
ABSTRACT

The process of adapting to caring for a spouse: An analysis with Trajectory Equifinality Modeling

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The purpose of this study was to examine the process of adapting to caring for a spouse. Semi-structured interviews were conducted with four participants. Their spouses needed total assistance due to disease. Interviewees chronologically recounted memorable events in their caring experiences, and their narratives were analyzed using Trajectory Equifinality Modeling. At the onset of their spouses' disease, caregivers were confused, but recognizing their marital bond, they undertook their care roles of supporting their spouses with positive attitudes. Caregiving puts a psychological and physical burden on caregivers, disrupting their personal lives. However, as they viewed their caring environments positively and found advantages over the more serious situations of others, they never became exhausted. This study found that their companionship in marriage encouraged adaptation in spousal care, as long as the disease did not damage the psychological connection between the couple. In addition, the results suggest that the key to spending better lives with their sick spouses was their management skills in utilizing medical nursing care services and relying on the people around them.

Key Words: spousal caregiving, adaptation, qualitative study, Trajectory Equifinality Modeling
