

World Peace and Nursing: What are the Links?

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Throughout history, nursing has played important roles in the promotion and restoration of world peace. Although the science of nursing had been founded about two centuries earlier, it was Florence Nightingale who made nursing gain its prominence as an important profession in times of peace, and is even more important in times of war. History of nursing proved the important role of nurses in providing quality care to soldiers and other casualties of war. It was during the time of war when a significant development of nursing history arose when a British nurse, Florence Nightingale worked hard in order to improve the conditions of the soldiers in the Crimean War and laid down the cornerstones of the foundation of the nursing profession.

Stories about the heroism of nurses during times of war have been the subjects of many books. One significant book about the nurses' heroism is the one that tells about the sacrifices given by French nurses during the Second World War. Many other stories have been told about these heroisms in the "little wars" that follow, however, there is only one thing clear: the caring attitudes and the compassionate service that have been rendered by these nurses may have, in one way or the other, have touched the hearts of many soldiers and eventually laid down their arms for world peace.

People from outside of the nursing profession may not be able to find the connection between nursing and the promotion of world peace. But as a nursing student and a nurse-hopeful, I am truly convinced that one way to achieve world peace is to let the "nursing spirit" live within the heart of every man and be a model of good "nursing practice". One needs not to be a nurse in order to develop such kind of attitudes. In our own simple ways we can imbibe a "nursing spirit" in us in order to promote world peace.

In my four years of study as a nursing student, two very striking definitions of nursing caught my interest. These two definitions show how nurses can be agents of world peace. These are:

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 responses; and advocacy in health care for individuals, families, communities, and populations.

American Nurses Association

The unique function of the nurse is to assist the individual, sick or well, in the performance of those activities contributing to health or its recovery (or to peaceful death) that he would perform unaided if he had the necessary strength, will or knowledge.

Virginia Avenel Henderson

Nursing is not only a caring profession... It is also a profession that has been and will be a promoter of world peace...