

A New year has dawned and it is very special for the nurses and the midwives, as we are celebrating the 200th birth anniversary of Florence Nightingale. Additionally, this year is declared as the year of the Nurses and the Midwives by the World Health Organization (WHO). The theme of this year 2020 is, "Nursing the World to Health". Each nurse should take pride within herself and have a heart of contentment as she states the sentence, "I am proud to be a Nurse" to the whole world.¹

Let me review briefly on the history of Florence Nightingale who dedicated her life to nursing and is the founder of Modern Nursing. This discussion will be in three dimensions, namely, her call to service, secondly, her work in the hospital and achievements and finally, a paradox of Florence Nightingale in comparison to today's nurses.²

This issue will talk about her call to service. Just imagine that you were from a rich family and would you have ever thought of coming out of the luxurious life and committing yourself to serve the sick and suffering. In a very young age, Florence Nightingale was active, compassionate and ministered to the ill. She even extended her services to the poor and also to the village neighbouring her family's estate. The more she started caring for people, her outlook of life focussed only on caring for the sick and the suffering. She was preoccupied with her thoughts on how to enrich her care. At this point, the story of Florence Nightingale clearly states that she was 16 years old. She was an adolescent girl in her tender age of 16 years; she started making plans and setting long term goals. According to Erik Erikson's theory of psychosocial developmental, it falls in the fifth stage which is the identity versus role confusion which occurs in the age of 12–18 years.³ Adolescents search for a sense of self and personal identity by exploring their personal values, beliefs and goals. She being in the adolescent age, Florence Nightingale was also struggling for independence and control. The adolescent aim to belong to the society by forming an identity based upon the outcome of their explorations and try to fit into it. Success for the adolescents in this usually leads to the virtue of fidelity, which was precisely what Florence Nightingale achieved. Fidelity means the ability to commit one's self to others on the basis of accepting others, even when there may be ideological differences.^{2,4}

She avoided marriage and felt the calling for her was divine and she wanted to pursue her divine calling despite her parents objecting it. Her parents were not pleased. Florence Nightingale truly experienced the valuable spiritual transformation to serve mankind.

Therefore, how many of us have come into the nursing profession with the real urge and spiritual transformation to really help the sick and the suffering like our Founder of Modern Nursing, Florence Nightingale. She set a unique example for the entire fraternity. As the whole world celebrates the year as Nurses year, let us introspect ourselves of our commitment, dedication and spiritual transformation towards our nursing profession in caring for the sick and suffering. Happy New Year 2020!



References

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