

# Religiosity, Spirituality and Mental Health

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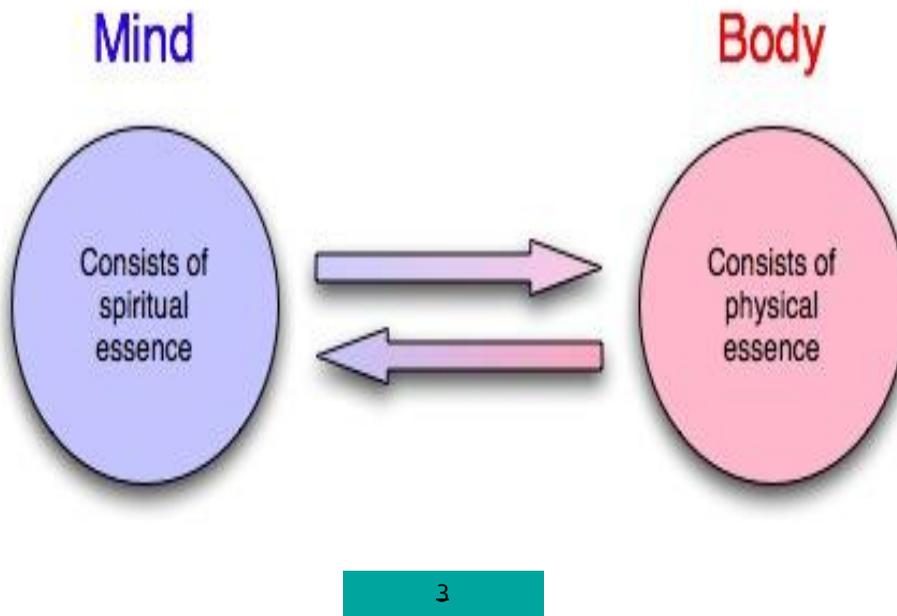


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## Setting the context

Social Work

- Complex set of ideas in contemporary society
- The 'Mind – Body' dualism
- Relationship between religion and science
- How we construe mental (ill) health
- Technological revolution



## Religiosity

Social Work

“Behaviours and beliefs associated with organised religion.”

( Good et al, 2017; Zinnbauer, et al, 1997)

- Religious beliefs
- Religious practice
- Religious experience
- Knowledge
- Effects or consequences

## Spirituality

Social Work

- Belief and obedience to a powerful/supernatural force
- Involves the ways in which people fulfil what they hold to be the purpose of their lives
- Includes a search for meaning of life
- Entails a sense of connectedness to the universe

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## Spirituality & Religiosity as protective to mental health

Social Work

- Helps to cope with adversity
- Access to social support
- Religious people live longer
- Religious involvement associated with pro-social values
- Protective factor against emotional distress

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## Spirituality & Religiosity as risk to mental health

Social Work

- Lack of spirituality can lead to emotional distress
- Loss of interest in religious activity can be a sign of depression
- Can lead to suicidal ideation

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## Spirituality & Religiosity as risk to mental health

Social Work

- Denial of symptoms
- Demonisation of symptoms
- Misconstruing religious states and experiences:

“when I speak to God, they say I pray,  
when I say I heard the voice of God,  
they say I am mentally ill”

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## Spirituality & Religiosity as risk to mental health

Social Work

- Distortion of normative religious beliefs
- Stressful events can transform normative religious beliefs into excessive preoccupations
- Encourage physical abuse

“withhold not correction from the child”

(Proverbs 23 verse 13)

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## Psychiatry, Religion and Spirituality

Social Work

- 73% report no religious affiliation
- 28% belief in God
- 31% asked about religious practices

Whilst,

- A significant number of service users report a belief in God

(Loewenthal, 2015)

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## Meeting spiritual needs

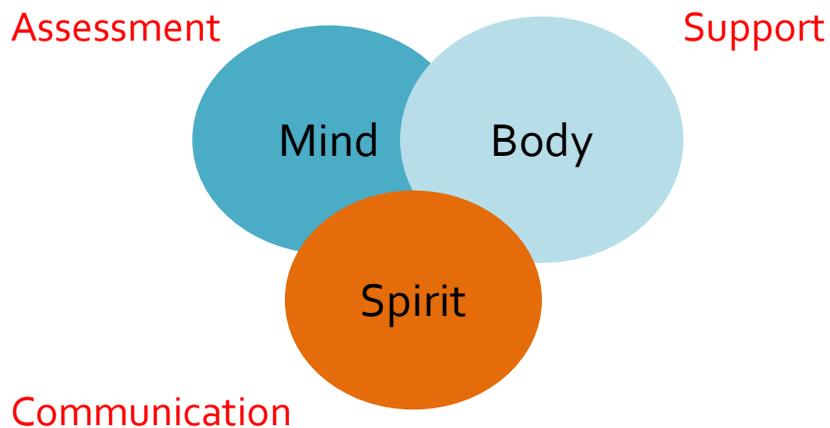
Social Work

- What does spirituality mean for the person?
- What role does spirituality and religion play in their life?
- Would they like to talk to someone about spiritual or religious matters?

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## Spiritual Care

Social Work



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## Conclusion

Social Work

“Religiosity and Spirituality are important dimensions in the lives of individuals and should not be ignored”



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## References

Social Work

Delgado, C. (2007) Meeting Clients' Spiritual Needs. *Nursing Clinics of North America*, 42 (2) 279 – 293

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