

The Nature of Suffering and the Goals of Nursing



Betty R. Ferrell and Nessa Coyle

“What an amazing book! With stories and clear writing about the sacred space between professional and patient, it rekindles the originating impulses of our work in healthcare and the profound privilege of caring for patients. It speaks not only to the experience of nurses, but of all of us. It is a gift to be given the language that reflects back to us the transcendent nature of our daily work. Everyone who takes care of patients should read it.”

—**Diane E. Meier, MD**, Director, Center to Advance Palliative Care, Professor of Geriatrics, Medicine and Medical Ethics, Mount Sinai School of Medicine

“Ferrell and Coyle in this remarkable work identify the essence of why all nurses entered our profession, that being to relieve suffering. The authors examine nursing's unique role with many perspectives. Case illustrations throughout the book give the reader insights in ways to examine their own practice. This writing clearly offers support to nurses who may also suffer in delivering care in our current health care system. This is a must read for any nurse who comes home daily and wonders, ‘Have I made a difference?’”

—**Patrick J. Coyne, MSN, APRN, FAAN**, Clinical Director of Thomas Palliative Care Services, Virginia Commonwealth University, Richmond, VA

The essence of nursing care continually exposes nurses to suffering. Although they bear witness to the suffering of others, their own suffering is less frequently exposed. This slim volume attempts to give voice to the suffering nurses witness in patients, families, colleagues, and themselves. By making this suffering visible, the authors wish to honor it and hope that we may learn from it. Drs. Ferrell and Coyle are also the editors of *Textbook of Palliative Nursing*, 2nd ed. (Oxford, 2006). Individually, they have worked more than 50 years in oncology nursing, caring for patients and working to improve the quality of care that patients receive.

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Betty R. Ferrell, PhD, MA has worked in oncology nursing for 30 years and has focused her clinical expertise and research in pain management, quality of life, and palliative care. Dr. Ferrell is a Research Scientist at the City of Hope National Medical Center in Duarte, California.

Nessa Coyle, PhD, FAAN has worked closely with advanced cancer patients and their families for more than 25 years as a member of the Pain and Palliative Care Service of Sloan-Kettering Cancer Center in New York City. Her clinical focus has been care of the dying and their families, continuity of care, communication, and ethical issues in end of life care.

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