Applying Swanson’s Caring Theory to Manage Spiritual Distress in a Patient With Terminal Lung Cancer

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ABSTRACT: This case report shares a nursing experience that applied Swanson’s Caring Theory as part of the care regimen for a terminal lung cancer patient suffering from spiritual distress. The nursing care was provided from March 20th to April 25th, 2012. Data were collected through observation and conversation and recorded using sketches and written notes. The nurse assessed the patient’s relationships with the self, with others, with the environment, and with God in accordance with Stoll’s spiritual interrelatedness hypothesis. Several spiritual distresses were reported. Interventions such as “knowing”, “being with”, “doing for”, “enabling” and “maintaining belief” were applied to manage the patient’s spiritual distress and address spiritual needs. This case report is intended to help increase the awareness and sensitivity of nurses to patients’ spiritual needs and to help nurses provide effective spiritual care.

Key Words: Swanson’s caring theory, spiritual distress, terminal cancer patients.

Accepted for publication: November 21, 2013

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