

# **MODULE 2**

## **THE FIRST, SECOND, THIRD, AND FOURTH CARITAS PROCESSES**

Kathleen Sitzman, PhD, RN, CNE, ANEF

Professor, East Carolina University, College of Nursing



# Caritas 1: Embrace altruistic values and practice loving kindness with self and others

- Loving kindness is not a style of behavior to be consistently modeled; it is an attitude, an intention, a stance...it is the will to love and care in whatever ways are meaningful and helpful within a given moment, within a given situation.
- This will look different for every person and situation.
- Intent to care, consistently adopting a caring stance in each situation, is what's critical.
- Mindfulness perspective: In any new situation, breathe in and resolve to cultivate compassion in the moment. Breathe out into the present moment and see what is here now, and what possibilities and challenges present themselves. Breathe in to touch your compassionate center once more, ***then act.***



## Caritas 2: Be authentically present, instill faith and hope, and honor others

- Cultivating openness and awareness in relation to practices and beliefs other than one's own supports this Caritas.
- Profound states of social, emotional, spiritual, and physical wellness exist in individuals, families, and groups who demonstrate a wide range of structures, beliefs, and practices. Cultivate the ability to be fully present and aware of what instills hope/faith in the other.
- Mindfulness perspective: In any new situation, breathe in and resolve to cultivate awareness in the moment. Breathe out into the present moment and see what is here now, and what possibilities and challenges present themselves. Breathe in and touch your fully present center once more, ***then act.***



## Caritas 3: Be sensitive to self and others by nurturing individual beliefs and practices

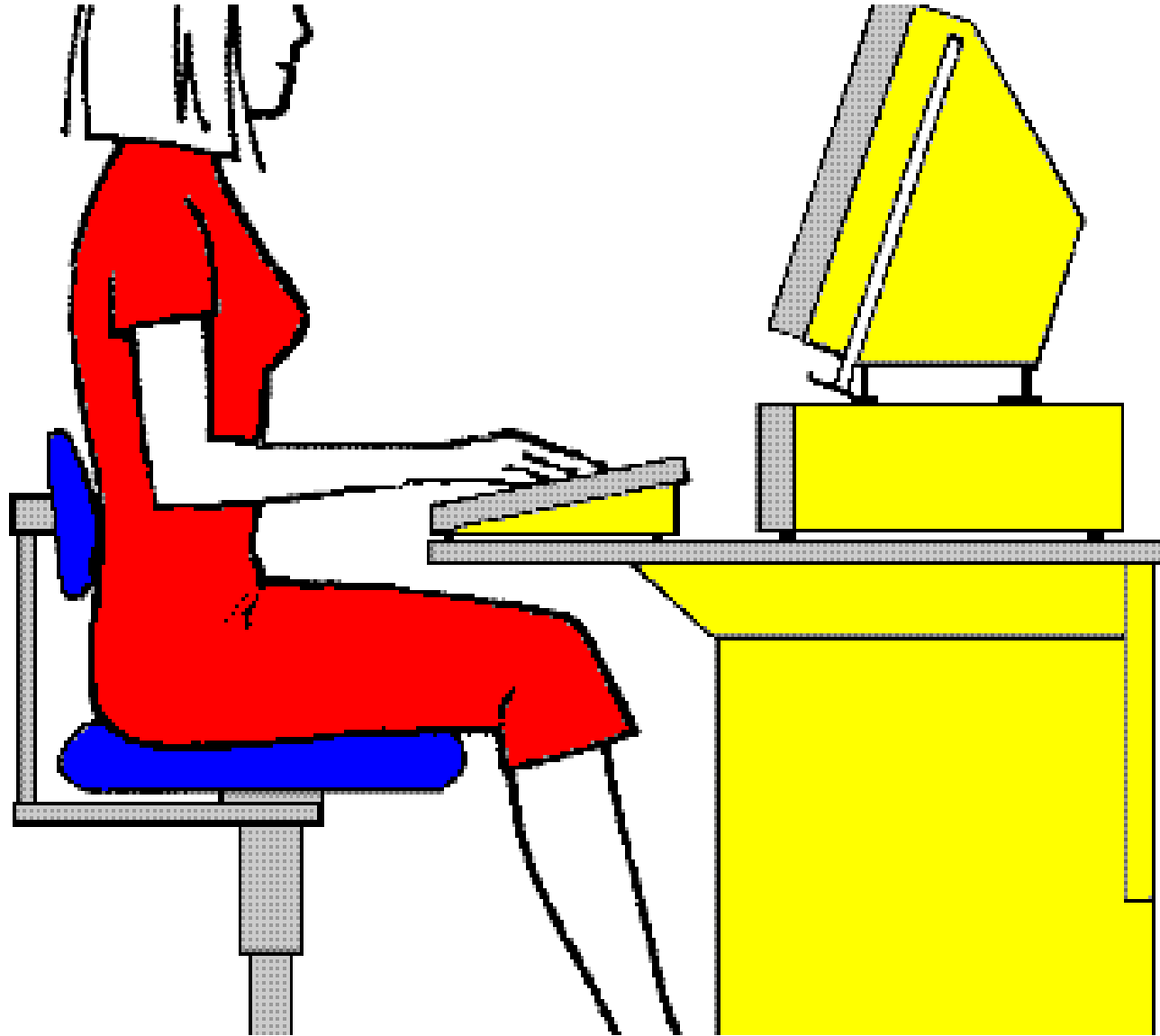
- “Self-understanding and self-love provide the foundation for understanding and loving another person. This first step is going home to ourselves, taking care of ourselves, understanding ourselves, accepting ourselves, and being compassionate to ourselves” Nhat Hanh, T. (2007).
- Cultivating an inner practice of some sort that supports sensitivity to the inner lives of self and others is crucial.
- Mindfulness perspective: In any new situation, breathe in and resolve to cultivate inner sensitivity in the moment. Breathe out into the present moment and see what is here now, and what possibilities and challenges present themselves. Breathe in and touch your inner center once more, ***then act.***



## Caritas 4: Developing helping-trusting-caring relationships

- “Authentic caring relationship building is concerned with deepening our humanity; it is about processes of being-becoming more humane, compassionate, aware, and awake to our own and others’ human dilemma.” (Watson, 2008, p. 72).
- “We and us” rather than “you and me.”
- If your thinking and speech reflect mindfulness and compassion, this has the power to restore communication, offer confidence, and nurture reconciliation (Nhat Hanh, 2007)
- Mindfulness perspective: Breathe in and resolve to cultivate trust of self and others. Breathe out into the present moment and see the challenges and possibilities in each moment. Breathe in to cultivate trust, ***then act.***





**THE FOLLOWING  
SLIDES PRESENT  
A REAL-LIFE  
EXAMPLE OF  
CARITAS: IT MAY  
SURPRISE YOU.**



# EXAMPLE

- Several years ago, I did a small research study about effective nursing interventions I had observed an occupational health nurse doing at a local hospital.
- This nurse assessed the workstations of hospital employees to see if improvements could be made to avoid medical conditions related to poorly designed workstations.
- This nurse had an unusually high success rate related to compliance and decreased pain and injury and I wanted to see what she did when she interacted with clients.
- I wondered if caring behaviors had something to do with her success. I suspected I might see a warm, friendly, conversational approach because, at this time in my career, I equated caring with this type of behavior and believed that if it did not exist, then true caring could not occur.
- **I was wrong.**



# EXAMPLE

- Results of this study showed that, in this case, clients expressed that they felt cared-for and inclined towards following prescribed interventions because the nurse paid focused and in-the-moment attention to them through mirroring, eye-contact, and verbal validation of the presenting concern(s).
- The average time required for these caring exchanges was 24 minutes. The results were notable in that this nurse did not ever touch the client directly, nor did she engage in any conversational banter during any of the observed interventions.
- She did not display personal warmth or a high level of friendliness. The primary features of every observed exchange were mindfulness, immediacy, and a palpable sense of being wholly attentive and firmly present for each client in that moment.
- There was a strong sense of "I am here for you, right now, in this moment, and I will do my best as we work through this together."





# EXAMPLE

- I learned something very valuable after completing that study and it has guided and informed my subsequent professional life; Caring, love, and trust, are best sustained through intention, presence, attentiveness, immediacy, and mindfulness.
- Friendliness, warmth, and maternal affection may be components of transpersonal caring moments, but they are not necessities.
- This point can be particularly helpful to remember when working with people who do not respond well to warmth, affection, or friendliness (Sitzman, 2001).



- In the next unit, we will explore the fifth, sixth, seventh, and eighth Caritas Processes.

