

## **Reinterpretation of the scientific approach to the act of caregiving**

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**Aims:** Continuing technological and scientific development in Medicine, associated with socio-economical transformations that took place in the last decades, allowed a substantial increase in human life span. However this increment in survival doesn't always mean a functional, independent and healthy life. The number of individuals with loss of autonomy, disabled and handicapped has risen in parallel to the higher prevalence of chronic and incapacitating diseases. In this context, a consistent and integrated care for these persons by their relatives and health professionals assumes an increasing importance. Therefore, this study has two objectives: to know the scientific approach of the caregiver and, by characterizing the act of caregiving as something intrinsically human, to put forward an interpretation of this subject considering the interaction patient-caregiver.

**Method:** In order to fulfil the proposed objectives, a research in the database PsycInfo about the concept of "caregiver" was initially undertaken, followed in a second stage by the reinterpretation of this concept according to the "Autopoietic Subject Theory" (Agra 1990, 2001).

**Results:** Using this methodology, it was possible to conceptualize four different theoretical positions, both for the patient and caregiver (formal or informal), when facing the disease and its clinical manifestations, as well as for the relational environment resulting from the concordant or dissonant dynamics established between the them.

**Conclusions:** It was verified that, in spite of potentially disturbing events, the intervention may promote a dependent compromised caring relationship between two persons, in which autopoiesis and biopsychosocial adjustment lead to an increment in the well-being of both patient and caregiver.

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