



Minority Fellowship Program

The National Board for Certified Counselors

Innovations in Counseling: Working with Minority Populations- Part 5 Session 1: Spirituality in Clinical Practice

Webinar Follow-up Question and Answer Session with Dr. Kathy A. Gainor.

1. Question from Andrea Westkamp

Any resources on Psychosynthesis?

Answer

Yes. I located two resources on the Internet that appear to be quite legitimate:

- (a) The Synthesis Center located in Amherst, Massachusetts
(<https://www.synthesiscenter.org/index.htm>)
- (b) Institute of Psychosynthesis located in London, England
(<https://www.psychosynthesis.org/>)

2. Question from Giselle Perez

In therapy, do you explore spirituality with the patient, following your own initiative? or it's best to wait for clues from the patient?

Answer

It really depends. We can let clients know that we are open to such discussions via our initial paperwork (by including a question about religion and spirituality) or making it a part of our initial or intake interview. The FICA, the Supplementary Modules of the DSM Cultural Formulation, Koenig's (2013) book, and Young and Cashwell's textbook contain some useful ways to broach religion/spirituality with clients. That said, if a client does not bring it up and I sense from my clinical intuition that it may be an area of concern or source of support, I ask.

3. Question from Ida Duplechin

Does this study also include PWD (physical)?

Answer

I think you are referring to Koenig, King, and Carson's (2012) handbook, which includes reviews of over 1800 research studies on religion and health that had been published in 2000 – 2009. The first edition (Koenig, McCullough, & Larson, 2001) includes information about over 1200 studies published from the 1800s to 2000. Some of the studies reviewed in the second edition include people with physical disabilities (e.g., Chapter 24 is focused on physical disability).

4. Question from Irma Ross

I find it very challenging to address spirituality with clients who have no belief in a higher power. Thoughts from you about how to do this?

Answer

I would be interested in knowing more about what is challenging for you. Identifying what this challenge is about for you as part of your self-awareness process may help you to know what you can do. In general, I would say that no belief in a higher power is simply another part of a particular client's values and beliefs



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that should be respected and honored. Remember, many Buddhists do not believe in a higher power and yet the practice of mindfulness is a powerful tool for many people, Buddhists and non-Buddhists alike.

5. Question from Irma Ross

How do you work with clients who have no religious nor spiritual beliefs?

Answer

I would repeat much of what I said in my response to question #5 above. In this case, I would be interested in knowing what beliefs are psychologically supportive to the client. I would also wonder if having no religious or spiritual beliefs pose any conflicts for such clients in family or social situations. If so, then our work together could be around how to cope with such differences and/or conflicts without necessarily having to change one's belief systems.

6. Question from Jennifer Chiamonti

Is FICA free?

Answer

Yes. See <http://smhs.gwu.edu/qwish/clinical/fica>.

7. Question from Jennifer Chiamonti

Is the FICA assessment free?

Answer

Please refer to question #7.

8. Question from Merida Valera

How do you guide a 23 year old female that has lost her mother and stopped believing in God since she was eight years old?

Answer

It would depend upon the presenting concern and the client's goals for counseling/psychotherapy. Is this young woman wanting to believe in God but is angry with God for "taking away" her mother? Is her anger causing her to be unable to move through her grieving process such that she still feels like she is that 8-year-old? Is her lack of belief affecting her life in any way? If so, how and is this significantly distressing to her? I would suggest consulting with a spiritually competent clinician so that you could share additional details regarding the situation.

9. Question from Peter Chirinos

Are there any out gay African American spiritual leaders ... more specifically Jehovah's Witness or Mormon leaders? AA or Caucasian spiritual leaders?

Answer

"Out" is a relative term. Someone who is out to me may not be out to the world or would wish to be outted



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to the world via this forum. Please contact me at gainork@mail.montclair.edu and I may be able to locate some names for you.

10. Question from Sharon Ipes

Who is the author of the sage & its wisdom walk?

Answer

Please refer to question #7.

11. Question from Carol Fournier

Can you please send out your bibliographical references to participants? It was difficult to catch the names and titles of your last slide. Thank you.

Answer

References (in order presented)

Koenig, H. G., King, D. E., & Carson, V. B. (2012). *Handbook of religion and health* (2nd ed.). New York, NY: Oxford University.

Young, J. S., & Cashwell, C. S. (2011). Integrating spirituality and religion in counseling: A introduction. In C. S. Cashwell & J. S. Young (Eds.), *Integrating spirituality and religion in counseling: A guide to competent practice* (2nd ed.). Alexandria, VA: American Counseling Association.

Hagedorn, W. B., & Moorhead, H. J. H. (2011). Counselor self-awareness: Exploring attitudes, beliefs, and values. In C. S. Cashwell & J. S. Young (Eds.), *Integrating spirituality and religion in counseling: A guide to competent practice* (2nd ed.). Alexandria, VA: American Counseling Association.

Bennet, S. (2007). *Wisdom walk: Nine practices for creating peace and balance from the world's spiritual traditions*. Novato, CA: New World Library.

Hodge, D. R. (2005). Developing a spiritual assessment toolbox: A discussion of the strengths and limitations of five different assessment methods. *Health & Social Work, 30*, 314-323.

Young, J. S., & Cashwell, C. S. (2011). Where do we go from here? In C. S. Cashwell & J. S. Young (Eds.), *Integrating spirituality and religion in counseling: A guide to competent practice* (2nd ed.). Alexandria, VA: American Counseling Association.

Additional Recommended Resources

Aten, J. D., O'Grady, K. A., & Worthington, Jr., E. L. (Eds.). (2012). *The psychology of religion and spirituality for clinicians: Using research in your practice*. New York, NY: Routledge.

Koenig, H. G. (2013). *Spirituality in patient care: Why, how, when, and what* (3rd ed.). West Conshohocken, PA: Templeton Press.

Moodley, R., & West, W. (Eds.). (2005). *Integrating traditional healing practices into counseling and psychotherapy*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.

Counseling and Values

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