

**Commented [hd1]:** Format for the running head is correct, but don't abbreviate use NURSING PHILOSOPHY

My Nursing Philosophy  
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Nursing is a flexible field with a wide scope in health care. However, that same flexibility means that Nursing has no straightforward path. It is up to the individual nurse to make Nursing his or her own. Having a philosophy about Nursing allows a nurse, like myself, to be able establish a foundation to build my practice upon. Here follows my Nursing philosophy:

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My title is "nurse" but I function beyond my singular title. I am a defender of health that wards off illness. I am a teacher and a coach for those going through change. I am a representative for those who cannot find the words to express themselves. I am a shoulder to cry on for those in a lapse of strength. No one role is more important than the other, and no one role can wholly describe me as a nurse.

Commented [hd4]: Well stated Eli

I have arrived at my philosophy after deliberation of my personal views about Nursing. I considered an interpretation of the definition of Nursing, what I believe is the purpose of Nursing, my values and beliefs of the Nursing profession, and principles that I follow in my current practice in Nursing.

### Definition of Nursing

Creating a philosophy of Nursing means that I can define what Nursing is. The American Nurses Association (AMA, 2014), an organization that caters to all nurses, offers a definition of Nursing:

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Nursing is the protection, promotion, and optimization of health and abilities, prevention of illness and injury, alleviation of suffering through the diagnosis and treatment of human response, and advocacy in the care of individuals, families, communities, and populations. ("What Is Nursing?", para. 1)

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This definition is broad in order to include a wide spectrum of approaches in Nursing, so it is open to an individual's interpretation. Two parts of this definition stand out to me. The first part is *the protection, promotion and optimization of health*, which I feel is a major part in the working relationship between nurse and patient. Second is the *advocacy in the care of the individuals*. This is a goal to strive for in Nursing and is an area for my professional improvement.

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The *protection, promotion, and optimization of health* of AMA's definition suggest that Nursing stands in the defense of patient's well-being. As a nurse on a medical floor, this means to me that nurses assist the recovery of the patient with nursing interventions. For example, to *protect* the patient's health, I would need to keep surfaces as clean as possible. *Promotion* of health would include helping a patient make healthier decisions through teaching. Or, to *optimize* health, I would assist patients in regaining their strength by encouraging mobilization. Nurses work with the patient to heal as well as possible.

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The latter part of AMA's definition about *advocacy* is important to the definition of Nursing because it means that the nurse is a representative of his clients. C. Wilson, RN (2005), in her article, "Said Another Way: My Definition of Nursing", focuses on advocacy because nurses must represent patients in politics. She sees nursing as an opportunity highlight the needs of others. I acknowledge the importance of advocacy from a professional standpoint, and I believe that building assertive communication techniques would improve my competency as a nurse. As a whole, the AMA definition is a comprehensive definition of Nursing. But because certain parts of the definition resonate with me as a nurse now and a nurse that I would like to be, I accept it as a capable definition to follow.

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### Purpose of Nursing

If the definition of Nursing is a backbone of what Nursing is, then the purpose is the heart of Nursing. I believe that Nursing exists to provide care for the patient from several angles aside from the medical standpoint. Such concentric care is referred to as “patient-centered care” and it is considerate of a patient’s basic needs, such as safety, nutrition, rest, communication, and maintenance of patient dignity (Kitson, Athlin, & Conroy 2014, 331-332). While physicians focus on fixing the main problem affecting a patient, nurses facilitate the healing process with patient-centered care. For example, if a patient has just broken a leg, then she may would be a fall risk should she walk without proper assistance – this is a safety issue. It would be up to the nurse to provide initial mobility assistance, and later provide teaching on how to use crutches properly. The nurses aren’t necessarily inserting screws to set the bone, but they help enable the patient so that they can return to normal functioning. As a whole, the purpose of Nursing is to acknowledge that the patient has needs that extend beyond a medical diagnosis and to tend to those needs with care.

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### Values and Beliefs

To fit into the Nursing profession, I must have nursing values. Tuck, Harris, and Baliko (2000), identify Caring, Professionalism, and Individualism as the most important nursing values. I agree that Caring and Professionalism should be held in high regard. For me, Caring requires the ability to be considerate. A nurse who cares is able to take the viewpoint of the patient and understand how that patient is feeling. He can offer the sympathy and relief based on this consideration of the patient. For example, a patient who had a sudden colon resection would have to cope with a colostomy. As a nurse, I would need to be considerate of the patient’s time to grieve for his body image. Meanwhile, Professionalism compliments Caring because it encompasses image and technical skill. Combining a good image and technical skill builds trust

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**Commented [h15]:** This is an important “value”, caring for human beings is at the crux of nursing and I think simple humanity...good Eli

and rapport with the patient. In the example with the patient and his colostomy, the nurse should be inoffensive about the colostomy because the patient may be sensitive to comments about his procedure. Rather, the nurse needs to be trusted to perform initial care of the stoma and appliances correctly and efficiently. Being able to earn the patient's trust and to perform a task skillfully is essential in nursing care.

**Commented [hd16]:** Excellent thoughts Eli,

However, I also believe that Education should be added to the list that Tuck et al. identify. Staff must be well-educated and well-trained; Nursing requires sufficient understanding of the human body, infectious processes, and preventative measures. Meanwhile, nursing techniques are always changing and improved upon, so nursing staff must be willing to continue learning. Another reason that I value Education in Nursing is that nurses also teach patients about care. Recall the example about the patient and his colostomy. After the patient has accepted his colostomy, he would need to be taught to care for the colostomy and to identify when something is amiss. Nurses are capable to provide such education. To ignore Nursing's involvement in patient education would mean to ignore a significant patient outcome. Caring and Professionalism are important values in Nursing, but Education is just as important to me.

**Commented [h17]:** Our profession requires a commitment towards life long learning; learning never ends. In my practice, unfortunately I see patient education being left behind by practitioners – I do lots of patient education in my practice as a school nurse.

### **Two Principles of My Practice**

To have a philosophy in Nursing means that I must live it through my practice. I have to analyze what I do as a nurse every day. I am currently a nurse on a medical floor who primarily works during the night shift. Once I complete passing medications and tasks for the day, I have a unique opportunity to slow down and speak to patients during my shift. I seize this opportunity by bearing two principles. First, I shall act as a guide for my clients during a trying time. Second, I shall strive to be a compassionate person for my patients.

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I am a guide because I give information and educate my patients. Once informed, patients should be empowered to live as healthy as possible. Every patient should be guided through their situation, but this is best illustrated with my experience with bariatric patients. These patients have decided to commit to a healthier lifestyle. However, the post-op period is a time of anxiety for them. I ease their anxiety by guiding them. I review with the patient the procedure they had and tell them that nausea and pain will be managed with medication. When I perform my assessment, I describe to the bariatric patient the signs of bleeding that I am looking for: a large amount of bloody emesis or drainage, increasing heart rate and decreasing blood pressure. This knowledge relieves anxiety by decreasing the unknown for the patient. But then, as the night progresses, I change my dialog to encouragement for their lifestyle choice and advise them of how they should manage food and activity. While I usually have only one night with bariatric patients, I spend that night informing and educating the patient. I similarly guide all my patients with my knowledge.

My other principle, to be compassionate, serves me well particularly in times of loss. One patient was 29 year-old diabetic. Despite being so young, his right foot had to be amputated due to vascular insufficiency. While his operation went well and there were no obvious complications, he would keep to himself and refuse pain medication. Realizing that he was grieving, I had to be especially compassionate, and let him know that I understood what he was going through. I helped him summon emotional strength, and I also gave him time alone to grieve. Days later, I found him smiling again, and he thanked me for being supportive after his surgery. I believe that the compassion that I showed him had helped him heal emotionally. Many patients are going through a difficult time at the hospital. Each case requires different medical care, but all patients deserve to have guidance and compassion.

**Commented [h19]:** This is a wonderful example Eli, good you were there for him..patients need us to be on their side.

### Conclusion

In conclusion, the definition of Nursing, my perceived purpose of Nursing, my Nursing values and beliefs, and my principles when nursing all reflect in my nursing philosophy. If I separate the elements of *protection, promotion, and optimization of health*, and *advocacy* from AMA's definition, I find that I have a picture of Nursing based on my current practice. I want to guard my patient from illness and strive to stand up for patients. This makes me a defender and a representative of my patients. My effort works hand-in-hand with what I believe to be the purpose of Nursing: to care beyond the medication and procedure. The Nursing values I have, caring, professionalism and education, are a part of my everyday practice as a nurse with knowledge and compassion. Therefore, I believe in teaching patients while being supportive of the patient's emotions. Every piece contributed to my philosophy, and now the philosophy is a part of who I am.

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**Commented [h21]:** Excellent, excellent conclusion

### Reflection

Sometimes I struggle with making decisions. During this transition of being a new nurse, I have to make more decisions for my career. Contemplating what I believe as a nurse has allowed me to create a basis for whatever decisions I make. If I am unsure of a path, then I can fall back on my Nursing philosophy and make sure I am following that path. Taking in my investment in education of myself and others, I feel that teaching Nursing could be a good path to consider in the future.

**Commented [h22]:** As you gain experience and confidence your decision making will come naturally...hang in there.

## References

- American Nurses Association (2014). What is Nursing?. *NursingWorld*. Retrieved October 30, 2014, from <http://www.nursingworld.org/EspeciallyForYou/What-is-Nursing>
- Kitson, A. L., Athlin, A. M., Conroy, T. (2014). Anything but basic: Nursing's challenge in meeting fundamental care needs. *Journal of Nursing Scholarship*, 46(5), 331-339. doi: <http://dx.doi.org.proxy.lib.odu.edu/10.1111/jnu.12081>
- Tuck, I., Harris, L. H., & Baliko, B. (2000). Values expressed in philosophies of nursing services. *The Journal of Nursing Administration*, 30(4), 180-184.
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Signature: Eliezer Urbano

Date: November 8, 2014

**Grading Guidelines**

Grading Criteria	Comments	Points
Appropriate introduction is included. (5%)	Very nice introduction	5%
The student's definition of nursing, whether borrowed or original, is described and explained. (15%)	Clearly defined and explained very well.	15%
The purpose of nursing from the student's perspective is clearly described. (10%)	Wonderful	10%
Values and beliefs about nursing are clearly identified. (10%)	Clear and sound values and beliefs about your practice will serve you well in future	10%
TWO principles or rules that guide professional practice are identified; and a specific example of how each rule or principle has been utilized or demonstrated in the daily practice of nursing are included. These can be specific examples from your clinical experiences. (15%)	I especially enjoyed reading this section, excellent examples, I enjoy your writing style	15%

<p>Conclusion summarizes main points of paper, *Remember that the conclusion of the paper should reiterate the main points. It should never introduce new ideas or things not discussed in the body of the paper. Try not to repeat the exact language you used in other areas of the paper, especially the introduction. (10%)</p>	<p>Your ability to summarize the content was thoroughly demonstrated</p>	<p>10%</p>
<p>Reflection- Reflect on or evaluate what you learned. (5%)</p>		<p>5%</p>
<p>Three (3) references are cited in the paper and included on the reference list (10%)</p>	<p>Excellent sources/references</p>	<p>10%</p>
<p>Correct grammar, spelling and punctuation (10%)</p>	<p>Eli, I might suggest having your written work proofread? You write very well, there were some words which were capitalized and didn't need to be, etc.</p>	<p>9%</p>
<p>Correct use of APA format, including adherence to page limit of 6 pages (10%)</p>	<p>For the running head, don't abbreviate your words – use entire word. Intext citations which are direct quotation from require page number. See the APA Manual for assist. 7 pages (1/2 pt).</p>	<p>8%</p>
<p>Final Grade: (100%)</p>		<p>97%</p>