The Role of Spiritual History in Patient Care

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Learning objectives

After participating in this presentation, the learner will be able to:

1. Briefly describe the data to support the impact that spirituality makes on patient health outcomes
2. Recognize how pharmacists can use a patient's spirituality to a therapeutic benefit
3. Discuss what is the benefit of and how to take a spiritual history
4. Apply concepts learned in a simulated patient spiritual history taking exercise

The data to support

Identifying as Religious in the US

Religion in the whole US population

Spirituality

“Good mental health” vs.
“Search for the Transcendent” vs.
“Deeply Religious”
The Role of Spiritual History in Patient Care

Evidence to support
- Positive health outcomes
- The lingual of peace
- Social support
- Increased quality of life

Barriers and Boundaries
- Evidence in religious practice
- Reluctance of therapists
- Associated negative feelings

Use of spiritual/religious data collected

Goal: better understand our patient

Evidence of need
- Lack of family support
- Increased isolation
- Decrease skills in face to face communication
- Increase stress on secular social support systems:
  - Loss of community
  - Loss of personal relationships
  - Decreased community resources

Best practice guidance
American Association of Medical Colleges, American Psychiatric Association, American Nurses Association, American Association of Colleges of Nursing, National Association of Social Workers

- Accreditation Council for Pharmacy Education
  - Cultural Awareness
  - Exploration of the potential impact of cultural values, beliefs, and practices on patient care outcomes.
- Center for the Advancement of Pharmacy Education
  - 3.3. Patient Advocacy (Advocate): Ensure that patients’ best interests are represented.
  - 3.5. Cultural Sensitivity (Include): Recognize social determinants of health to diminish disparities and inequities in access to quality care.
  - 4.1. Self-awareness (Self-aware): Examine and reflect on personal knowledge, skills, abilities, beliefs, biases, motivation, and emotions that could enhance or limit personal and professional growth.

Why pharmacists?
- Second most trusted profession
- High access to patients
- Access to medical records/documentation ability
- Trained in patient communication
- Practicing at the top of our license
- Build rapport
- Create an impact for the good

2017 CPFI Annual Meeting, Colorado Springs

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June 17

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The Spiritual History

Why do a history:
- Understand role religion/spirituality play in patient coping
- Understand religion/spirituality as a source of stress
- Recognize negative effects of religion on patients health
- Know patient’s religion/spirituality beliefs as they relate to medical care
- Be aware of social network supporting religion/spirituality beliefs
- Identify religion/spirituality needs that may impact health

Addressing spiritual needs requires:
- Active listening
- Showing respect for patient beliefs
- Supporting patient beliefs
- Providing appropriate referral
- Providing spiritual care

Spirtual History

SPIRITual History

S. SPIRITUAL BELIEF SYSTEM
What is your formal religious affiliation?
Name or describe your religion’s belief system.

P. PERSONAL SPIRITUALITY
Describe the beliefs and practices of your religion or spiritual system that you personally accept.
Describe the beliefs and practices you do not accept.
Do you accept or believe... (specific tenet of practice)?
What does your spirituality/religion mean to you?
What is the importance of your spirituality/religion in daily life?


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### SPIRITual History

**I. INTEGRATION WITH A SPIRITUAL COMMUNITY**
- Do you belong to any spiritual or religious group or community?
- What is your position or role?
- What is it a source of support? In what ways?
- Does or could this group provide help in dealing with health issues?

**J. FAITH AND BELIEF**
- Do you consider yourself spiritual or religious?
- Do you have spiritual beliefs that help you cope with stress?
- What gives your life meaning?

**F. HOPE QUESTIONS**
- What sustains you and keeps you going?
- Do some people, their religious or spiritual beliefs act as a source of comfort and strength in dealing with life's ups and downs; is this true for you?
- What are your sources of hope, strength, peace, love and connection?

**The HOPE questions**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>H. SOURCES OF HOPE, MEANING, COMFORT, STRENGTH, PEACE, LOVE AND CONNECTION</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>We have been discussing your support systems. I was wondering, what is there in your life that gives you internal support? Is it a source of comfort? In what ways? It does or could this group provide help in dealing with health issues?</td>
</tr>
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</table>

**The HOPE questions**

<table>
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<th>O. ORGANIZED RELIGION</th>
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<tr>
<td>Do you consider yourself part of an organized religion?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Why is it so important to you?</td>
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<tr>
<td>What aspects of your religion are helpful and not so helpful to you?</td>
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<tr>
<td>Are you part of a religious or spiritual community? Does it help you?</td>
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**FICA: Taking a spiritual history**

<table>
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**SPIRITual History**

**R. RITUALIZED PRACTICES AND RESTRICTIONS**
- Are there specific practices that you carry out as part of your religion/spirituality (prayer, meditation, etc.)?
- Are there certain lifestyle activities or practices that your religion/spirituality encourages or forbids? Do you comply?
- What significant do these practices and restrictions have to you?
- Are there specific elements of medical care that you forbid on the basis of religious/spiritual grounds?

**A. ADDRESS IN CARE**
- Are you a part of a spiritual or religious community? |
- Is there a group of people you really love or who are important to you?
- How do your beliefs affect the kind of medical care you would like me to provide over the next few days/weeks/months?

**FICA: Taking a spiritual history**

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<th>A. ADDRESS IN CARE</th>
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<tr>
<td>Are there any barriers to our relationship based on religious or spiritual issues?</td>
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<tr>
<td>Are there any specific practices or restrictions that you have that you wish to forgo or have withdrawn because of your faith?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>As a doctor, is there anything that I can do to help you access the resources that usually help you?</td>
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<tr>
<td>Are you worried about any conflicts between your beliefs and your medical situation/care/decisions?</td>
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<tr>
<td>Would it be helpful for you to speak to a clinical chaplain/community spiritual leader?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Are there any specific practices or restrictions that you currently observe?</td>
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<tr>
<td>Has being sick (or your current situation) affected your ability to do the things that usually help you spiritually? Does this affect your relationship with your family, friends, and doctors?</td>
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**T. TERMINAL EVENTS PLANNING**
- As we plan for your care near the end of life, how does your faith impact on your decisions?
- Are there specific practices or restrictions that you would like me to keep in mind as I care for you?
# The Role of Spiritual History in Patient Care

## Faith: spiritual history-taking made easy

### F: FAITH / SPIRITUAL BELIEFS
- Do you have any particular faith, religious or spiritual beliefs?
- What gives your life meaning?
- What helps you cope in times of stress or illness?

### A: APPLICATION
- In what ways do you apply your faith in your daily life?
- Do you belong to a particular church or community?
- Is prayer or meditation important to you?

### I: INFLUENCE / IMPORTANCE OF FAITH IN LIFE, IN THIS ILLNESS AND ON HEALTH CARE DECISIONS.
- How do your faith and spiritual beliefs influence your life? Are they important to you?
- How do your faith and spiritual beliefs influence you in this illness? Have they altered your attitude or behavior?
- Has this illness influenced your faith?
- Do your beliefs influence or affect your health care decisions that would be helpful for me to know about?

### T: TALK / TERMINAL EVENTS PLANNING
- Do you have anyone you can trust to talk to about spiritual or religious issues?
- Do you have any specific requests if you were to become terminally ill? (E.g. terminal care options, living will or end of life requests.)

### H: HELP
- Is there any way I or another member of the health care team can help you?
- Do you require assistance or help with prayer? (E.g. facilities or accompaniment)
- Would you like to speak to a chaplain?
- Would you like to discuss spiritual issues or your beliefs with your doctor?

## Joint Commission guidance

- Who or what provides the patient with strength and hope?
- Does the patient use prayer in their life?
- How does the patient express their spirituality?
- What type of spiritual/religious support does the patient desire?
- What is the name of the patient’s clergy, ministers, chaplains, pastor, rabbi?
- What does suffering mean to the patient?
- What does dying mean to the patient?
- What are the patient’s spiritual goals?
- Is there a role of church/synagogue in the patient’s life?
- How does the patient keep going day after day?
- What helps the patient get through this health care experience?
- How has illness affected the patient and his/her family?

## GOD:

### G: GOD
- May I ask your faith background?
- Do you have a spiritual or faith preference?
- Is God, spirituality, religion or spiritual faith important to you now, or has it been in the past?

### D: DO
- What can I do to assist you in incorporating your spiritual or religious faith into your medical care?
- Or, is there anything I can do to encourage your faith?
- May I pray with or for you?

### LORD METHOD

- Love: Has this illness caused you to question God’s love for you?
- Abandon: Has this illness led you to believe God has abandoned you? Have you asked God to heal you and He hasn’t?
- Punish: Do you believe God or the devil is punishing you for something?
Single question
Do you have any spiritual needs or concerns related to your health?
Non-religious: ask how they are coping, what gives life meaning, social support

Practice
Pair up, use one of the provided histories or make up your own. Start sharing!
Goal is to complete the history in 6 minutes or less
Take 4 minutes to discuss how it went, areas to improve
Meet back in 20-25 minutes

You have just experienced a “Spiritual History”
Which method did you use?
What did you like about this method?
What would you change?
Are you comfortable asking these questions?
Are you comfortable sharing your responses if asked?

More reflections
Reflect back on the last time your health history was taken
◦ Were these questions asked?
◦ Would you have liked them asked?
◦ How did you feel during the history taking?

Reflect on a time when you were ill or hospitalized
◦ Did your faith or spirituality make a difference?
◦ Did your religious group/Church make a difference in your recovery?
◦ Did the religion of your provider make a difference?

Praying for/with our patients

Everything has its time
“...To every thing there is a season, and a time to every purpose under the heaven:.... A time to rend, and a time to sew; a time to keep silence, and a time to speak,“
Ecclesiastes 3:1 and 7, King James Version (KJV)
Questions

You are a piece of the puzzle of someone else's life. You may never know where you fit, but others will fill the holes in their lives with pieces of you.

— Bonnie Arison