DOSSIER: The disgust in the work of caregivers, escaping from it but not too much.

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Abstract: The work of caregivers assigned to the personal care of Elderly in institutional facilities is often thought of as dirty work, part of the unrewarding aspects of nursing care. It is delegated to men and women who must deal with unbearable feelings of disgust and the ethical threat that this represents for a job well done. This paper examines the defensive strategies used by caregivers to withstand their disgust and turning suffering into pleasure through a touch and conversational clinic where residents can become desiring subjects. However, disgust cannot be suspended entirely because it is part and parcel of a situation that caregivers cannot disregard in terms of the hygienic, compassionate and cooperative aspects of their work. Finally, the link between work and disgust involves a form of moral courage that might prove to be a characteristic of work of care.

Keywords: Emotions at work, disgust, dirty work, work of care, moral risk.