Integrating Spirituality into Practice within the Context of Addiction Counseling
Agenda

12:30-1:00 Registration
1:00-1:15 Ice breaker & Intro
1:15-2:00 A God of our understanding
2:00-2:15 Break
2:15-3:00 Clinical Considerations
3:00-4:00 A Spiritual Perspective: Body, Soul & Spirit
4:00-4:15 Wrap up & Evaluations
Ice-breaker

– Introduce yourself: “name & department”

– What do you hope to learn today?

– What does spirituality mean to you?
What is Spirituality???

(The concept of spirituality means different things to different people)
THE TWELVE STEPS OF ALCOHOLICS ANONYMOUS

1. We admitted we were powerless over alcohol—that our lives had become unmanageable.
2. Came to believe that a Power greater than ourselves could restore us to sanity.
3. Made a decision to turn our will and our lives over to the care of God as we understood Him.
4. Made a searching and fearless moral inventory of ourselves.
5. Admitted to God, to ourselves, and to another human being the exact nature of our wrongs.
6. Were entirely ready to have God remove all these defects of character.
7. Humbly asked Him to remove our shortcomings.
8. Made a list of all persons we had harmed, and became willing to make amends to them all.
9. Made direct amends to such people wherever possible, except when to do so would injure them or others.
10. Continued to take personal inventory and when we were wrong promptly admitted it.
11. Sought through prayer and meditation to improve our conscious contact with God as we understood Him, praying only for knowledge of His will for us and the power to carry that out.
12. Having had a spiritual awakening as the result of these steps, we tried to carry this message to alcoholics, and to practice these principles in all our affairs.
The God of My Understanding

– Step 2 of the 12 Steps: Came to believe that a Power greater than ourselves could restore us to sanity.

– #2 of the 12 Traditions: “For our group purpose there is but one ultimate authority - a loving God as He may express Himself in our group conscience.
Video: Brand Power
– The Basic Text of the A.A. society. The Bible of A.A.
– Broken up into sections:
  – The first section describes the A.A. recovery program
  – The second section begins with Dr. Bob’s story. The section then splits into sections of personal stories, from many anonymous sufferers of the addiction.
  – The third section is the appendices, which includes the 12 Traditions and information on how to get in touch with A.A.
Chapter 4 within the Big Book seeks to help those who struggle with *The God thing*.

- Begins by defining alcoholism: “If, when you honestly want to, you find you cannot quit entirely, or if, when drinking, you have little control over the amount you take, you are probably alcoholic.”

- It then suggests: “If that be the case, you may be suffering from an illness which only a *spiritual experience* will conquer.”
– This is where many “put on the brakes” and close their mind to working this type of program. The word *spiritual* can be a deal breaker for many.

– The reading goes on to give options: “To be doomed to an alcoholic death or to live on a spiritual basis---not always easy alternatives to face.”

– Our clients come to us sometimes, with very strong opinions about religion, spirituality, God…etc. These opinions can be very negative, based on their past experiences.
We Agnostics (cont.)

– Many times our clients will claim that their own personal moral compass is what has guided them thus far.

– The reading expounds: “But we found that such codes and philosophies did not save us, no matter how much we tried. We could wish to be moral, we could wish to be philosophically comforted, in fact, we could will these things with all our might, but the needed power wasn't there. Our human resources, as marshalled by the will, were not sufficient; they failed utterly. Lack of power, that was our dilemma. We had to find a power by which we could live, and it had to be A Power Greater Than Ourselves. Obviously. But where and how were we to find this Power?”
The reading suggests taking an open minded approach. That by laying aside prejudices and/or preconceptions and having a willingness to listen and surrender is all that is necessary to start. The reading addressed Step Two in the form of a question: “Do I now believe, or am I even willing to believe, that there is a Power greater than myself?”
The reading then bridges our willingness to an idea: “As soon as we admitted the possible existence of a Creative Intelligence, a Spirit of the Universe underlying the totality of things, we began to be possessed of a new sense of power and direction, provided we took other simple steps….To us the realm of Spirit is broad, roomy, all inclusive; never exclusive or forbidding to those who earnestly seek. It is open, we believe, to all men.”
We Agnostics (cont.)

– We as clinicians can suggest to our clients that they examine what being spiritual could mean for them. The reading proposes: “Do not let any prejudice you may have against spiritual terms deter you from honestly asking yourself what they mean to you.”

Alcoholics Anonymous (1991)
Video: Higher Power

https://youtu.be/Q0Ze2Lr7czs?t=10m30s
What are Your Beliefs?

– Although you do not need to have the same beliefs as your client, it would benefit the counseling relationship to be comfortable exploring this topic in session.

– Awareness of our own biases, beliefs, values and expectations is key.

– This ensures a cohesive, therapeutic relationship.
Spiritual Inquiry

– What was your spiritual/religious background growing up? How has this impacted your worldview?

– What are some of your concerns about addressing spiritual/religious content in session?

– What, if any conflicts have you experienced when dealing with spiritual/religious content?
Considerations for Spirituality in Counseling

– Kristy Blodgett, LPCC
Spirituality vs. Religion

– “Spirituality is the innate human connection to something greater than the self. It is universal and personal, it’s experiential and in the moment.”

– “Religion is a particular structure, rituals, and beliefs that are created in response to the spiritual dimension of life. It provides continuity, accumulated wisdom, morals and ethics.”

(Goldberg, 2013)
Spirituality as an Adjunct

- Focusing on forgiveness and spirituality have shown to be effective coping strategies in reducing the risk of relapse through reducing stress and managing cravings.
- Spirituality has a positive impact on personal growth and improving affect.
- Studies have shown that increasing spiritual awareness may help one to develop a sense of purpose, increase hope and decrease the development of psychological co-morbidity.
- Enhance spirituality alongside specific treatment for PTSD. (Langman & Chung, 2013)
Spirituality within Individual Counseling

- A study examined beliefs about the appropriateness of discussing religious, or spiritual concerns in counseling: Clients believed that religious concerns were appropriate and had a preference for discussion within the counseling session.
  (Rose, Westefeld, Ansley, 2001)

- A study examined psychotherapists, who didn’t identify as, “religious,” however, 82% viewed religion as beneficial and 7% viewed religion as harmful to mental health in counseling.
  (Delaney, Miller, Bisono, 2013)
Statistics for Spirituality within Individual Counseling

74 Clients Surveyed at various mental health settings in the Midwest:

- 63% believed it was appropriate to discuss spiritual/religious concerns during individual therapy.
- 55% indicated they would like to discuss spiritual/religious concerns during individual therapy.
- 18% indicated a preference for not discussing spiritual/religious topics for various reasons (e.g., not being spiritual/religious, preference to discuss concerns with a spiritual leader).

(Post, 2010)

5,472 college students were surveyed throughout the United States:

- 26% discussed a moderate amount of distress related to religious/spiritual problems.
- 19% sought help from a university, or counseling center—Which emphasizes the importance of exploring religious/spiritual concerns because some clients enter therapy with a presenting concern related to religious/spiritual issues.
Integrating Spirituality with Trauma and Addiction

- Higher incidence of Posttraumatic stress disorder – 15% to 55%
- Increased levels of addiction and other psychological difficulties (e.g., anxiety, depression) and physical health problems.
- Trauma often results in a hypersensitivity, affecting other neurological/psychological pathways, which contributes to the development of pathology. The body memorizes the impact of the traumatic event.
- Spirituality in conjunction with trauma-specific interventions may work to resolve distress and buffer against further development of psychopathology.
- With addiction, concerns for spirituality, forgiveness and guilt.

(Langman & Chung, 2013)
Spirituality within Group Counseling

- Appropriateness of discussing religious concerns and the use of religious/spiritual interventions within the group setting.
- Client preferences regarding the discussion of religion/spiritual issues.
- Variables which may impact client beliefs with regard to appropriateness of the topic of spirituality.
- Variables which may predict client preferences for discussing religious/spiritual issues.

(Post, 2010)
Statistics for Spirituality within Group Counseling

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Percentage</th>
<th>Description</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>94%</td>
<td>Americans believe in God, or a higher power</td>
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<tr>
<td>89%</td>
<td>State an allegiance to a specific religious faith</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>59%</td>
<td>Indicate their spirituality is important to them</td>
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(Post, 2010)

- Surveyed Data from recent publications within the United States indicate a trend regarding religion and spirituality as important aspects of multiculturalism.

- Information does not indicate that persons entering therapy want to discuss religion/spiritual concerns with their therapist.
Clinical Implications

- Spirituality in relation to physical/mental health and substance abuse - the following have received the most attention, empirical evidence and support, per client report:
  - Health behaviors – some behaviors are prohibited by certain denominations, which promote better health.
  - Social support – higher levels of religious participation = higher levels of support, larger support network, more help, increased satisfaction with social support
  - Coherence hypothesis – has received the most attention. It provides a sense of meaning/purpose for one’s place in the universe, purpose for life and the courage to endure suffering and find meaning in suffering.
Clinical Implications (Con’t.)

- Interventions have been utilized in the treatment of anxiety, depression, and to enhance psychological well-being.

- Spiritual interventions have been utilized along with Mindfulness-based therapies for improving anxiety/mood disorders, Dialectical Behavioral Therapy for treating BPD/eating disorders/Substance Use Disorders/depression, Acceptance and Commitment Therapy for groups with numerous difficulties, as well as, spiritually informed Cognitive Behavioral Therapy for clients who have identified spirituality/religion to be important.

(George, et. al. 2000)
Clinical Implications (Con’t.)

- Therapists need diverse spiritual beliefs, values and phenomena as part of the counselor preparation process.
- Empathy is needed in assisting clients with analyzing spiritual concerns: recognizing needs, deficit, search for reason/explanations, ask questions, admit wisdom/ignorance, express doubts, cultivate assertive self-expression/self-awareness, improve coping skills and theological understanding.
- Explore ideas/alternatives to problem-solving.
- Allow clients to develop autonomy regarding spiritual/religious beliefs and thoughts.
Clinical Implications (Con’t.)

- Encourage openness and acceptance of others regarding religious/spiritual beliefs.
- Promote an environment which encourages self-examination, experiencing, researching, interpreting, clarifying and evaluating. Allow client to accept personal responsibility for choices/actions.
- Emphasize freedom and responsibility of choice in order to allow for meaningful expression.
- Utilize reality testing to help client develop fresh perceptions of reality, re-organizing/re-developing, redefining their personal experience.

(Carter, 2011)
The Effects of SRBP’s (Spiritual and Religious Based Practices)

Positive effects on psychological well-being

- Contributes to identity development/worldview, helps one cope with difficulties and avoid risky scenarios.
- Provides meaning and support during stressful times. Positive religious coping has shown to contribute to successful stress management. Over 80% of mentally ill patients reported using religion to cope.
- Spirituality is a core component of recovery from Substance Abuse.

Negative effects on psychological well-being

- Higher mortality/morbidity
- Negative spiritual coping can have an impact on mental and emotional health
- Pathological guilt, or moral issues, and Hyperreligiosity are characteristics of OCD and other psychotic disorders
- Example: 9 y.o. male client
The Effects of SRBP’s (Con’t.)

Positive effects on psychological well-being
- Increased sense of meaning, purpose, resilience, satisfaction and happiness.
- Empirically, has demonstrated beneficial relationships between SRBP’s and psychological health.
(Vieten, Scammell, 2015)

Negative effects on psychological well-being
- Spiritual Bypassing – implies the unhealthy misuse of spiritual practices/terminology to avoid dealing with important psychological issues, relationship problems
- Religious/spiritual problems themselves may require informed interventions
Multicultural Competency

- Importance of discerning spirituality vs. religion.
- Gauge the atmosphere prior to discussion during individual/group counseling – level of client commitment to religion/spirituality.
- Sensitivity/cultural awareness – spirituality may be a private matter.
- Willingness to discuss religious/spiritual concerns with clients and to learn the boundaries of discussion.
- Gain competence to address religious/spiritual diversity – seek out CEU’s and/or self-directed study.
- Referral – spiritual leader within one’s community.

(Post, 2010)
C.2.a. Boundaries of Competence. Counselors practice only within the boundaries of their competence, based on their education, training, supervised experience, state and national professional credentials, and appropriate professional experience. Whereas multicultural counseling competency is required across all counseling specialties, counselors gain knowledge, personal awareness, sensitivity, dispositions, and skills pertinent to being a culturally competent counselor in working with a diverse client population.

American Counseling Association (2014)
Ethical Considerations

- Spirituality/Religion – beliefs vary between cultures. **Jehovah’s Witness** – may seek counseling as long as it doesn’t interfere with their beliefs or scripture, attempts to handle mental health within the family, or church are encouraged, initially. **Christian Scientists** – God is everything, evil does not exist, sickness “is a false belief, or error of moral thought.” They believe that physical/mental health problems are resolved through prayer alone. They often utilize a trained prayer healer. In recent years, church leaders have loosened restrictions which forbid followers to seek help from outside providers.
Ethical Considerations (Con’t.)

- Ethical Dilemmas (e.g., mandated reporting - protecting individuals from abuse/neglect)
- Balancing evidence-based techniques and theoretical approach while honoring moral principles of autonomy, justice, beneficence, nonmaleficence and fidelity.

(Jared Rose, University of Toledo)
Case Study

- Amber is an independently Licensed Professional Clinical Counselor working in the state of Ohio at an addictions treatment facility. Amber has been seeing a client, Linsey, for the past 6 months for opioid addiction and symptoms of depression. Linsey, her husband, Ron and their three children, are Christian Scientists. Linsey’s church encourages healing through prayer alone, but her symptoms have not improved. Linsey has therefore sought mental health services as an adjunct to faith healing. Her church leaders are aware of her decision to see a professional counselor although they continue to monitor Linsey’s progress.
Case Study (Con’t.)

Amber has done research to better understand Linsey’s religious beliefs and has open dialogue with Linsey, who continues to educate Amber regarding beliefs. During the last session Linsey was upset, her 5-year old daughter, Abby came down with an upper respiratory infection. Linsey firmly believes that prayer can heal Abby, although she commented to Amber, “it hurts to see my poor baby suffer.” While maintaining respect for Linsey’s religious beliefs, Amber becomes concerned about Abby’s wellbeing. Linsey’s description of symptoms sound exactly like what Amber’s daughter went through when she had pneumonia.
Amber expresses to Linsey that she is not a physician, but that the symptoms sound like it may be something serious. She explores with Linsey her willingness to take Abby to a physician. Linsey insists that she and Ron have already prayed for Abby and that she is “healed by God.” Linsey indicated that she is not willing to take Abby to a physician, because a physician is not necessary. After the session, Amber feels uncertain of what the next steps should be.
The ACA has a model to guide ethical decision making that consists of seven steps:
1. Identify the problem.
2. Apply the ACA Code of Ethics.
3. Determine the nature and dimensions of the dilemma.
4. Generate potential courses of action.
5. Consider the potential consequences of all options.
6. Choose a course of action.
7. Evaluate the selected course of action.
SPIRITUAL TREATMENT PLAN

Identify your spiritual resources
List what helps you move from:

Vulnerability -> Resilience ________________________________
Helplessness -> Agency ________________________________
Despair -> Hope ________________________________
Emptiness -> Purpose ________________________________
Isolation -> Communion ________________________________
Resentment -> Gratitude ________________________________
Sorrow -> Joy ________________________________

Threefold Path: In/Out/Up
Spiritual healing involves nurturing a relationship with yourself, others, and the Divine. Write the practices that support you in each of these areas below.

Reaching In (Self)

Reaching Out (Others)

Reaching Up (Higher Power)

The Plan
Choose three activities that you will commit to trying for a month:
1)
2)
3)
Spirituality is an essential element of human experiences. It represents the part of us that:

- Searches for meaning
- Seeks out transcendent experiences
- Recognizes a force exists beyond the material world

Spirituality can also:

- Encourage hope and purpose
- Help foster positive emotions, coping skills, needed in recovery
Spiritual Dimensions

Spiritual dimension can be described and interpreted as an individual’s search for:

– Purpose
– Fulfillment in life
– Hope/will to live
– Belief and faith

Exploration of the spiritual dimension is important in regards to:

– the attainment of an overall sense of health & well-being
– quality of life
The Battle in the Mind

The mind is the battlefield on which two diametrically opposed forces contends; the struggle between good or bad, right or wrong. This battle involves a fight for control of the mind (cognitive), the heart (emotion) and will (decisions) of individuals. Therefore it is crucial to spiritual growth that an individual is able to discern (detect) the three different elements that make up this very human experience.
The Battle of the Body, Soul, & Spirit

There is also battle that is at war within the body, soul, and spirit of an individual that is in direct opposition to an individual who desires to build a relationship with God. This conflict strategically attempts mentally, emotionally, & spiritually deplete an individual.
The Battle of the Body, Soul, & Spirit

A more holistic approach to addiction treatment is based upon the knowledge that sustained recovery occurs when a person’s physical, emotional, mental, and spiritual health are addressed. The body, mind, soul and spirit are connected and disease affecting one of these areas must affect all other parts of the person.
Body
(world-awareness)

- Third and outermost segment of a person’s being that comes in contact with matter
- Contact is made through the five senses of the body, SIGHT, HEARING, TOUCH, SMELL AND TASTE
- It is through these parts that a person is able to experience the physical world, affecting it and being affected by it.

In my body, I have “world-awareness”. As long as I am alive, I will know when I am hot or cold, if I am sick or well, hungry or full. My body keeps me in touch with what’s going on in my environment.
Soul (self-awareness)

- The second segment of an individual’s threefold being, the medium which stands between, connecting the spirit and body.

- The part of an individual which enables him/her to be conscious of his or her own existence.
Faculties of the Soul

1. INTELLECT (wisdom, knowledge, and understanding)
2. HEART (affections, emotions and desires)
3. WILL (decision, choice, determination)

The faculties of the soul are responsible for a person’s personality. The soul is the busiest part of the human condition. It is in my soul that I store all of my memories, emotions, feelings, affections, ATTITUDES, and appetites.

But don’t get too hung up on hiding behind intellect because it is very much possible to be intellectually proficient and emotionally deficient (i.e. I can be intellectually smart or prosperous and suicidal or depressed at the same time).

It is in my soul that I have “self-awareness”
Faculties of the Soul

Just as the physical body will become physically ill because it has been illegally invaded by something foreign (i.e. common cold) that has diminished its ability to function properly, so to the soul can become infected as a result of:

- events, circumstances, and experiences that occur over a lifetime
- fixated on the past (stuck in a rut)
Faculties of the Soul

The soul is where scars are carried:

- Remembers what happened as a kid.
- It’s the part that holds on to the traumas, grief, abuses, disappointments

If healing does not take place in the soul from encounters that have had a negative impacted in life…a “soulish” sickness can develop that will definitely affect your ability to:

- make good, sound decisions
- demonstrate good judgment
- and function in life effectively

The soul itself is not neutral and can play a big part in hindering an individual from seeking the guidance of a Higher Power and allowing that power access and control of their life.
Faculties of the Soul

Please understand…if at any time your head (decisions/judgments) disobeys your body…if your thinking is dragging your body into a situation that it does not want to be in…you are definitely sick and in need of internal healing that can only best be treated with assistance, guidance and spiritual insight and awareness of a Power that is:

1. Greater than you
2. Knows who you are, where you are, and the exact location to the infection in your soul
It is in the soul where “hope” finds a place to live. If you have lost hope…you’ve lost it all. Faith is the substance of tangible things “hoped” for…so if you have lost all hope; your faith has nothing to do, which in retrospect, will continue to reconfirm the grim images and thoughts that are already embedded in the soul (mind).
Faculties of the Soul

The eye-gate is the primary entrance to the soul.

- Eyes are the projector
- Heart is the screen
- Mind is the computer or (memory)

The eyes project images ingrained upon the heart, which are then stored in the mind.
SPIRIT
(God-awareness)

An individual’s spirit is the first and innermost segment of an individual, that which was formed by God for God. The spirit is the most distinguished and morally exalted part of the human condition, that which joins him/her to God.
SPIRIT

The three main elements of an individual’s spirit are:

– CONSCIENCE
– INTUITION
– COMMUNION

These operate independent of the soul and body, enabling an individual to have fellowship with his/her Higher Power. It is in the spirit that we have “God-awareness”.

"God-awareness".
The **Conscience** convicts of wrong doing or reveals guilt. This is not accomplished by the influence of the soul or through information stored in the mind but rather by spontaneous direct judgment. The conviction experienced in the conscience is independent and direct. If an individual should do wrong it will immediately raise its voice of accusation and will cause the individual to right a wrong behavior.
Intuition

– Is the **antenna** of the human spirit a means of spiritual reception
– Opposite of the physical senses of the body and intellectual understanding of the soul
– Involves a supernatural sensing without conscious reasoning; knowledge which comes to us instantaneously without any help from the mind, emotion or will

In reality, we really “**know**” through our intuition; our mind merely helps us to understand. The revelations of God and all the movements of the His Spirit are known to the individual who believes in Him through their intuition.
Communion

- Involves **fellowship** and **worship** (devotion and reverence).
- God is not apprehended by our thoughts feelings or intentions; He can only be known directly in our spirits.
- “Our worship of God and His communications with us are directly in the spirit.” They take place in the “inner most being of an individual, not the soul or the outward body.”
- God is not apprehended by an individual’s thoughts or efforts; an individual perceives God intuitively. Likewise God communicates His will to man intuitively, through the individual’s spirit. God desires to renew our minds by His Spirit working through our spirit.
Ruled by Self
- Ruled by self gratification
- Ruled by senses

Ruled by Soul
- Ruled by external/internal stimuli

Ruled by Spirit
- Ruled by desires of God

\[ \text{Self} > \frac{\text{Stuff}}{\text{God}} \]

\[ \text{Stuff} > \frac{\text{Self}}{\text{God}} \]

\[ \text{God} > \text{Everything} \]
– **Realize** I’m not God; I admit that I am powerless to control my tendency to do the wrong thing and that my life is unmanageable. *(Step 1)*
– **Earnestly** believe that God exists, that I matter to Him and that He has the power to help me recover. *(Step 2)*
– **Consciously** choose to commit all my life and will to God’s care and control *(Step 3)*
– **Openly** examine and confess my faults to myself, to God, and to someone I trust. *(Steps 4 and 5)*
– **Voluntarily** submit to any and all changes God wants to make in my life and humbly ask Him to remove my character defects. *(Steps 6 and 7)*
– **Evaluate** all my relationships. Offer forgiveness to those who have hurt me and make amends for harm I’ve done to others when possible, except when to do so would harm them or others. *(Steps 8 and 9)*
– **Reserve** a time with God for self-examination, through prayer and meditation in order to know God and His will for my life and to gain the power to follow His will. *(Steps 10 and 11)*
– **Yield** myself to God to be used to bring this Good News of recovery to others, both by my example and my words. *(Step 12)*

~Rick Warren~
Spirituality

Is NOT the latter to which we climb up to meet God, but the staircase that God uses to come down to us

~Dr. Marcus Cosby~
Video: Music


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