Susann Arvidsson has an interest in health promoting factors in people with chronic musculoskeletal pain or with rheumatic diseases and an additional interest in patient education. In her present PhD-thesis, she explores and describes health promoting factors in people with/without chronic musculoskeletal pain and in people with rheumatic diseases. She also evaluates the effects of an intervention pilot study with a self-care promoting PBL-program for people with rheumatic diseases having chronic musculoskeletal pain, sleep disturbances and/or fatigue.

This thesis is comprised of four samples: a randomly selected sample from a Swedish general population and three different samples containing people with rheumatic diseases registered at a hospital for rheumatic diseases in the southwest of Sweden. The results showed that there were some common factors like feeling rested after sleep and having a good sleep which were predicting improved HRQL in both people with and without chronic musculoskeletal pain and in people with rheumatic diseases. Having strong SOC and work capacity (regardless of the number of work hours) were also important health factors for people with rheumatic diseases. Then, health promoting self-care was experienced as that self-care was a way of life, and it implied dialogues, power struggles and choices. It was also shown six months after a self-care promoting PBL-program that people with rheumatic diseases improved their empowerment and that they had implemented lifestyle changes.

The results of this thesis provide a valuable and useful insight in health promoting factors in people with/without chronic musculoskeletal pain and in people with rheumatic diseases, but also that people with rheumatic diseases may have benefit from taking part in patient education with a self-care promoting PBL-program. These results contribute to evidence supporting the introduction of a more salutogenic perspective in rheumatology care and research.

Susann Arvidsson has a background as a registered nurse and has the degree of Master of Medical Science with the main subject caring sciences. She is working as a nurse at the Spenshult Hospital for Rheumatic Diseases. This PhD-thesis presents her research education in nursing science.