The aim of this study is to bring out and emphasize the concept of "presence" and make evident the way in which it is made visible within caritative leadership. The research questions thus include: what is presence, and in what ways it is manifested within the caritative leadership. This study is based on the caring science perspective and the theories which have been developed at the department of Caring Science at Åbo Akademi University.

The research design employs the hybrid model developed by Schwartz-Barcott & Kim (2000). The study progresses through three stages: the theoretical phase, the empirical phase and the analytical phase, which is a synthesis of the results attained from the previous phases. The three phases conclude in a concept description of the concept 'presence'. The theoretical phase was carried out in the form of a literature survey, analysis of content and interpretation thereof. The data used in the empirical phase was collected through interviews conducted with eight nurses working at one of the clinics in The Hospital district of Helsinki and Uusimaa. The interviews were analyzed through an analysis and interpretation of the responses.

The synthesis of the three phases concludes in a thesis about presence: "Presence is a unique interpersonal state of being which is characterized by a trusting companionship, and a thesis regarding the present leadership: "The present leadership is a caritative leadership".

Presence as the trusting spirit of community gives expression to the ethos which guides the nurses towards a caritative attitude, thus mediating caring. The nurses’ caritative attitude, where dignity and holiness constitutes an ethos, is expressed by presence. “To be there” implies presence and feeling of companionship.

The results of this study implicates that the present nursing leader can focus on the present and encompasses a strong subject knowledge. The present nursing leader is the person to rely on in every possible situation and with whom you feel a genuine companionship. The present nursing leader functions as a role model in terms of ethics and understanding, and guides the workplace through a caritative attitude and makes caring possible. The nursing leader gives expression to ethos through presence.