The purpose of this caring science study is to gain increased knowledge about, and to obtain a deeper understanding of how the human touch as a part of the natural, original caring may have a meaning for the health and wholeness of the suffering human being in the perioperative care. The research questions are: 1. What is the life-giving touch composed of in the perioperative care? 2. What is conveyed in the life-giving touch?

The theoretical perspective of this study is based on the tradition developed at the Department of Caring Science at Åbo Akademi University, under the guidance of professor Katie Eriksson. This tradition sees the human being as a unity of body, soul, and spirit. The methodological approach is hermeneutical and the text interpretation is conducted by using a method developed by Henry Cöster. The texts for interpretation consist of 9 narratives, written by patients who have undergone an operation.

The result in this study show evidence of that a dignified reception of the patient, that includes a caritative attitude towards the patient in the perioperative care is experienced as a life-giving touch. As a conclusion the study culminates in the concepts of being seen, carried and raised. This means that when the patient has been seen as a valuable person it has given the patient the confidence and trust to allow the nurse to carry the patient through the operation and finally to raise the patient to a higher level of health and wholeness.