The aim of this caring science study is to deepen the understanding of tactful caring from a caring science perspective. The study questions are as follows: 1. How do nurses describe tactful caring in the journal *Epione* between the years 1908 and 1965? 2. How is tactful caring made visible from the perspective of student nurses? The ontological starting points are basic assumptions about human beings, caring, caring communion and human dignity. The overall methodological approach is hermeneutical and the focus is on understanding.

The aim is to explore tactful caring and create a deeper understanding of it. The study is carried out by using idea-historical content analysis and inductive latent content analysis.

From the idea-historical material emerges a pattern of ideas for tactful caring. Tactfulness is made visible through the right disposition, education, knowledge and cultivation. To be tactful means to be discreet and respectful and to show love for other human beings. Tactfulness is the capacity for distance; one needs to be available without imposing oneself on somebody. To see the whole person and understand the depth of that person’s emotional life are important parts of being tactful. Tactfulness is made visible by using one’s intuition and sending forth one’s spiritual tentacles. Tactfulness is willingness to do good and to meet the other person with respect. Tactfulness towards our dead implies piety for the dead and consideration and respect for the feelings of relatives.

The results from the latent content analysis reveal a pattern of meaning units that describes tactful as being considerate and dignified in meetings with patients: to walk in the tact of the patient; to seek the inner room; the respectful dialogue; to listen to the voice of the heart; harmony and caution in caring.