

A charter for Nursing in the 21st century

1. The challenge

Humanity is undergoing a dramatic transformation. The destruction of our livelihoods through global warming, air pollution, water shortages, the degradation of soil quality and the extinction of species are caused by our way of life. Social inequality, lack of education, precarious income conditions, hunger, disregard for human rights, extremism fanaticism and war, all of these have a major impact on health and disease and the development opportunities of our children on this planet.

2. The Call

The Corona Pandemic is likely to be but a weather glow before the storms that will sweep across the earth and humanity if we do not prudently and persistently take countermeasures and transform the ills locally, regionally and globally into good.

3. Change of mindset

In view of these times, we ask ourselves about the task of the nursing professions. What contribution can we make to help shape the upcoming cultural change? Why could the nursing professions in particular provide important impulses for individual health and the public health system? Four theses will be put forward for discussion.

- a) A philosophy of caring and concern can replace the prevailing philosophy of material growth.
- b) an attitude of unselfish cooperation can replace the prevailing principle of performance and competition in the long term.
- c) all activities of care take on a deeper meaning because they are charged with human values. Appreciation of things and everyday actions and respect for life can overcome an attitude of consumption and meaningless indulgence.
- d) The influence of environmental factors such as peace, security, social bonding, upbringing and education or access to the resources of daily life on health and successful life plans has always been the basis for action in nursing. This is also increasingly the subject of research. Concern for health through shaping the environment and the world we live in must complement the pathogenetic model of health and disease that only focuses on repairing the defective.

4. Becoming messengers of change

Healthcare and nursing professionals can be messengers of change. We advocate for sustainable, mindful, and developmental care. According to our personal and biographical possibilities, we get involved in local, national, and international politics, especially within the health and nursing sector.

5. Becoming messengers of change at our workplaces

At our workplaces, we are committed to humane, person-centered care and collegial cooperation with all professional groups and employees. This also means caring about working conditions that enable meaningful work, fair and adequate salaries, resource-saving transformation of all work processes and the use of sustainable medical products.

6. Becoming messengers of change by balancing high-tech medicine and human care

Particularly in areas that necessarily save lives with high technical input, such as our intensive care units, we are committed to the presence of human closeness and warmth. We want to help ensure that all medical actions are appropriate to the individual situation of the patient. We protect our patients from technical procedures that are no longer in their service. In home care and long-term inpatient care, we advocate the provision of all technical aids that facilitate social participation and promote well-being. Technical aids always require interpenetration with human encounter and care, even in the private sphere.

7. Becoming messengers of change by transferring knowledge into practice

Health care and nursing professionals educate themselves to understand, feel and transfer proven everyday knowledge, professional knowledge and scientific evidence into everyday actions. They strive to ensure that their actions are professionally correct, heartfelt and beautiful in execution, and good and appropriate in effect.

8. Nursing science

Nursing knowledge is the prerequisite for excellent action. It initially arises through perception and observation in the living and working environment of nursing. Through reflected experience and a methodology appropriate to the object of research, nursing science emerges as an all-round life science.

Natural science, social science and human science methods retain their validity and significance for nursing science. A nursing science of the future could furthermore develop a methodology based on phenomena, which integrally combines knowledge, art and ethics and becomes equally evident for nurses, patients, those in need of care and other health care professionals.

9. Independent fields of action

Nutrition, movement, rhythm, touch and social integration are an important resource for self-regulation in all health care systems. Therapeutic recommendations on this and the practical implementation under everyday conditions in the respective field of life are therefore among the essential tasks of the nursing professions. External applications such as wraps, compresses, washes, baths, massages and touch form a bridge between these fields of healthy and sustainable lifestyle and medicinal interventions. Here, nurses can develop an independent, complementary field of action.

10. Professional and private life

The separation between gainful employment, creative activity in leisure time and social work in parenting, care and household is an expression of the fragmented life in societies based on the division of labor. Fewer and fewer people see themselves in a position to integrate all three areas into their own life plan in a meaningful way. Nurses and caregivers therefore advocate for co-designed work processes and the integration of professional and private spheres of life.

11. Responsibility and spirituality

The change of social and cultural conditions through the ongoing technical revolution, the social change through globalization and migration, global and regional catastrophes through

destruction of the natural basis of life and last but not least an ever-increasing materialistic world view demands inner adaptation and development steps of each individual. The responsibility for the development and well-being of the earth and its inhabitants inevitably awakens the need for one's own mental-spiritual development. Nurses and caregivers know that the "inner life" needs care just as much as the outward care. In the future, spiritual practice will have an importance equal to physical nourishment.

12. Individuality and community

The contrast between the developmental needs of the individual and the needs of society has not been solved satisfactorily in history either by the formation of social hierarchies with privileges for individuals or by collective standardization. In the future, community formations should serve more and more the development of the individual. The individual's development must ascend to the gradual assumption of responsibility of the individual for the well-being of other humans and living beings on this earth.