ABSTRACT


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(169 pages, 11 appendices, 3 tables, 9 figures)

The overall purpose of this study is to gain a new understanding from the perspective of caring science concerning violence between spouses, suffering and the alleviation of suffering, and thus create a theoretical model of these topics. The aim of this study is to promote the theory of caring science and the patient care, to help to understand violence between spouses, suffering and the alleviation of it among men and women, and to offer new perspectives to develop caritative caring and increase dialogue about these issues in the society.

The research is based on the theory of ‘caring science’ and hermeneutic research tradition. Deduction, induction and abduction have been used in this study. The empirical material consists of a questionnaire for and semi-structured interviews of two women who have experienced violence in their own relationship and semi-structured interviews of two men who have been violent in their relationships. Philosophic hermeneutics by Gadamer was applied for the interpretation of this material.

According to the study results the Home is seen as a base of all the dimensions of existence and lifeworld of a human being. Its essence and function is true, good and beautiful and can be therefore called a haven. Violence between spouses and suffering changes the Home into a place where the untrue, evil and ugly gain a foothold. Violence means suffering, where loveless behaviour abandons oneself and the spouse from the communion. Power is taken into one’s own hands and it is used irresponsibly by disgracing the dignity of both parties. Violence between spouses can be an intentional or intuitive defence against a word or action which touches one’s own spot of shame. Human beings desire to get rid of suffering and lead harmonious life which makes one struggle between the actual and the potential. In order to get alleviation one has to give in and reveal one’s suffering. It can be alleviated using caritative caring but it can also be increased by causing suffering in care. Suffering and recovering from it can teach something new that a person can utilise for one’s own good and the benefit for others.

In conclusion, it can be stated that at the core of violence between spouses there is a feeling of shame that has neither become visible nor confronted, and which is manifested in violence. The cornerstone of human interaction and prevention of suffering and violence between spouses is ethos prevailing in the home of spouses and parents. The basic elements of ethos are respect for dignity and love. Ethos, ‘caritas’ and ‘claritas’ form the basis of caring science, caring and alleviation of suffering. Love can endure almost anything.

Keywords: Violence between spouses, suffering, hermeneutics, caring science