The purpose of this caring science study is to get a new understanding about what a caring culture involves and give means to develop a caring care culture. The purpose of the thesis is to help care leaders in developing a caring culture, and to explain what the innovation and the openness mean in the caring care culture. The research summary shows that an optimal caring culture helps the nurses to have the energy to perform and enjoy their work, which has a direct influence on the patient care. The leader has a significant impact on the care culture. The theoretic perspective forms the ground for this study. By means of a research summary, earlier research results are raised up. The empirical section contains the interviews of four care leaders who are on the point of completing or already have completed their Master's degree of health care science. The research questions are the following: 1. What is the caring element in the caring care culture? 2. How can a care leader support the nurses to have the energy to perform and enjoy their care work by means of developing an open and innovative caring culture?

The thesis utilizes a qualitative inductive content analysis and hermeneutic interpretation which is in harmony with the theoretic perspective of a hermeneutic, caring science oriented in human science.

The result shows that a humanistic vision of and the respect for human beings and their uniqueness are central aspects in a caring care culture. The kindness reflects on the caring care culture. The research summary supports the experience that the leader is seen as a role model in developing a caring culture which is based on a joint ethical value basis for nursing and on the interaction between the whole personnel and the organization. The leader must enable the nurses to develop their profession and have the possibility to maintain or change matters in their work. Humour and a positive outlook on life are important in the caring care culture in order to attain health and in order to overcome difficult matters and to improve work atmosphere. A positive communication is the basis for openness. When people use all their senses and actually see their surroundings and listen to each other, the openness will be enabled. Both based on the research summary as well as on the empirical study, the innovation is considered to create something new and bringing it in practice. The leader is seen as a central person to spur and support the nurses to dare being innovative. Positive communication, a bright view of life, openness, listening and creativity will create new innovations.