

Original Article

Drama – Creative Play with Health - Giving Power

Barbro Mattsson-Lidsle, MNCc, RN

Doctoral Student, Åbo Akademi University, Department of Caring Science, Vasa, Finland and Lecturer, Novia University of Applied Sciences, Vasa, Finland

Camilla Koskinen, PhD, RN

University Lecturer, Åbo Akademi University, Department of Caring Science, Vasa, Finland

Lisbet Nyström, PhD, RN

Senior Lecturer, Åbo Akademi University, Department of Caring Science, Vasa, Finland

Correspondence: Barbro Mattsson-Lidsle, Villagatan 15, FIN-65200 Vaasa, Finland
e-mail: Barbro.Mattsson-Lidsle@novia.fi

Abstract

Background: Drama has primarily been employed in education for the purpose of teaching nurse students in a creative way to understand thoughts and emotions so that they may grow as caregivers. Through drama an inner conception of oneself, of one's inner strength and health, can be released.

Aim: The aim of this study is to describe drama as creative play within caring and its health-giving power.

Material and method: The research was conducted through a drama group and interviews. Eleven women diagnosed with breast cancer participated as informants. The drama group met for a period of nine months, and drama was created from life stories, relaxation and imaginary journeys, the painting of inner pictures and the drawing of life paths. The main methodology used is hermeneutics and therefore the data material was interpreted hermeneutically on structural, rational and existential levels.

Results: Drama as creative play is a restful balance between active actions and inner rest. Drama releases a joy of living, opens up new ways of viewing oneself and others and the discovery of a new life course. Drama may not transform life itself but one's perspective of life. Drama may release what is important in life and new values in life which in itself brings health.

Discussion: Drama as creative play requires courage because thoughts and emotions that have often been repressed are brought to the surface and may alter one's conceptions about illness, about one's identity as a human being and about one's own life. Drama sets in motion a movement toward an inner establishment of values that are important in life and the strength to act in accordance with one's own life course. Drama as creative play within caring can give patients strength to create order in life and provide space for inner healing and health.

Key words: drama, health, caring, caring science, hermeneutical methodology