



The sense and meaning of comfort in the lived experience of the survivors of ASCT

Lúcia Bacalhau*¹, Patrícia Pontífice Sousa²

¹ RN, MSc, PHD Student, Institute of Health Sciences, Center for Interdisciplinary Research in Health, Universidade Católica Portuguesa, Lisbon, Portugal
luciabacalhau@gmail.com

² RN, MSC, PhD, Associated Professor, Institute of Health Sciences, Center for Interdisciplinary Research in Health, Universidade Católica Portuguesa, Lisbon, Portugal
patriciaps@ucp.pt

Background

Allogeneic Stem Cells Transplant (ASCT), and, the chronicity associated with this life event, have a growing prevalence and a significant impact on the life and daily life of each person who experiences it (Cusatis, Tecca, D'Souza, Shaw, & Flynn, 2020).

Survival leads to multiple changes in different areas of life, revealing various health needs for which a comforting response is sought (Islam, 2018).

Allogeneic Stem Cell Transplant (ASCT) has been used as a curative treatment for a greater number of clinical situations (Poloméni, Lapusan, Bompont, Rubio, & Mohty, 2016).

Concepts

Lived experience: Act of consciousness of the appropriation of the meaning of an aspect of the world (van Manen, 2014)

Comfort: Immediate and holistic experience of being empowered by meeting needs in the contexts of experience (Kolcaba, 2003).

Survivor: Anyone who has completed treatment for their disease and is in remission (Carlyle et al., 2015).

Methods

To understand the lived experience of comfort, we used a qualitative approach using **van Manen's phenomenology of practice**.

We uncovered the phenomenon through phenomenological interviews and illustrative episodes that reflected the lived experience of **20 survivors**.

In the process of analysis, we followed the "stages" such as **epoché, reduction, and vocative**.

The **MAXQDA** support was facilitative in organizing the data and in the analysis process.

Objective: The aim of this study was understand the meaning and sense of comfort for the survivor of ASCT.

Results

The results revealed the complexity of the phenomenon in relation to the understanding of how the "Being a survivor" person experiences comfort in the daily life of the ASCT process. Comfort as a need and desire, a subtheme of this analysis, is illustrated by the following meaning units (i) to give time to life; (ii) to live well-being; (iii) to give meaning to the days; (iv) the opportunity to achieve healing. The place of comfort in the lived experience of the ASCT survivor is understood as a phenomenon felt as necessary, desired, and substantiated of life and well-being in daily life.

From the analysis, the following aspects emerged as meaning and sense of comfort:

(i) to give time to life: One feels that the meaning of comfort is to be able to continue to live, to be alive.

(ii) to live with well-being: the meaning of comfort is expressed in the experience of well-being, without interference from uncomfortable factors, and therefore considered a promoter of happiness.

(iii) to give meaning to the days: the way life time is lived is shrouded with greater intensity and comforting significance when the survivor seeks to enrich his or her days of life, to be happy in daily achievements, and to enjoy the time lived.

(iv) the opportunity to achieve healing: associated with transplantation is the end of the treatment processes, the final stage of experiencing the treatments.

We found comfort as something desired, ambioned to promote well-being and sense of happiness for survivors.

Discussion

The importance of what is experienced is here assumed as the means to achieve length of life. This concept construction of comfort is shared by several authors although in other contexts of care (Pereira et al. (2019), Ribeiro, (2012) and Oliveira, (2011)). Barbara William (2012) realized that living the ASCT is a profound experience, which involves transcendence as a process that is experienced when the person overcomes challenges, but at the same time assigns meaning and purpose to their lives, discovers deeper dimensions of their being and expands contact with those close to them.

Zahra Farsi and her collaborators (2012) associated ASCT with the hope of getting healthy again, this feeling becomes like a vital force in their lives and improves the process of adjusting to the life-threatening situation to the days of living.

Conclusion

Regarding the comforting sphere, this knowledge allows personalizing and adapting nursing care to the survivor, drawing attention to the need for intervention in this domain of living and contributing to achieve full comfort and improve the quality of nursing care.

Ver referências bibliográficas aqui

