Chapter 1

Spirituality: An Inevitable Component of Psycho-Social Care

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ABSTRACT

The World Health Organization (WHO), in its definition of health, considers spirituality as an inseparable segment of health. Spiritualism exists in every human being—it is individualized. Spirituality attracted the attention of mental health professionals despite the advancement in science, technology, quality of life, medical care. Healthcare research conducted in developed countries demonstrated the efficacy of spirituality in medical and psychosocial care and promoting quality of life. There is a significance of integrating spirituality with psychosocial care. Various empirical studies are suggestive of the positive impact of spirituality in the holistic management of various disorders: depression, anxiety disorder, substance abuse, cancer, and AIDS. In the backdrop of the above, the chapter addresses the spirituality of the client and the role of religion in the implementation of psychosocial care plans. This chapter also sheds some light upon the integration of spirituality in nursing care, rehabilitation, and the management of trauma-related disorders.

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INTRODUCTION

Spirituality and religiosity maintained its space even in the modernized world despite advancements in science, technology, education, medical technology, and industrialization, and especially in health and mental health care, and it holds prime importance (Chattopadhyay, 2005). With the advancement of time, the importance of religiosity and spirituality in health care is increasing but in distinct ways. A robust body of literature has documented the relationship between health and spirituality (VanderWeele, Balboni, & Koh, 2017). Globalization, cultural pluralism, social and cultural development, and institutionalization of spirituality have contributed significantly to the resurgence of spirituality (Vanderveer, 2009).

Religiosity and Mental Health

Historically, it has been observed that extreme form of religious practices in irrational ways causes superstitions, and those are harmful to physical and psychological health. While religious beliefs emphasize positive emotions such as peace, forgiveness, and caring for each other. These positive aspects of religions promote quality and quality of life. This positive aspect of religiosity can be seen around the world. In such a way, religiosity enhances positive emotion, generosity, gratitude, kindness, compassion, and hope. And these positive emotions attached to religions are closely associated with positive outcomes of mental health (Falb & Pargament, 2014). This good outcome of mental health is achieved through the social aspect of religiosity. Because religions enhance social network, social support, and connectivity of people in community, which further lead to reciprocation of emotional and instrumental help. This emotional reciprocation is based on win-win approach, giver, and receiver; both are benefitted. The emotional exchange causes emotional fulfillment and instills a sense of personal worth, feeling loved and valued by God or a Higher Power. When a person thinks that he/she is loved and God is taking care of him/her, the person develops the emotional comfort, this psychological comfort help in elevating the coping during the time of distress and diseases (Miller & Thoresen, 2003).

What is Spirituality?

Spirituality is an evitable component of human existence; it relates to something higher power. Human being offered the diverse nomenclature to this higher power. Despite the variety of classification, our relationship with divine power instill the power of life, sense of stability, power, purpose, and a direction (Bullis, 1996; Schuster & Ashburn, 1992). According to the doctrine of various religions, the yardstick of spiritual development is different, and different time levels are decided to achieve
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