

CULTIVATING THE ART OF SERVICE

Isabel Amélia Costa Mendes¹

In its broadest sense, Art is "any set of rules that is capable of directing a human activity..."⁽¹⁾ That is how Plato postulated art, without establishing any difference between art and science.

Service is one form of art we need to cultivate. In terms of competitive impact, it is through this meaning that service achieves its highest quality levels, that is, excellence⁽²⁾.

We are living in the Age of Service. The leaders of service organizations assume the singular duty of accountability with respect to clients. Workers internally or externally involved in the organization also become the focus of this accountability, because the excellence of their services depends on factors that determine their valuation as persons.

From a Platonic perspective, Nursing bases its activities on the regulative or imperative art, that is, its actions are based on knowledge. But, besides integrating the liberal art (oriented towards the activity of reason), nursing actions also integrate the art of service and, in this particular aspect, the history of this profession is rich in opportunities for service acts.

Nursing leaders are responsible for offering the necessary conditions for our professionals to turn to their inner self in the search for resources that allow for greater comprehension and creativity. May this search be marked by generosity and energy.

This baggage will improve the professionals' quality of life, as they will be able to perform the service act as an art. This will directly influence the clients who, besides receiving competent care, will feel that their dignity as a person is preserved.

That is our mission: to serve in order to promote the development of all human beings' personal and professional potential, to enable them to reproduce the example they received and achieve the expected benefits.

REFERÊNCIAS BIBLIOGRÁFICAS

1. Abbagnano N. Dicionário de filosofia. 4ª ed. São Paulo (SP): Martins Fontes; 2000.
2. Albrecht K. Revolução nos serviços: como as empresas podem revolucionar a maneira de tratar os seus clientes. São Paulo (SP): Pioneira Thomson Learning; 2002.

¹ Editor of Latin American Journal of Nursing, Dean, Full Professor of the University of São Paulo at Ribeirão Preto College of Nursing - WHO Collaborating Centre for Nursing Research Development, Brazil, e-mail: iamendes@eerp.usp.br