

# The Role of Spirituality in Recovery



Created & Presented by  
Dr. Gloria Morrow

Hosted by SCRP Conference



# Opening Activity

In your small groups, please choose a song that has spiritual relevance to you and please explain why. Please remember, the group must choose only ONE song that has significance to the majority of the group members. Your song DOES NOT have to be a religious/spiritual song.



# Purpose of Training

This training is designed to help participants to understand the role of religion, spirituality and faith in the lives of diverse mental health consumers/clients. Participants will be introduced to the core components of diverse beliefs and practices of people from various faith traditions. The barriers for the consumer/client (including those from the LGBTQ community) and mental health professionals will be explored . Strategies for overcoming those barriers will be discussed. Specific assessment tools will be introduced to help participants to gain a better understanding of the religious/spiritual world of the consumers/clients they serve. Furthermore, specific strategies for engaging the faith community in the service delivery of consumers/clients will be shared. This training will also provide a discussion about wellness centers and their increased interest in infusing religion, spirituality, and faith into programming to enhance the recovery process of consumers/clients.



# Learning Objectives

During the course of this keynote address, participants are expected to:

- ◆ Be able to identify at least three reasons for the inclusion of Spirituality in culturally responsive care.
- ◆ Be able to identify at least three barriers to including Spirituality in treatment and services.
- ◆ Be able to identify at least three strategies for including Spirituality in culturally responsive care.

# Setting the Tone

- ◆ Set and agree to relationship building strategies.
  - Respect
  - Participation
  - Non-judgmental
  - Open
  - Active listening
  - Agree to disagree
  - Your thoughts?????



Love ReDefined  
Relationships  
not  
Rules



# THE CASE FOR CULTURAL COMPETENCY



# Small Group Activity

- ◆ Please get into small groups to respond to the following questions:
  - What is the recovery model?
  - What is spirituality?
  - What is religion?
  - What is faith?
  - Why is spirituality, religion, and faith important for recovery?



# The Recovery Model

- ◆ Another perspective to the medical model.
- ◆ Proposes that consumer/clients who adopt the belief that they can recover from their illness are more likely to recover.
- ◆ The central element for recovery is hope.

# Religion

- ◆ A cultural system that creates powerful and long-lasting meaning by establishing symbols that relate humanity to beliefs and values. Many religions have narratives, symbols, traditions and sacred histories that are intended to give meaning to life or to explain the origin of life or the universe.
- ◆ Sometimes used interchangeably with faith or belief system. But religion differs from private belief in that it has a public aspect.



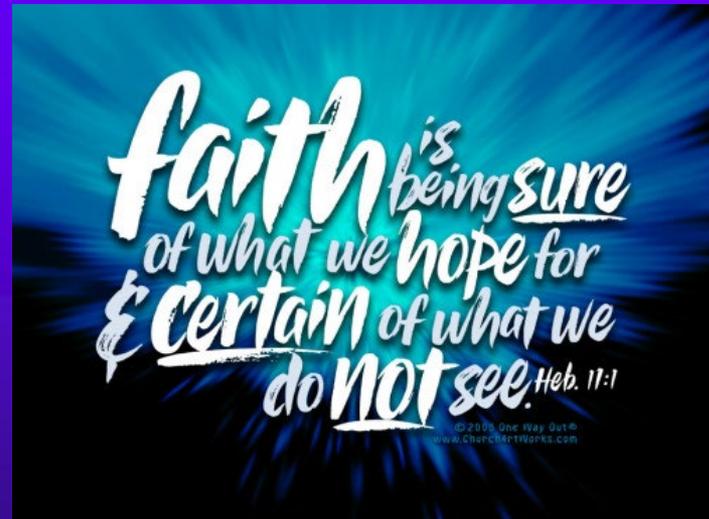
# Spirituality

- ◆ A complex term with diverse meanings.
- ◆ Often used interchangeably with religion.
- ◆ A vital aspect of culture.
- ◆ A term that is sometimes difficult to embrace.
- ◆ A term associated with hope, connection to self and others, and meaning. (Dr. John Towes, in *Visions: BC's Mental Health Journal – Spirituality and Recovery*, No. 12, Spring 2001).
- ◆ “Being spiritual means living, according to what one defines as spirit/nonphysical. It is living according to something you believe to be larger than yourself. (Clark, M.M., 2011).



# Faith

- ◆ Belief or trust: Belief in, devotion to, or trust in somebody or something, especially without logical proof.
- ◆ Religion or religious groups: A system of religious belief, or the group of people who adhere to it.
- ◆ Trust in God: Belief in and devotion to God.





# Distinction Between Spirituality and Religion

- ◆ “Both religion and spirituality can be perceived as the two sides of the same coin. Religion, as a concept is related to the structural aspects of a belief system. It is commonly viewed as structured, organized, and at times, rigid. It involves the behavioral and the ritualistic aspects (e.g., church attendance, ceremonies, sacraments, prayer, personal devotions, etc.) of worship.
- ◆ Spirituality, on the other hand, refers to the abstract and transcendent aspects of a belief system. IT is often conceived of in loose terms and has been frequently associated with mystical experiences, intense emotions, and meaningfulness.
- ◆ However, since both concepts involve the meaning aspects of one’s belief systems, they may be connected in some way.

Leong and Hoffman (2005)

# The Relevant Research



RESEARCH

- ◆ Many people of all racial and ethnic backgrounds believe that religion and spirituality favorably impact upon their lives and that well-being, good health, and religious commitment or faith is integrally intertwined (Taylor, 1986; Priest, 1991; Bacote, 1994; Pargament, 1997).
- ◆ Religion and spirituality are deemed important because they can provide comfort, joy, pleasure, and meaning to life as well as provide strategies for dealing with death, suffering, pain, injustice, tragedy, and stressful experiences in the life of an individual or family member (Pargament, 1997).
- ◆ In the family/community-centered perception of mental illness held by Asians and Hispanics, religious organizations are viewed as an enhancement or substitute when the family is unable to cope or assist with the problem (Acosta, et al., 1982; Comas-Diaz, 1989; Cook & Timberlake, 1989; Meadows, 1997).



# The Relevant Research (Cont'd)

- ◆ The California Mental Health Spirituality Initiative (CMHSI) made a compelling argument for the inclusion of spirituality based on the results of its 2009 survey data. Over one-third of survey respondents reported that the following spiritual/religious practices helped to support their mental health.
  - Prayer (73%)
  - Meditation (45%)
  - Attending religious services (41%)
  - Spending time in nature (40%)
  - Reading sacred texts or spiritual self-help books (36%)
  - Singing (34%)



# The Relevant Research

- ◆ In the pivotal CMHSI concept paper, it was suggested that spirituality and faith communities are necessary elements in recovery for the following reasons:
  - Spirituality can be a powerful tool to inspire hope, create motivation, and promote healing.
  - Many persons from diverse multicultural communities, utilize spiritual and/or faith based organizations as a source of social support and hope in their healing process.
  - Spirituality is an essential part of how people understand themselves and the world; it is not something separate.
  - Some people experience altered states of being with a spiritual component that can support the journey of recovery. For some, this can be a life-changing event. Often, this spiritual component is ignored, labeled, or confused with delusion or other symptoms.



# California Survey Data

- ◆ According to the Mental Health & Spirituality Initiative, Center for Multicultural Development, and the California Institute for Behavioral Health Solutions:
  - Over 75% of mental health consumers and family members indicated that spirituality is important to health.
  - Two-thirds of respondents agreed that the public mental health system in California should do more to support clients and families utilizing their spirituality as a wellness and recovery resource.
  - 74% indicated that mental health providers should be willing to discuss spiritual concerns with them.
  - 66% agreed that it is appropriate for the public mental health system to address spirituality as part of mental health care.



# The Rationale

- ◆ Research findings suggest that Spirituality is linked to recovery. Therefore, failure to include Spirituality in treatment and activities in wellness centers may negatively affect clients' process of recovery.
- ◆ Spirituality is a vital aspect of culture, and failure to acknowledge, understand, and embrace Spirituality in the lives of clients may be culturally nonresponsive to their needs.



# The Rationale

- ◆ Religious/spiritual diversity is a cultural fact that most mental health providers will encounter in their work;
- ◆ People who are in emotional crisis often spontaneously consider spiritual and religious matters during periods of intense emotions and psychosocial disorganization

*(Con't)*



# The Rationale

- ◆ Mental health providers will enjoy more credibility and trust with religious clients, leaders, and communities
- ◆ Competency in religious/spiritual diversity may help mental health providers to understand how to access more fully the healing resources in religious communities to assist their consumers in coping, healing, and changing.

*Worthington, E.L. (1989). Religious faith across the life span: Implications for counseling and research. The Counseling Psychologist, 17, 555-612.*



# The Rationale

- ◆ Mental health disparities exist when providers do not fully understand and respond to the cultural world of those they serve. Failure to understand consumers' cultural world can lead to misdiagnosis, premature termination, and other cultural errors.
- ◆ Spiritual disconnection can lead to despair.

# The Rationale

- ◆ Growing support for the connection between mind/body/spirit.
- ◆ People most often refer to spirituality than religion as a variable that increases hope.
- ◆ Religion, spirituality, and faith, while distinct, yet often interrelated terms, are believed to have a variety of positive effects on those who are suffering from both physical and mental health challenges.



# The Role of Spirituality

“For many people with mental health issues, spirituality is key to understanding this experience. It is essential in their journey of recovery.”

Jay Mahler





# Role of the Faith Community

- ◆ Instruction/Education
- ◆ Inclusion
- ◆ Social Support
- ◆ Coping
- ◆ Tradition
- ◆ Healing
- ◆ Problem Solving
- ◆ Hope



# Role of Religion, Spirituality, and Faith in Diverse Communities

- ◆ LGBTQ Community (Video Clip)
- ◆ Racial/Ethnic Groups
- ◆ Senior Adults
- ◆ High need populations/Rural communities



# Video Presentation

All God's Children



# Barriers to Effective Services



# Therapeutic Barriers Consumer's Perspective

- ◆ Cultural Mistrust
- ◆ Stigmatization and labeling
- ◆ Help-seeking issues
- ◆ Discomfort and unfamiliarity with traditional modalities and strategies
- ◆ Providers fail to acknowledge the role of spirituality, religion, and faith in recovery
- ◆ Providers fail to integrate spirituality/religion/ faith into treatment



# Therapeutic Barriers Provider's Perspective

- ◆ Provider bias
- ◆ Negative stereotypes and assumptions
- ◆ Unfamiliarity with cultural world of consumer
- ◆ Uncomfortable because of separation of church and state issue.
- ◆ Misdiagnosis due to cultural error
- ◆ Failure to understand the role of spirituality/religion/faith
- ◆ Lack training in integrating spirituality/religion/faith in treatment
- ◆ Lack training in engaging the faith community in the delivery of services to clients



# Strategies for Including Spirituality into Treatment

- ◆ Acknowledge the role of spirituality in the lives of those you serve.
- ◆ Acknowledge the role of spirituality in your life, even if it does not fit the mainstream understanding of spirituality.
- ◆ Become familiar with assessment tools and incorporate them into your initial assessment of those you serve.
- ◆ Allow your clients to teach you about the role of spirituality in their lives, and how they need spirituality infused in treatment.
- ◆ Seek supervision/consultation.



# Sharing of Resources

Please get into small groups and discuss some of the strategies you use to integrate spirituality into the service delivery to diverse communities you serve.

Activity Time: 15 minutes



# Best Practices and Initiatives that Incorporate Religion, Spirituality, and Faith

- ◆ CAPABILITY 2: Community Recovery
- ◆ DMHAS Faithworks
- ◆ Cowlitz Faith Based Mental Health Partnership
- ◆ Mental Health & Spirituality Initiative: Center for Multicultural Development - CIMH



# Tools for Assessing Spirituality/Religious Needs

- ◆ Spiritual Assessment Interview
- ◆ FICA Spiritual History Tool
- ◆ Hope Assessment



Q&A



# Dr. Gloria Morrow

## CONTACT INFORMATION

- [dr\\_gloria\\_morrow@msn.com](mailto:dr_gloria_morrow@msn.com)
- 909-261-5232

