

**A Companion on the Journey
Spiritual Accompaniment in Palliative Care.**
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Religion and Spirituality.

Although sometimes taken to mean the same thing... there are differences.

They can complement and enrich each other.

Seeks to be attentive to both the spiritual and religious needs.

Religion

That which binds together...

- It has to do with collecting, consolidating and unifying.
- It has special words which are meant to be passed on.
- It has a set of beliefs.
- It has people to revere and events to recall.
- It has a moral code.
- It has certain rituals (rites of initiation, sacraments, etc...)

cf. Doka, K (2002)

The outward expression of spirituality.

It is supported by a community of people who believe in and are guided by the same story.

All major religions began as intensely meaningful experiences, first within an individual or among a small group of people, and then among a larger group...

Doka, K. (2002)

Religious Needs

- To be able to connect with faith community.
- To be able to celebrate with the faith community.
- To have access to one's religious leaders.
- To have access to a quiet space or place.
- To have customs and rituals respected.

Responding to Religious Needs

- Celebrating religious services, prayers, feasts etc.
- Facilitating the person in maintaining contact with his/her local faith community.
- Facilities for the observance of rituals and customs.

Spirituality

sense of oneself

transcendence

meaning and
purpose

reverence

inspiration

relationship

presence

the infinite

awe

principles and values

faith

Spiritual needs can be particularly acute at different times.

- ❖ Time of change.
- ❖ Recognition of ageing.
- ❖ Time of illness.
- ❖ Terminal illness.
- ❖ In bereavement.
- ❖ As death approaches.

Death, dying, loss, terminal illness, old age, disability...

all of these can have a profound effect on one's assumptions about life and the meaning of life and can give rise to questions such as -

“Why?” “Why me?” “What’s it all about?” “Why now?”

Spiritual Needs.

- To be loved and to give love.
- To believe in oneself.
- To have hope.
- To have peace.
- To find meaning in life, loss, suffering & death.
- To be involved & to contribute.
- To forgive.
- To connect.
- To belong.
- To grieve.

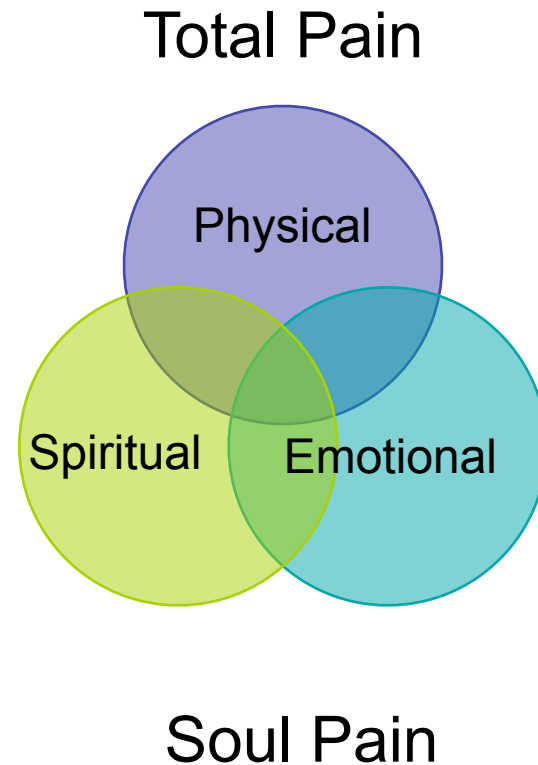
Spiritual Health Assessment

Meaning
Forgiveness
Relatedness
Hope

R. Groves & A Klauser (2006)

Spiritual distress

Fear.
Anger.
Guilt.
Denial.
Hopelessness.
Restlessness.
Depression.
Disconnection.



Enabling people find meaning, hope and wholeness in their life and in relationships,
and
recognising
spiritual pain.

Spiritual care might be considered an offering rather than a service delivery.

(cf. Hudson, R. 2009)

A shared search for meaning, faith , hope...

Importance of Personal Story

A person's story reveals the way they construct the universe and their place within it. Stories reveal more than symptoms and diagnosis.

Story Telling

“Discovering our personal stories is a spiritual quest. Without such stories we cannot be fully human. For without them we are unable to articulate or even understand our deepest experiences.”

Sue Monk Kidd (2006)

Spiritual Reminiscence

“Spiritual Reminiscence ... focuses on the meaning of life through the life story, including connectedness, and the faith context... and on what has given joy or brought sadness. The process of spiritual reminiscence may identify events that caused anger, guilt or regret.”

MacKinlay & Trevitt (2007)

Report of the National Advisory Committee on Palliative Care

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“Palliative care... includes addressing the spiritual needs of patients... fear of dying, anxiety about the after-life, denial of impending death, concern about family and finances, or search for meaning within personal suffering are just a few of the psychological and spiritual issues reported by the dying.

“Patients who have religious beliefs are often greatly helped by religious support during their illness.

“It is important to recognise... and to facilitate people of all religions, and those with no religion. All patients, regardless of their belief or lack of belief, are entitled to spiritual care.”

Key issues in delivering effective spiritual and existential support to those experiencing illness or treatment or who are approaching death are:

- Listening to the (person's) experience and the questions that may arise
- Affirming the (person's) humanity
- Protecting the (person's) dignity, self worth and identity
- Ensuring that spiritual care is offered as an integral part of an holistic approach to health, encompassing psychological, spiritual, social and emotional care, and within the framework of the (person's) beliefs or philosophy of life.

- Patients and carers receive support, if sought, to make sense of difficult life events through an exploration of spiritual and existential issues, including an effort to foster hope and promote well being within an integrated care approach.

- Health and social care professionals are able to acknowledge spiritual issues among patients and carers and to respond in a flexible, non-judgemental and non-imposing way.
- Spiritual needs of staff are recognised, with support available to them in working in this area of care.

Spiritual and religious care competencies for specialist palliative care.

Marie Curie Cancer Centre

1. All staff and volunteers who have casual contact with patients and their families/carers.
2. All staff and volunteers whose duties require contact with patients and their families/carers.
3. Staff and volunteers who are members of the multidisciplinary team.
4. Staff or volunteers whose primary responsibility is for the spiritual and religious care of patients, visitors and staff.

Chaplaincy & Pastoral Care... where to?

- Chaplains as professionals alongside other disciplines.
- Chaplains part of the multi-disciplinary team.
- Communication and co-operation.
- Assessment

Implications for Chaplains.

- Competence
- Standards
- Accountability.
- Evidence.
- Research.
- Education.

**Empty hands.
Two ears.
An open heart.**



full attention.
quality of presence,
accompaniment,
companionship.

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