

## ***Nursing Education: Is there a need to learn transformatively in the age of Covid-19?***

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### ***Abstract***

Transformative learning theory (TL) explains how we make meaning, interpret experiences and in the process of learning transform taken-for-granted frames of reference. TL theory seeks to promote processes of transformative learning that enable us broaden current perspectives and to live with uncertainty and ambiguity. Experiencing the challenges of social solidarity and physical isolation may provide disruptions of one's life that TL theory defines as a disorienting dilemma.

Front line workers, like nurses, carry a heavy burden on behalf of all. In addition to the challenges that social solidarity and physical isolation that we all face, health care workers face additional dilemmas: Their own needs are in conflict with the needs of those in their care. In order to protect their patients and families/friends they need to self-isolate. At the same time, many of their (usual) opportunities to take care of themselves are extremely limited due to self-isolation, cut off from their sources of support. Nurses and health care workers also face the urgency of their work while they might not be protected to the extent that is necessary due to a lack of protective clothing or reasonable working hours. How can health care workers be supported facing these disorienting dilemmas? How can educators support care workers coping with these challenges? This learning is urgent and this brings an additional dimension to their learning needs.



### ***Biography:***

Saskia Eschenbacher is Professor of Adult Learning and Counseling at Akkon University of Applied Human Sciences, in Berlin and currently a Visiting Professor at Teachers College, Columbia University, in New York City. She earned a Ph.D. (2018) in Education from the University of Augsburg. From 2011-2018, she worked as a research and teaching associate at the Catholic University Eichstätt-Ingolstadt and at the University of Augsburg. In 2015 and 2018, she spent terms as a Visiting Researcher at New York University's Steinhardt School of Culture, Education, and Human Development. Her main research areas are transformative learning theory/transformative education.

Karla Bensmann completed her professional training at the nursing school of the Red Cross in Nuremberg and graduated from the Protestant University of Nuremberg in Nursing Science. She works at Charité Berlin in the palliative and cancer care unit. Currently she works at the palliative care unit for COVID-19 patients and is finishing her degree in Social Work at the Akkon University of Applied Human Sciences in Berlin. Her expertise is in health care and nursing, she is interested in transformative learning and neuroscience.

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