

# What is the Art of Nursing?



Nursing is a quite expansive field, so it can be kind of hard to pin down what exactly it is. Is a nurse just an aide to a doctor? Is a nurse just someone who takes care of someone else in a medical manner? Most everyone acknowledges that nursing is a field of science, but why do so few consider it an art form? In our opinion, there are several facets of the craft that genuinely categorize it as an art as well as a science.

## Nursing as an Art Form

According to a [study](#) that utilized Rodger's evolutionary perspective, the art of nursing is "the intentional creative use of oneself, based upon skill and expertise, to transmit emotion and meaning to another." For the life of us, that definition is a bit obtuse, so let's talk about what it really means.

Primarily, it means the whole idea is pretty subjective, because different people may have different ideas of what it means to be a nurse. In general, it means using imagination, sensitivity to others, interpretation of others' feelings, and active participation in the care of others to provide them with the best healthcare experience possible.

That's exactly why this aspect of nursing is more of an art than a hard science. There's no scientific way in which you can guarantee the right way to deal with an individual. Every person that a nurse must care for has different personal needs and desires tied to their personality and identity. You could argue that there is a science to determining what those personalities are,

but there's still no way for anyone to objectively claim "this is the right way to emotionally care for this type of person, every single time."

Because, at the end of the day, one of the things that sets a nurse apart from a doctor is the level of connection they often make to a patient. A doctor may take care of the heaviest lifting on the scientific medical side, but the nurse is the face the patient sees most often, the face that most often offers them a friendly, personable connection that puts them at ease.

A lot of people consider nurses less important than doctors, but the value of that connection cannot be overstated. Medical care isn't just about solving the physical problem that ails a patient, but assuring them that everything will be alright along the way. This is the aspect of nursing one could consider an art form, and one that doesn't get enough recognition for its value.

## **What is Truly Encompassed by the Art of Nursing?**

So, we've established that the art of nursing is mostly about tending to the personal emotional and psychological needs of patients. But that's a pretty broad statement. What all is actually included in such a definition?

There are several things to consider. Understanding the patient's desires and needs. Earning their trust. Responding to their cognitive, psychological, and emotional concerns in a compassionate manner. Ultimately, it falls to the nurse to apply not just the physical science of healing, but also the philosophies and virtues of healing as they care for their patient. This also includes the ability to explain the plan of care to the patient in a way that they will not only understand, but be assured by. Even this single notion is deceptively complex, and has many facets, such as:

- **Understanding the Needs/Wants of the Patient:** The nurse must understand the concerns that the patient has, and the assurances that they want in their medical assessment. Assuring them is the first step of medical care.
- **Earning the Patient's Trust:** Of all the fields in the world, the medical field is perhaps the one where it is most important for the professional to have the complete trust of the client. A patient needs to trust in the ability of the nurse, the doctor, and the whole hospital. Otherwise, they may refuse treatment.
- **Compassionate Response to All Concerns:** The patient has psychological, emotional, and cognitive needs. In most cases, these are not things to be addressed by medical science, but rather just a compassionate soul. Admittedly, not everyone goes into medicine for purely altruistic reasons, but nevertheless, the nurse is usually the one who needs to make the customer feel as though they matter as an individual to the healthcare professionals caring for them. No patient should feel unimportant in a place dedicated to saving lives.
- **Explaining the Plan:** Needing medical attention is often quite scary, and the thing that makes the process so terrifying is usually the unknown. Patients don't know what is going to happen to them. It usually falls to the nurse to explain the situation and the plan for care as clearly as possible, while also being as comforting and reassuring as they can. Even when outcomes are bleak, the nurse should understand that everyone wants comfort in a dire situation.

Ultimately, there are many requirements to be a nurse, and many of those requirements fall under the field of art. If you need further proof of this, just look at the qualities one would need to achieve all that has been mentioned: integrity, empathy, leadership, responsibility, emotional intelligence, and more. While these traits are obviously not completely removed from science, they are often much more important to art, further proving that nursing, like many medical fields, is a hybrid profession that blends both science and art into a cohesive whole.

## **Conclusion**

Nursing is a medical profession, and thus definitely a science. But at the same time, it is an art form, due to the requirements of the field: nurses must have empathy, integrity, emotional intelligence and social awareness so that they may care for all of the needs of their patients, even those that are not strictly medical. That includes understanding and empathizing with them, clearly and confidently explaining plans of care, and being a beacon of solace and comfort to the patient even when the situation is dire.

For all of these reasons and more, there is no denying that nursing is a hybrid profession that encompasses the realms of both science and art.

## **Reference:**

[The art of nursing: a concept analysis - PubMed \(nih.gov\)](#)

## **Image Reference:**

[https://www.freepik.com/free-photo/covid-19-frontline-healthcare-essential-workers\\_13312501.htm#page=1&query=nurses&position=0&from\\_view=search](https://www.freepik.com/free-photo/covid-19-frontline-healthcare-essential-workers_13312501.htm#page=1&query=nurses&position=0&from_view=search)