

# The Challenge of Being Ethical as a Nurse

Wendy Austin PhD RN  
Professor Emeritus  
Canada Research Chair  
Relational Ethics in Health Care (2003-2013)  
Faculty of Nursing & Dossetor Health Ethics Centre  
University of Alberta

The ethical intention is  
*“aiming for the ‘good  
life’ with and for others  
in just institutions.*

---

Paul Ricouer, *Oneself as Another*, 1992, p.172.

# Foundational Ethical Challenges of Nurses

---

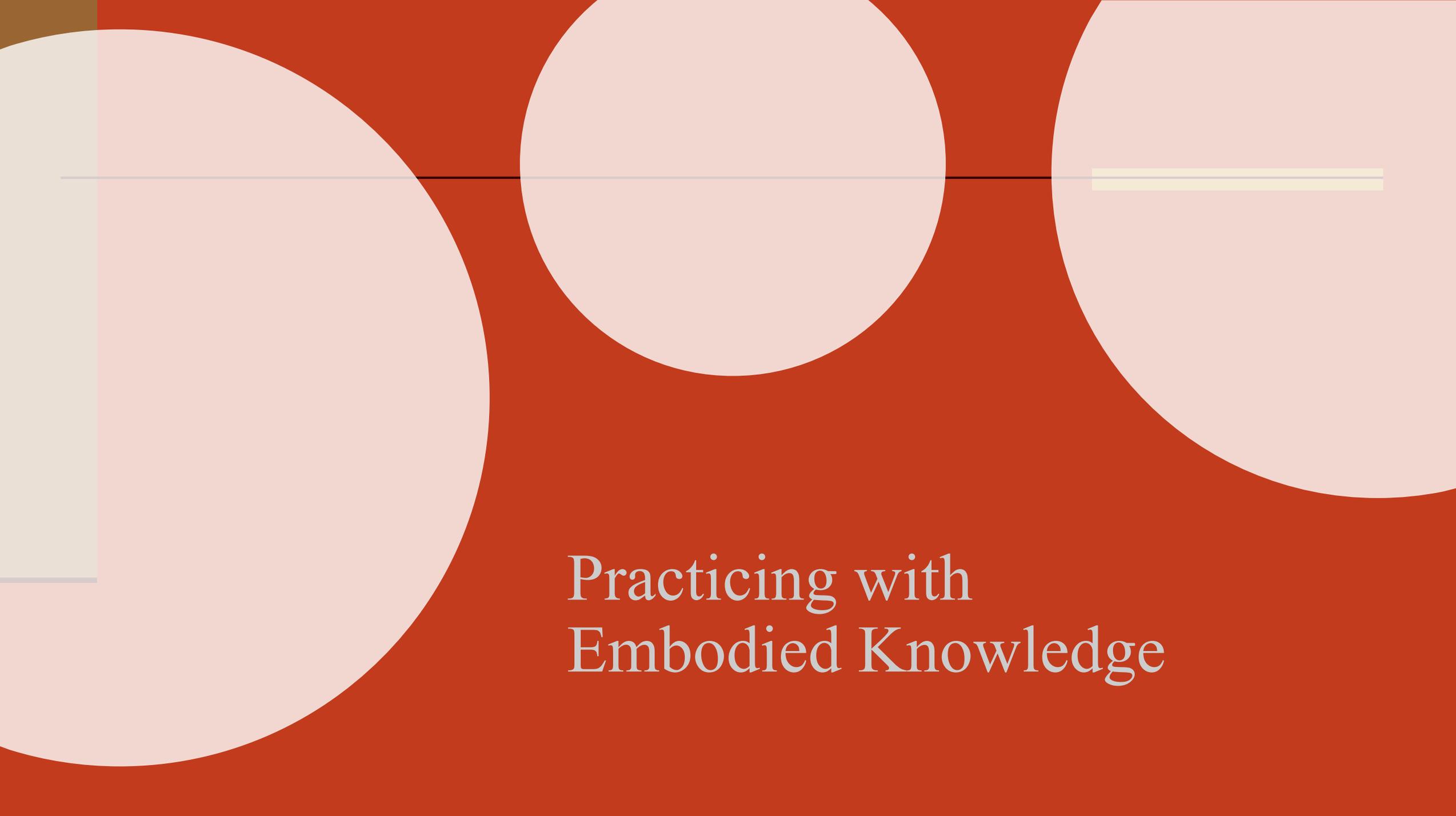
- Being a Moral Agent as a Nurse
- Practicing with Embodied Knowledge
- Engaging with Patients and Families
- Practicing with Others in a Moral Community
- Being a Nurse in a Global Community

# Being a Moral Agent as a Nurse

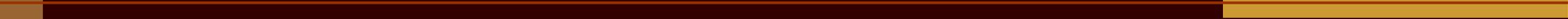
---

# “Dark times” of Nursing

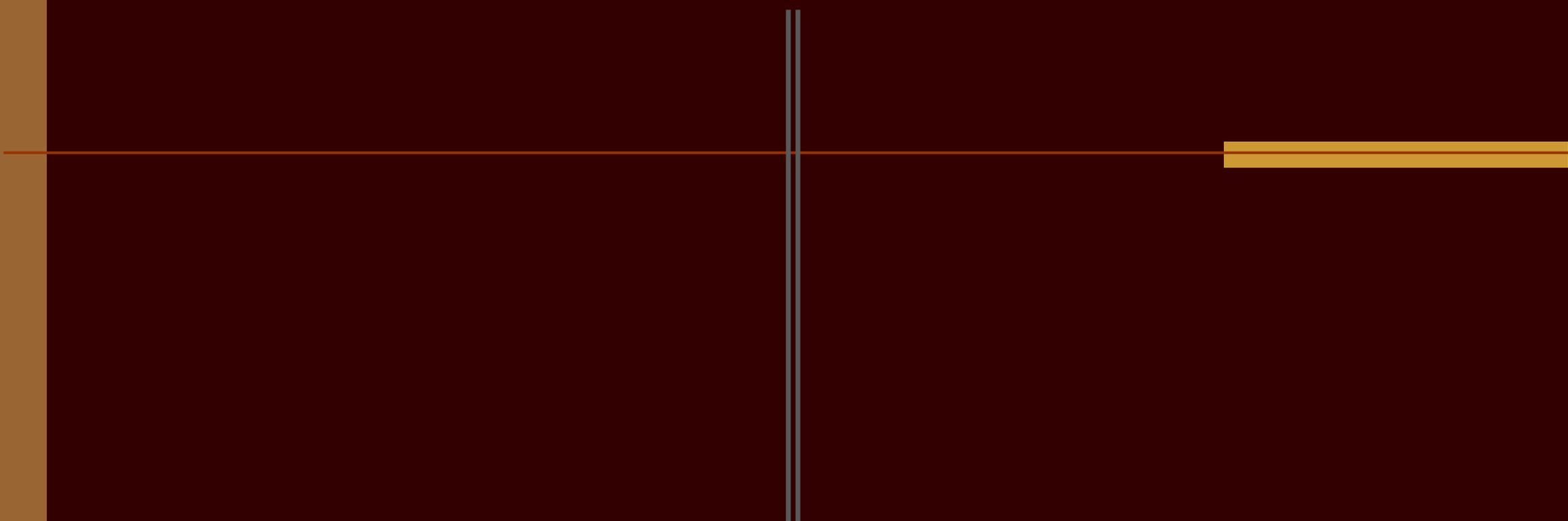
---



# Practicing with Embodied Knowledge

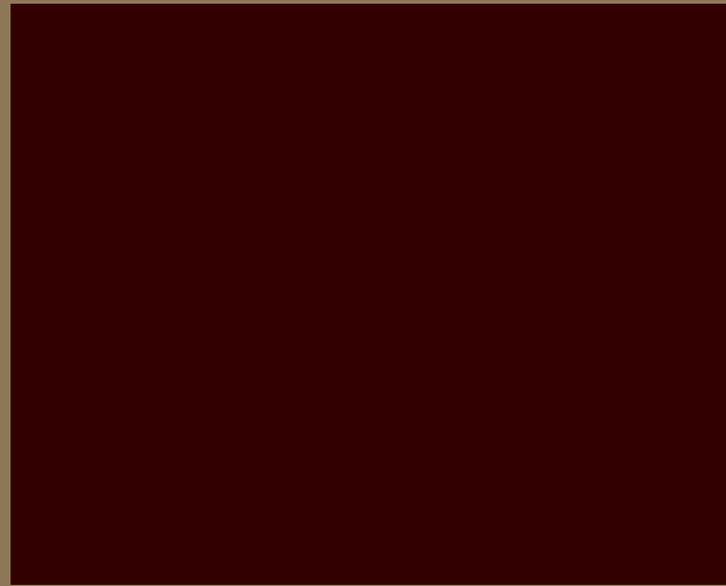
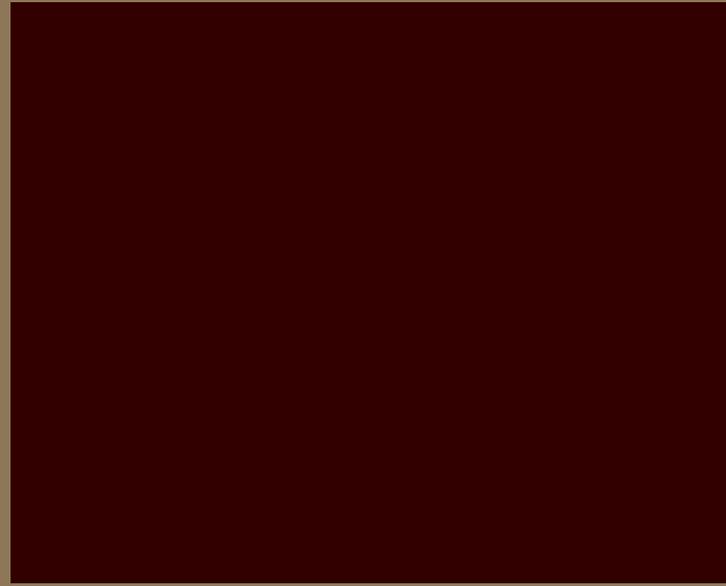


*Engaging* with  
Patients and  
Families



# Language and Cultural Differences

---



Life Style and Status  
Differences





# Differences in Personal and Social History

# Time & Technology





Dangerousness

---

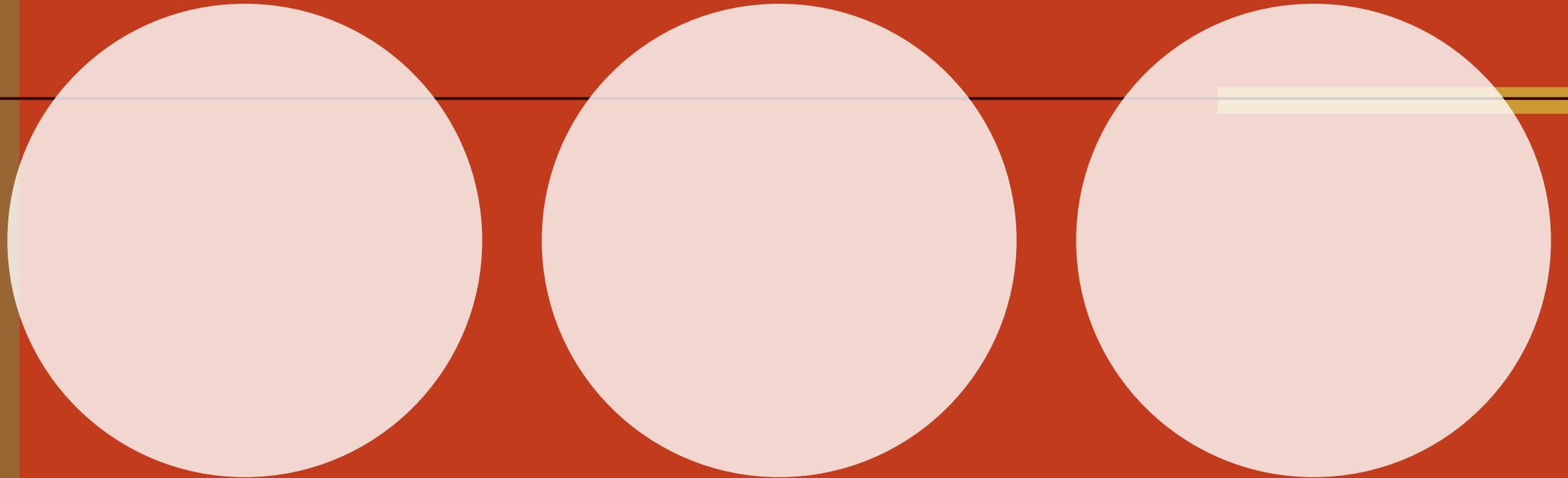
---

# Practicing with Others in a Moral Community



# Context Shapes Issues

---



Being a nurse in a global community

# Dan Callahan:

## Knowledge for ethics

- Ethical thinking requires three qualities:
  - self-knowledge
  - perceptiveness about one's society and its values/beliefs
  - knowledge of the traditions of ethics



# Uncertainty and Vulnerability

- *We act, not on the bases of unshakeable grounds, but in order to do what we can, taking what action seems wise and not without misgivings. We act, but we understand that we are not situated safely above the flux and that we do not have a view of the whole...We act because something has to be done.*

- *John Caputo*

