cerbone, 2008).
- HP appreciates that understanding evolves from Being-in-the-world.
- The specific culture and traditions I am born and socialized into, being a woman, a mother/grandmother, a nurse/educator permeate my pre-understandings and influence how I make meaning of phenomena and therefore my interpretation is not value-free (Smythe, *et al.*, 2008)
- HP goes beyond understanding things conceptually. Informed by the 'existentials' proposed by van Manen (1997 p.101); 'lived space (spatiality), lived body (corporeality), lived time (temporality) and lived human relation (relationality) deepened my analysis on how meanings emerged through individuals' experiences in the world.
- Continuous reflexivity: I did not attempt to suspend or 'bracket' my presuppositions but rather questioned and challenged my views as I interpreted the nurse educators' meaning of compassion

Methods

- Purposive Sampling:
 - Nurse educators who teach in all fields of nursing in the pre-registration programme
 - Nurse educators who worked in the university for two years or more
 - Nurse educators who are registered with the NMC
- Twelve nurse educators selected on a first-come-first-serve basis
- In-depth face-to-face semi-structured interviews were conducted using an interview guide
- A pilot interview was undertaken with my supervisor

Unconcealment (Findings)

Phenomenological themes brought into the clearing

Being-with is Care

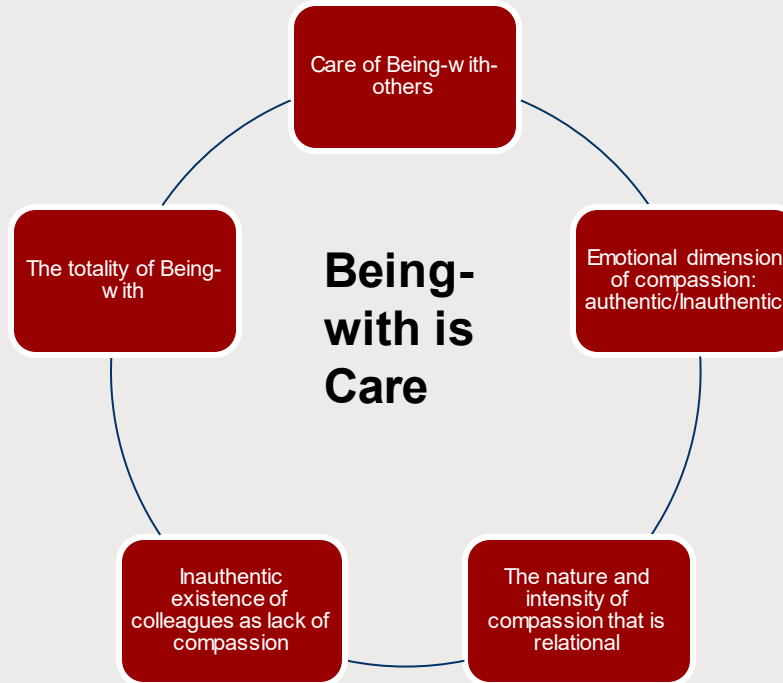
A settling of the
colliding worlds of
nursing practice and
nurse education

Unveiling the veiled
dance of *Kairos*
balanced with
negotiated time for
compassion in nurse
education



Phenomenological theme with emergent meanings:

Being-with is Care

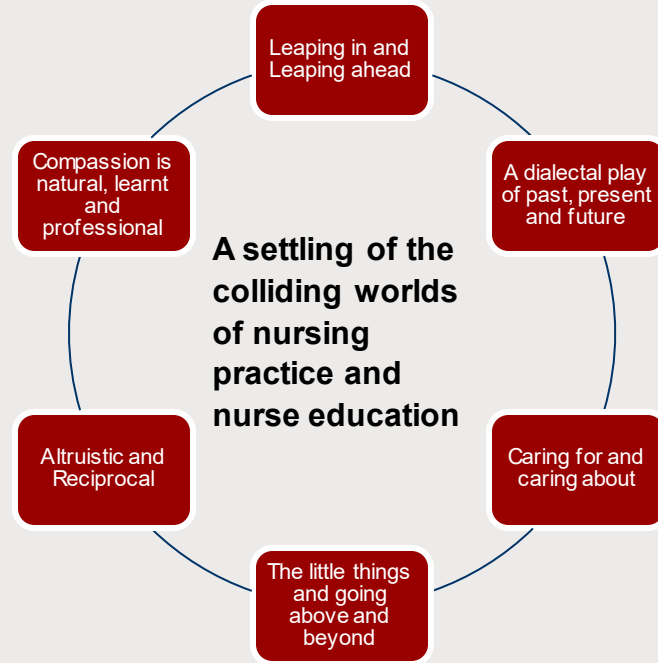


'None of them came... I felt if they say come and have a cup of tea and say I'm sorry... It was a major event for me and I would have felt happier if somebody express their compassion towards me...'

'I understand why we have these rules because when you are talking about personal experiences it's easy to feel quite emotional... they are in floods of tears and that can be disruptive'

Phenomenological theme with emergent meanings

A settling of colliding worlds: Nursing practice /Nurse Education

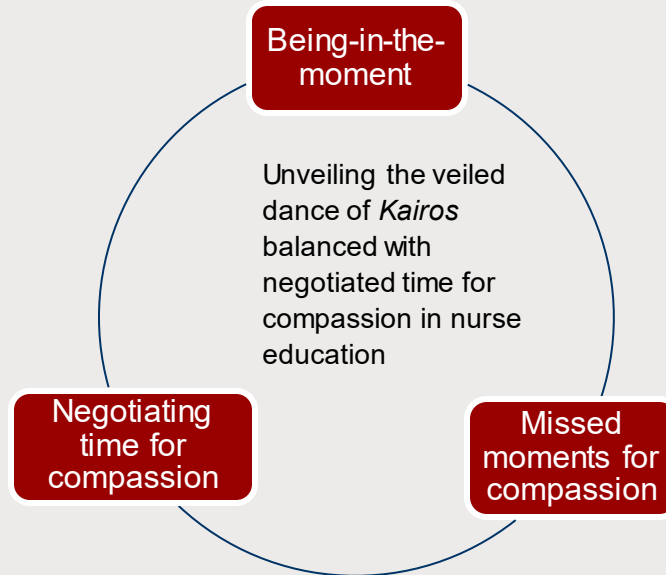


'As a mental health nurse, I'm thinking what's happened in their lives for them to get where they are struggling and everything is overwhelming them'

'I can't help feeling that some students need to toughen up a bit..., man up or grow a pair... I have empathy for them but up to a point... you have to be careful cause you get landed with everything and that happened in nursing and then you burnout.'

Phenomenological theme with emergent meanings

Unveiling the veiled dance of Kairos balanced with negotiated time for compassion in nurse education



'I couldn't have said "Dry your eyes, listen I have to go to". You have to make that person think that you have all the time in the world, even though you haven't.'

'It was stopping in the here-and-now, of recognising that I had become upset and listening, the conversation was like coaching me'

Being an interlocuter in the hermeneutic circle

The study's findings	The extant literature	Contribution to knowledge
Being-with is Care	Compassion described as 'Caring about' others (Curtis, 2014), making time to be with individual patients' (Bramley and Matiti, 2014), meaningful relationships (Rykkje, Eriksson and Råholm, 2015)	Nurse educators place great importance in forming meaningful relationships through Being-with their students, peers, managers and the university, as it matters to their own flourishing. Inter-relational and power dynamics exist within groups. Opportunities for compassionate relationships are limited due to a marketised culture in nurse education
The emotional aspect of compassion is complex and as such is avoided/delayed in teaching practices	<p>The emotional aspect of compassion is not made explicit in the nursing curriculum (Peters, 2006)</p> <p>Surface acting (Hochschild, 1983)</p> <p>Emotions are complex (Van Der Cingel, 2009).</p> <p>Organisational pressures (Kenny, 2003; Braine and Parnell, 2011; Mackintosh-Franklin, 2016)</p>	Teaching the emotional aspect of compassion is complex and therefore leads to pedagogical irregularities as nurse educators feel vulnerable and do not feel adequately prepared for facilitating compassion. In addition, I am emphasising that nurse educators make an evaluative judgement to avoid exploring the emotions as a protective mechanism to safeguard students' emotional well-being –'Authentic intentions' Negative role modelling- surface acting/compassion fatigue...Emotional intelligence is necessary for positive role modelling, holistic judgements...

The study's findings	The extant literature	Contribution to knowledge
<p>Colliding views of compassion stem from the nurse educators varied background experiences of nursing practice- leads to disruptions in their teaching practices and ways of Being-in-the-university</p>	<p>Williams (2010) micro-ethnographic study found that practice-bred values in nursing hegemonise nurse educators' academic practices and can create conflict in the academic world.</p> <p>Findlow (2012) asserts that competing academic and professional identity leads to ill-defined boundaries when supporting students.</p>	<p>Whilst nurse educators have differing views over their interpretation of compassion that stems from their distinctive background experiences, they value the significance of compassion in nursing and accept professional responsibility to facilitate it. Therefore there is settling of colliding worlds an openness to shared understanding 'Fusion of Horizons'</p>

The study's findings	The extant literature	Contribution to Knowledge
<p>Grasping opportune moments for compassion is interpreted as compassion and requires emotional intelligence.</p> <p>Occasionally such fleeting moments are missed and is interpreted as lack of compassion by those who are distressed</p> <p>The nurse educators take responsibility for their care of students through negotiating times to problem solve, support and Be-with-students that are interpreted as compassion</p>	<p>Sinclair <i>et al.</i>, (2018) study highlighted that patients described receiving 'timely' care as compassion</p> <p>Several studies report that recognising and understanding others' distress require emotional intelligence that is needed for the emotional labour in compassion (Curtis, 2012; McCaffrey and McConnell, 2015; Strauss et al., 2016).</p> <p>Paley (2014) suggests that 'inattentional blindness' can occur when one is preoccupied with organisational pressures.</p>	<p>Unveiling the truth, furthers understanding and suggests that during opportune times, nurse educators apply their tacit knowledge to reflect-in-action and interpret the felt experience of the suffering of others; this prompts them to grasp such opportunities for compassionate endeavour.</p> <p>The meaning and opportunities for compassion is temporal and at times are grasped, missed or negotiated and are influenced by personal and organisational agendas</p>

The study's findings	The extant literature	Contribution to Knowledge
<p>Grasping opportune moments for compassion is interpreted as compassion and requires emotional intelligence.</p> <p>Occasionally such fleeting moments are missed and is interpreted as lack of compassion by those who are distressed</p> <p>The nurse educators take responsibility for their care of students through negotiating times to problem solve, support and Be-with-students that are interpreted as compassion</p>	<p>Sinclair <i>et al.</i>, (2018) study highlighted that patients described receiving 'timely' care as compassion</p> <p>Several studies report that recognising and understanding others' distress require emotional intelligence that is needed for the emotional labour in compassion (Curtis, 2012; McCaffrey and McConnell, 2015; Strauss et al., 2016).</p> <p>Paley (2014) suggests that 'inattentional blindness' can occur when one is preoccupied with organisational pressures.</p>	<p>Unveiling the truth, furthers understanding and suggests that during opportune times, nurse educators apply their tacit knowledge to reflect-in-action and interpret the felt experience of the suffering of others; this prompts them to grasp such opportunities for compassionate endeavour.</p> <p>The meaning and opportunities for compassion is temporal and at times are grasped, missed or negotiated and are influenced by personal and organisational agendas</p>

Implications and Recommendations

- It is the 'joint responsibility' of the individual and the university to create opportunities for enabling compassion in our relationships and ensure a shared understanding of its meaning is integrated in our pedagogical practices.
- I am willing to work with the programme team and year leads to explore consistent pedagogical means for facilitating compassion: I have already started having these conversations...
- I will be promoting the idea for a community of practice through the compassionate curriculum interest group
- I will seek permission from the head of school for an internal blog writing site through the university's intranet for nurse educators to engage in conversations on compassion that they often find difficult to talk about.
- There is a strong case for me to negotiate a time with managers for educators to come together in a physical space and Be-with.

The voices of nurse educators making meaning of compassion

*It's in the little things, because you can't be a hero everyday
The nature of listening, stopping, noticing...helping me make sense of something
Because you 'know' me, know why I am reacting in an unusually upset way
Just sitting in silence with me, you didn't have to say anything
Or the envelope on my desk when I returned after dad died
It was lovely, I just cried...*

*But there are unspoken rules, we don't openly cry, we hide our emotions
Like when mum died, no one said come...have a cup of tea or I'm sorry
Perhaps they'd send me a card or an email, like going through the motions
Being pushed and pulled, be answerable, be productive... always in a hurry
But I desire meaningful relationships, with my managers, students and peers
Thus Being there for me and with me is compassion; Being-with is Care*

*Normative rules permeate our teaching, synthetic scenarios suppress our feelings
Worlds collide from compassion's ambiguity... surfacing pedagogical inconsistency
Conflicted horizons of personal stories, tick box exercises or aesthetics appealing
Emotional side buried, boasting competencies as we accept professional responsibility
For I understand these rules, to protect, to safeguard us and others' ills
But I am left questioning, recognising facilitating compassion beseeches necessary skills*



The voices of nurse educators making meaning of compassion

*Like a running stitch, those themes of compassion should run through our teaching
That thread becomes golden, vibrant...more of a dimension than a boring brown
Colliding worlds settle, because compassion in nursing is significant, far-reaching
And nursing is about life... a lot of things going right, a lot of things going wrong
They might get upset, So what if they cry?
We need to maintain professional boundaries, But where do these lie?*

*So I drop everything to be in the moment as these boundaries we cannot define
And I enter uncharted territories... saying we'll take it steady we'll take it slow
Making them feel we have all the time in the world, grasping this Kairos time
Amidst busy schedules, noticing, listening, coaching, helping that person to grow
At times there are clues of not wanting to listen, unknowingly, Dasein's fallenness
And in such evanescent moments others yearning for compassion are seemingly missed*

*And though fleeting moments for compassion at times escape me
For I'm thrown in the everydayness of Being, in the university's hustle
I'm called to conscience, my awareness, my concern, my self-responsibility
Opportune moments seized, balanced with negotiated times, though they jostle
Brought into the clearing, nurse educators meaning making of compassion are told
Through Care for Being-with, balanced opportune and negotiated time and settled collided worlds.*



References

- Boell, S.K. and Cecez-Kecmanovic, D. (2014) 'A hermeneutic approach for conducting literature reviews and literature searches', *Communications of the Association for Information Systems (CAIS)*, 34(12) pp.256-286.
- Braine, M. and Parnell, J. (2011) 'Exploring student's perceptions and experience of personal tutors' *Nurse Education Today*, 31(8), pp.904-910.
- Bramley, L. and Matiti, M. (2014) 'How does it really feel to be in my shoes? Patients' experiences of compassion within nursing care and their perceptions of developing compassionate nurses', *Journal of Clinical Nursing*, 23(19-20), pp.2790-2799.
- Braun, V., & Clarke, V. (2006) 'Using thematic analysis in psychology. *Qualitative Research in Psychology*', 3(2), pp.77-101
- Cerbone, D.R. (2008) *Heidegger: A Guide for the Perplexed*. London: Continuum International Publishing Group.
- Curtis, K., Horton, K. and Smith, P. (2012) 'Student nurse socialisation in compassionate practice: a Grounded Theory study', *Nurse Education Today*, 32(7), pp.790-795.
- Francis, R. (2013) Report of the Mid Staffordshire NHS Foundation Trust Public Inquiry. Available at: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/report-of-the-mid-staffordshire-nhs-foundation-trust-public-inquiry> (Accessed: Dec 22, 2018).
- Gadamer, H. (2004) *Truth and method*. Translated by J. Weinsheimer and D.G. Marshall. 2nd, rev. edn. London: Continuum International Publishing Group.
- Heidegger, M. (1962) *Being And Time*. Translated from German by J. Macquarrie and E. Robinson. Oxford: Blackwell Publishing Ltd.
- Hochschild, A. (1983) *The Managed Heart*. Berkeley: University of California Press.

- McCaffrey, G. and McConnell, S. (2015) 'Compassion: a critical review of peer-reviewed nursing literature', *Journal of Clinical Nursing*, 24(19-20), pp.3006-3015.
- Newham, R. A. (2017) 'The emotion of compassion and the likelihood of its expression in nursing practice', *Nursing philosophy: an International Journal for Healthcare professionals*, 18(3), p.e12163-n/a. DOI: 10.1111/nup.12163
- Paley, J. (2014) 'Cognition and the compassion deficit: the social psychology of helping behaviour in nursing', *Nursing Philosophy*, 15(4), pp.274-287.
- Schantz, M.L. (2007) 'Compassion: A Concept Analysis', *Nursing Forum*, 42(2), pp. 48-55.
- Sinclair, S. et al.(2018) 'Assessing the credibility and transferability of the patient compassion model in non-cancer palliative populations', *BMC Palliative Care*, 17(108) Available at: <https://link-springer-com.ezproxy.kingston.ac.uk/article/10.1186/s12904-018-0358-5> (Accessed 3 March 2021).
- Smythe, E.A. et al. (2008) 'Doing Heideggerian hermeneutic research: A discussion paper', *International Journal of Nursing Studies*, 45(9), pp. 1389-1397.
- Strauss, C. et al. (2016) 'What is compassion and how can we measure it? A review of definitions and measures', *Clinical Psychology Review*, 47, pp.15-27.
- van Manen, M. (1997) *Researching Lived Experience: Human Science for an Action Sensitive Pedagogy*. 2nd edn. New York: Routledge.

- Willis, P. (2012) *Quality with compassion: the future of nursing education*. Report of the Willis Commission on Nursing Education. Available at: <https://www.macmillan.org.uk/documents/newsletter/willis-commission-report-macmail-dec2012.pdf> (Accessed: 9 February 2017).

- Willis, P. (2015) *Raising the Bar: Shape of Caring: A Review of the Future Education and Training of Registered Nurses and Care Assistants*. Available at: <https://www.hee.nhs.uk/sites/default/files/documents/2348-Shape-of-caring-review-FINAL.pdf> (Accessed: 9 February 2017).



<https://doi.org/10.1016/j.nedt.2022.105588>

Contact Details:
Dr Gemma Hurley
Associate Professor in Advanced
Clinical Practice, School of Health and
Psychological Sciences, City,
University of London, Myddelton St.,
London EC1R, 1UW
Email: gemma.hurley@city.ac.uk

Acknowledgements to my supervisors
Dr John Hammond, Associate Professor,
St Georges University of London.
Professor Katherine Curtis, Kingston University
London.