Dementia Care 2014

Spirituality: Foundation for Strengthening Relationships in Dementia Care

Canad Inns, Polo Park

March 10, 2014: 1:15 - 2:30pm

(Rev.) Adel Compton, BScN, MDiv, Prairie Jubilee (2012)

WRHA Regional Director Spiritual Health Services
“Health and the Human Spirit”

Spiritual Health Care Strategic Plan for Manitoba 2012-2015

**Vision:** Spiritual health and well-being for all Manitobans accessing health care system

**Purpose:** To advance and implement spiritual health care as an integral component of holistic health care in Manitoba

**Definitions**

**Dementia:** term referring to a variety of brain disorders. Seven A’s of dementia: anosognosia, agnosia, aphasia, apraxia, altered perception, amnesia, and apathy

**Spirituality:** Life meaning and purpose defined by individual... helps us to discover how to live in the world or when to let go to death. WHAT GIVES JOY?

**Religion:** organized spirituality, more focused on creating community around a particular set of beliefs and practices

**Spiritual Health Care:** mutual interdependent relationship; person-centred holistic health care by spiritual health practitioners meeting Manitoba Core Competencies for Spiritual Health Care Practitioners

**Core Competencies for Spiritual Health Care Practitioners 2012**

A. KNOWLEDGE BASE

* 1. Counseling

* 2. Academic preparations

* 3. Health Care Fields

* 4. Spiritual Practice
B. CORE COMPETENCY CLUSTERS

* 1. Awareness
* 2. Thinking skills
* 3. Communication
* 4. Interpersonal
* 5. Leadership
* 6. Accountability
* 7. Self-managing
* 8. Information technology, literacy and research skills

**Spiritual Health and Health Care**

* Person-centred approach
* Supports ethical decision-making
* From birth to death, in joy and in sorrow. Medicine and spirituality/religion agree death is a natural part of human experience... not to be prolonged
* Spiritual health affects everyone in health care context
* Spiritual/religious healthier: rituals, practices and relationships make positive difference in dealing with altered health circumstances

**Spirituality, Health Care & Dementia**

* For person with dementia journeying through progressive stages of disease, Spiritual Health can aid recovery, healing, remembering, calming and dying.
* For caretaker journeying with person with progressive dementia, paying attention to personal spiritual well-being can offer release and calming related to emotional overload many experience as caretaking responsibilities increase.
# Dementia Care

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Person with Dementia</th>
<th>Caretaker</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Memory loss... may repeat actions</td>
<td>Some tasks okay (ie. microwave, laundry)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Loss of judgment... Where am I? Why? How? May be fearful and/or wandering</td>
<td>Needs reminding, notes for medicines, start checking, extra help, home care</td>
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<tr>
<td>Confusion, speaks to past (60s, 50s, 40s) and not to you. May lose all adult boundaries/no shame, sexual behaviour may indicate need to toilet or physical care</td>
<td>Compassionate speech (doesn't create violence), eye contact and kind tone, share joy, quit asking questions since person can't answer, listen and share his/her reality</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fearful at sundown, suspicious, aggressive</td>
<td>Be calm &amp; supportive; hold hand, be quiet and distract, give space, keep yourself safe</td>
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<tr>
<td>No conversation</td>
<td>Photos, art, reading, pet, rituals, and music</td>
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<tr>
<td>Apathy</td>
<td>Music to soothe the soul</td>
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# Dementia and Spirituality

<table>
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<tr>
<th>Person with Dementia</th>
<th>Spirituality Supports for Caretaker</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Loss of faculties, time and space...remembers rituals and sacraments Retains capacity to share feelings with others</td>
<td>Buddhist insights on self and mind helpful... also compassionate speech (no violence &amp; no duality) Enter person’s reality</td>
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<tr>
<td>Outbursts and emotional suffering may reflect unresolved wounds, anger, disappointments or self-loss</td>
<td>Flash moments of “knowing” a paradox including ideas of Buddhist impermanence &amp; Christian eternal To relate: practical mysticism &amp; contemplative attitude</td>
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<td>Author and nursing staff observed body language “transformations” with use of music and reading poetry</td>
<td>Religion &amp; spirituality affirm power of “material” to reveal divine presence: rituals, sacraments, nature, music, visual arts (ie. love arias and Hildegard’s music)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Questions of death – At the end, are we who we were at the beginning?</td>
<td>Islamic insights: upon death “our sight will be made keen” (Qur’an 50:22) will see our whole life with honestly... beauty/suffering of our lives... One’s life goal is to find inner peace before death.</td>
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**Spirituality, Stillness and Silence**

Being present with a person living with dementia is an art of feeling comfortable with the whole of who you are as you witness another person’s journey from usual relationship behavior to illogical, irresponsible and finally unknowable.

**Supports and Resources**

* Include joy in your life

* Alzheimer’s Society: Resources

* Faith Communities

* Support Groups: The Compassion Project, KLINIC … mindfulness practices

* Meditations

* Stress Management
Bibliography


Callaby, Pilar, Peter G. Coleman and Martie A. Mills (2012). Caregiving in Dementia: From Resentment to Forgiveness, in Journal of Religions, Spirituality and Aging, 24:1-2, 93-104. To link to this article: URL:http://dx.doi.org/10.1080/15528030.2012.633053


Manitoba Health Spiritual Health Care Strategic Plan. (September 2012). Health and the Human Spirit: Shaping the Direction of Spiritual Health Care in Manitoba.


