
Spirituality and Healing - The Search for Meaning

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Holistic model of healing

Looking at the human being as consisting of the following dimensions:

- Body
 - Mind
 - Soul
 - Spirit
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What is Spirituality for you?

Aspects of Spirituality

- Connectedness/relatedness
 - Relationship to divine, transcendental, supersensible, invisible
 - Something greater than self
 - Meaning and purpose
 - Existential questions of life/existence
 - Values, ethics
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Spirituality and Religion

Religion -

organised/institutionalised community of faith

Spirituality -

individualised system of belief/values

Known Health Benefits of Spirituality

- Reduced incidence and/or longer survival for
 - Cancer (bowel)
 - Heart disease, hypertension
 - Depression, suicide
- Quicker recovery from major surgery, depression
- Reduced mortality for all causes

Koenig H. et al, Am J Psych 1992; 149:1693-1700

Williams D. et al Soc Sci Med 1991; 32:1257-62

Oxman T. et al Psychosom Med 1995; 57:5-15

Understanding Spirituality – Different Dimensions of Consciousness

- Everyday – normal – default consciousness
 - Expanded consciousness
 - Horizontal Dimension
 - Vertical Dimension
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HORIZONTAL

- Physical, material
 - Intellect, rational
 - Task, goal oriented
 - Outward orientation
 - 'Doing', busyness
 - Past, future
 - Stress, anxiety, fear
 - No alone time
 - The 'more syndrome'
 - Separation: 'I and the world'
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VERTICAL

- Intangible, invisible
 - Imaginative, creative
 - Process, value orient.
 - Inward orientation
 - 'Being' mode
 - Present, mindfulness
 - Inner peace, stillness
 - Alone time essential
 - 'Enoughness'
 - Oneness: 'The world and I are one'
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Spiritual Qualities – Vertical Dimension

- Acceptance
 - Forgiveness
 - Humility
 - Patience
 - Gratitude
 - Compassion
 - Surrender
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Big Imbalance: Horizontal - Vertical

- Western society: increasing imbalance
 - Imbalance = Illness
Restore balance = Healing
 - Conscious effort to re-balance = hard work
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The lack of meaning in life
is a soul sickness
whose full extent and
full import our age
has not yet began to comprehend

Carl Jung

THE HERO'S QUEST

by Joseph Campbell

Common stages:

1. Longing
 2. Search
 3. Struggle
 4. Disillusionment
 5. Home coming
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1. Longing

For fame, wealth, adventure,
justice, love, happiness ...

2. The Search

For something or someone
that will satisfy the longing

3. The Struggle

Gains + losses

Pleasure + pain

Hope + despair

UNRELENTING CHANGE

4. Disillusionment

- CRISIS – hopes, dreams shattered
 - ‘Dark night of the soul’
 - Humbling, grieving
 - Forced break
 - Black hole – crossroad – ‘Crack opens’
 - Reassess life and priorities
 - Choices: re enter struggle or embrace home coming
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5. Home Coming

- Letting go
 - Struggle stops – arrive here and now
 - Opportunity for healing and renewal
 - Finding new identity
 - Finding new purpose and meaning
 - Freedom
 - Authenticity
 - Inner peace
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Where are you at on your journey?

- Do things happen by chance?
 - Illness/accident – bad luck or meaning?
 - What could the illness be telling you?
 - What could the message be?
 - What needs to change?
 - What is the learning opportunity?
 - What is your passion - makes your heart sing
 - What choices do you need to make?
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FREEDOM

LIES IN THE RESPONSE

TO THE

GIVEN
