Society for Spirituality and Social Work

♦ Collected Publications ♦

1989-1992

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Topical Bibliography on Religion and Social Work

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Introduction

This bibliography is intended as a resource for social workers who wish to teach or conduct research on the subject of religion and spirituality in social work courses. The bibliography is arranged according to topical categories in order to assist selection of readings for a comparative approach to the subject. The following criteria were used to select entries: 1) published as social work journals or books; 2) content explicitly refers to religion or spirituality; 3) range of entries represents diverse perspectives: Buddhist, Christian, Existentialist, Jewish, Shamanistic and Spiritist, Nonsectarian, Other Religious Perspectives.

Entries were categorized according to the primary topical focus of their contents. For example, an "existentialist" entry may include allusions to Christian beliefs, but the primary focus is on existentialist philosophy. Likewise, a "nonsectarian" entry may be influenced strongly by a particular religious perspective, but the author attempted to address the subject in a generic or interreligious manner. Although this bibliography is not exhaustive, it is hoped that it will provide a thorough introduction to the subject.

Buddhist


Christian


Existentialist


Jewish


Bunim, Sarah S. (1986). Religious and secular factors of role strain in Orthodox Jewish mothers. Dissertation; Wurtsweiler, DSW.


Shamanistic and Spiritist


Nonsectarian


Other


Social Work Journals Emphasizing Religious Perspectives

Journal of Jewish Communal Service
Social Work and Christianity
Social Thought
Foreword
On the Inaugural Issue
Editor

INTRODUCTION
Welcome to the inaugural issue of the Spirituality and Social Work Communicator. This newsletter is dedicated to promoting dialogue and mutual understanding among social work scholars, students, and practitioners who strive to provide spiritually-sensitive service. As increasing numbers of publications and conference presentations indicate, we and our clients represent a diverse and sometimes conflictual range of sectarian and nonsectarian views. The Communicator's editorial policy is to encourage open expression of diverse views in a constructive and respectful manner. The human spiritual quest for a sense of meaning, purpose and morally fulfilling relationship is integral to our own professional and personal attempts to understand and alleviate suffering and injustice. This quest motivates the practice of many social workers, and it motivates many clients to seek our assistance. I believe that the magnitude of suffering and the significance of spirituality in dealing with it are so great that social workers of all diverse spiritual views need to work together in cooperation and common purpose. It is my hope that this newsletter and the Network on Spirituality and Social Work will play a role in this coming together, this literal communication.

I wish to thank the people who have encouraged, supported, and advised the network in its formation. This advisory group includes: Robert Constable, Loyola University of Chicago; Donald Krill, University of Denver; Sadye Logan, University of Kansas; Max Siperin, Suny-Albany; and M. Vincentia Joseph, Catholic University of America. I would also like to thank the University of Iowa School of Social Work for a small start-up grant and the University of Kansas School of Social Welfare for its present support of this project. Special appreciation goes to one of our School secretaries, Crystal Cunningham, for doing the excellent word processing and layout for the newsletter.

FORMAT AND CALL FOR PAPERS
Each issue (2 per year: Winter and Summer) will include an editor's foreword and afterword. The foreword will introduce the topical theme of the issue and the afterword will attempt to provide an integrative or supplemental perspective on the articles. Each issue will include articles of the following types: Topical Thematic Essays; Research, Education, and Practice Updates; Transdisciplinary News; Readers' Responses; and Working Paper Exchange. Submissions are invited for all these types of articles. Submissions will be reviewed by the editor and referred for blind review to the advisory group or other readers for a second opinion if necessary. When the readership and submission rate expands significantly, we may move to a more formal review process.

Each issue will have an organizing topical theme, such as "Buddhist Perspectives on Social Work" or "Transpersonal Psychology and Social Work." Submissions of all types will be reviewed in terms of relevance to the theme, although not all items in a given issue need to conform to the theme. However, Essays will be selected in accordance with a specific issue's theme. Updates will be reports of current social work research, curriculum developments, or practice innovations relevant to spirituality and social work. Transdisciplinary News will review articles, books, or conferences that occur outside social work contexts but which are relevant to our concerns. Readers' Responses will be letters to the editor in response to previous issues of the Communicator. Working Paper Exchange will offer brief (300-word) abstracts of work (Continued on page 2.)

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CALL FOR PAPERS

The Spirituality and Social Work Communicator invites essays on the following topics:

1. Minority perspectives on spirituality and social work.
2. Transpersonal psychology and social work.
3. Application of prayer in social work practice.
4. Spiritual aspects of self-help movements (e.g., Alcoholics Anonymous).

Articles appropriate for Transdisciplinary News, Updates, Readers' Responses, and Working Paper Exchange are also welcome. See the guidelines in the Foreword of this issue.

Based on the number and quality of responses, the theme of the next issue will be selected from the above topics.

Deadline for next issue: April 15, 1990.

SUBSCRIPTION FORM

Includes Winter and Summer issues, 1990.
Mail to: Edward R. Canda, Spirituality and Social Work Network, School of Social Welfare, Twente Hall, University of Kansas, Lawrence, KS 66045-2510, USA.

NAME ____________________________________________
STREET __________________________________________
CITY, STATE __________________________ ZIP CODE, COUNTRY ______

I wish to have my name and address listed in a public directory of social workers and other helping professionals interested in spirituality for the purpose of networking.

[ ] YES  [ ] NO

Enclosed is my check, payable to Spirituality and Social Work Network, for:

[ ] $5.00  (USA and Canada)  or  [ ] $10.00  (International)

Foreword, (Continued from page 1.)
in progress, inviting readers to exchange papers and comments with the authors of the papers.

All articles must be submitted in APA style. Two copies must be included together with a stamped self-addressed envelope for return of the manuscript if necessary. Maximum length for any article will be 6 to 7 pages typed double-spaced (plus references). Articles may be less formal, more personal, and more creative than is allowed in the typical journal.

SPIRITUALITY AND SOCIAL WORK NETWORK

The first two issues of the Communicator will include the names and addresses of all subscribers who requested on their subscription form to be included in the network directory. This will enable people of similar interest to identify each other for local meetings, conference gatherings, and correspondence.

TOPICAL BIBLIOGRAPHY

This first issue includes a bibliography, organized by topics, of social work articles and books that deal with spirituality and religion. The bibliography was compiled by the editor.

INAUGURAL ISSUE

INVITATIONAL ESSAYS

Finally, I would like to introduce the essays included in this issue. I invited members of the advisory group to submit essays that summarize their views of the most significant issues or ideas that the profession should address involving the connection between spirituality and social work. They were encouraged to be less formal and more personal than the typical journal allows. I am grateful to those who were able to contribute at this time. Their comments and suggestions establish general concerns and directions for the Communicator to pursue in the future.

CHRISTMAS

is the Christian celebration of the birth of Jesus Christ, celebrated possibly as early as the fourth century in North Africa, established as the 25th of December by the Jerusalem church in the mid-fifth century, and first declared a public holiday in the early sixth century by the Roman emperor Justinian. Current festivities incorporate elements of northern European winter solstice practices, such as celebrating the victory of sunlight over powers of darkness and evil spirits by displaying lights and evergreen plants. (Summarized from M. Eliade, ed., Encyclopedia of Religion, Vol. 3, (New York: Macmillan, 1987): pp. 460-461.)

--Editor
Welcome to the *Spirituality and Social Work Communicator*
Max Siporin

We offer a warm welcome and best wishes to this new addition to our personal and social work lives. For those of us concerned about spirituality and social work, there is anticipation of a promising dialogue with fellow social workers on a subject that some of us believe to be of primary importance. This newsletter and the events to be associated with it, such as conferences and publications, will meet a need some of us feel strongly about: to learn, explore, and share thinking about the spiritual aspects of human beings and how social workers can help people understand and realize themselves in terms of these aspects of their lives.

We look forward to the new decade with an increasing recognition of a critical social problem and of the critical necessity to deal with it. This problem concerns the growing void in the lives of people that may help explain the alarming incidence of pathology and deviance prevalent in our society: the epidemics of crack and other drug abuse, venereal disease, interpersonal violence, and family and community disorganization. Another side of this pathology is the trend to religious fundamentalism, and its increasing acceptance, despite the scandals, such as the Bakker case, which have exposed the underside of this religious trend.

These trends are taking place in our country, where there is a high level of economic affluence and a great shortage of workers qualified to fill basic jobs, as well as high proportions of people who have achieved substantial educational levels as high school and college graduates. Of course, social workers need to continue their battles against poverty, discrimination, injustice, substance abuse, violence, and social disorganization, and for socioeconomic structures more responsive to people's needs. We may be better able to do so with a conscious regard for the bases of these forms of pathology.

Whether we refer to this void in people's lives as feelings of alienation, anxiety, depression, meaninglessness, powerlessness, amorality, or hopelessness, we refer to a spiritual dimension of the human personality which lacks needed elements and supports. By spirituality, we mean the element of the personality that includes a state of being and consciousness, within which a person seeks and sometimes achieves a purpose, set of personal meanings, and a relation to other people, to nature, and to the ultimate reality and immanent force of life.

Some of us refer to this inner element of self as the soul and to the ultimate reality and life force in religious terms as God; but many individuals, including social workers, prefer a nontheistic terminology and orientation. There are also some people, including social workers who deny or disregard this element of the human being. It is clear, however, that the need for spiritual consciousness, growth and experience is basic to the human being. Individual and social pathology arises from the lack of opportunities and support for human relationships and experiences that have spiritual qualities and transcendence, sacrament, virtue, and grace. Also, this spiritual element is essentially moral in identifying what is virtue or vice, right or wrong, good or evil; it is thus necessary in guiding human aspiration and conduct.

During the past few years there has been a welcome increase in attention, among social workers and in social work education, to religious and spiritual aspects of personality and behavior, and in the application of this knowledge to social work practice. This development has been taking place in the face of some controversy and opposition. I can personally attest to the negative reactions expressed by some colleagues about this trend, in their opposition to any imposition of religious beliefs and practices upon nonbelieving practitioners. There is a deeply ingrained identification of spirituality with an institutional religious orientation that has negative connotations and will continue to have negative meaning for a substantial number of social workers who prefer a nontheistic or atheistic personal belief system. Despite the continuing religious revival that has been taking place in this country and worldwide, a substantial proportion of social workers will continue to have this nonreligious orientation.

The statement by Sanzenbach in the November 1989 issue of *Social Casework* about religion and social work expresses this kind of misidentification of religion and spirituality and a stereotyping of religion as ultra-conservative fundamentalism, and therefore as inimical to humanistic social work values. In this same edition of the journal, Cana and Joseph offered very helpful responses in clarifying the diversity of conservative and liberal religious fundamentalism, restating the distinctions between religion and spirituality they both have made, and reaffirming the concordance of humanistic, progressive religious beliefs and practices with social work values. Still, the interchange highlights the need to recognize and accept the presence of nonreligious as well as religious social workers, and to address their concerns about spirituality in both religious and nonreligious terms.

In our pursuit of greater understanding of the spiritual dimension of personality and how it may be enhanced in social work practice, it is helpful to hold valid distinctions between spirituality and religion. However, there are issues to be faced about whether it is feasible to gain spiritual development and experience in truly nonreligious terms, given the wider meanings of

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Welcome to the *Spirituality and Social Work Communicator*, Max Siporin.

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religion, and its non-institutional as well as institutional forms. There also is an issue about the validity of the use of religious practices, such as prayer, within social work practice procedures, in the context of a proper distinction between social work as secular profession and ministry and a religious ministry that has its own socially sanctioned functions and procedures.

However we may deal with these issues, our focus needs to be directly on the nature of the spiritual dimension, needs, and experiences of social work clients. It would be helpful for us to clearly identify some of the elements of the spiritual aspect, even though we may never penetrate or know its mystery. We hopefully will go beyond the metapsychology of psychoanalysis and the currently popular cognitive theories of personality which are limited in approaching this aspect. We also can winnow out the valid content from certain existentialist approaches that lack credibility because of their association with some of the nonsensical, witless, muddled excesses of New Age thinking and activities.

It would advance our knowledge to steer clear of reductionist quantitative, "empirical" research methods and to use as well as further develop qualitative, hermeneutic research approaches that can deal with the complex, multifactorial aspects of the human being and of the spiritual dimension. Recent research efforts, as by Canada and by Joseph and Conrad, are fine exemplars for us to follow. We can aim to further a social work practice that is in Canada's phrase "spiritually-sensitive." We can creatively develop and test helping procedures that will enable clients to deal effectively with their existential anxieties, feelings of alienation, meaninglessness, and powerlessness, and with their moral, interpersonal estrangements and conflicts. Such creative helping should also enable clients to grow, function, and fulfill themselves as members of a spiritually-nourishing and supportive society.

The advent of this *Communicator* augurs well for the realization of the needs and wishes I have just identified. I look forward to the dialogue and sharing relationships and to the spiritually good outcomes which our participation in this project will stimulate.

Max Siporin is a professor at the State University of New York at Albany, School of Social Welfare.

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**Spirituality and Social Work: Issues to be Addressed**

*Robert Constable*

What is the spiritual dimension in social work and what relation does it have to social work practice? Spirituality is a relatively new term in social work and demands definition. Traditionally "religion" became a frame of reference for spirituality. Social work always respected religion as a part of clients' lives and agency sponsorship. Yet it was less clearly a part of social work practice, and when it appeared in the form of the social worker's religious beliefs, it had to be treated with all due caution. The half-millennium of religious wars in the West, the belief and the promise of a pluralistic American experiment, the process of modernization and the development of the concept of privacy, the dominant materialist, positivistic, and psychoanalytic approaches to thought, all gave reason to be cautious about religion, if not barely tolerant. If religion was barely tolerated, spirituality, taken out of the organized context of religion, would be less so. And so it is today to a degree, although the countervailing forces of a revival of personalized expressions of religion have brought the concept of spirituality to the fore. Without the anchorage of religion the term acquires a variety of permutations, all of which are reflected in the literature. It may be that spirituality in its multiple manifestations is a transitional term, reflective both of the casualties suffered by organized religious expression in the process of the Western experience of modernization and simultaneously of the reemergence of creative and constructive forces in human nature which cannot be suppressed.

*Webster's Third New International Dictionary* reflects well these permutations of the term and is a useful beginning framework for analysis. Spirituality "relates to or consists of spirit . . . rather than material." The antimaterialist and antipositivist stance is common to many who write about spirituality. Indeed the oppositional stance to the predominant materialist ideologies may be a source of energy. The spiritual is what is not material—but is that really true? Or are we setting up a dichotomy which denies the obvious, that we also are body and there is some relation between the two? What then is spirituality and what does it have to do with social work? The definition is a symptom of the problem as long as it is defined only by a negative and excludes other aspects of reality. The field remains in disarray on what precisely spirituality is and thus on what its relation to social work is.

The second Webster permutation is that spirituality pertains to "religious or sacred matters." No doubt this is the traditional approach, but the postmodern, personalistic mentality is not easily encompassed by simple religious affiliation, and the literature itself

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Spirituality and Social Work: Issues to be Addressed, Robert Constable.

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shows far more diverse concerns about spirituality, even among atheists (Canda, 1988b). For reasons discussed earlier, in a personalist world spirituality cannot be limited to its organized manifestations in religion and religion, as a social institution, certainly is and should be much more than the sum of the personal spiritualities of its members.

The third permutation is the most abstract, "relating to the moral feelings or states of the soul as distinguished from the external actions." The problem is that it separates itself from action and appears to be related to a reflective or contemplative faculty. There are vague links to a moral universe or to personal asceticism. The moral universe is quite different from personal asceticism and any severance of morality from human acts is problematic for social workers, who constantly deal in action.

Nevertheless it is clear that the concept of spirituality has freed itself from organized religion. From a personalist standpoint, the development is probably positive. But the distinction does not help much in its definition. As with religion, in its undefined state spirituality can become a cover for all sorts of what otherwise might be called insanity. This was a reason for social work’s traditional caution around both spirituality and religion. Recent discussion in the religion and social work literature points out these concerns (Spressart, 1988). Secondly, spirituality can be used to institutionalize a series of purely individual points of view with no broader frames of reference. Modernized and personalized religion can do this also. Philip Reiff’s caricature of the emergent personality of the Twentieth Century, "Psychological Man," is no longer bound by any commitments which conflict with his or her sense of well being and self realization. This personality would use conventional religious institutions to mask the profound change. This change amounts to the reduction of religion to psychological or sociological phenomena. Reiff suggests that

the wisdom of the next social order, as I imagine it, would not reside in right doctrine, administered by right men, who must be found, but rather to doctrines amounting to permission for each man to live an experimental life . . . Psychological man, in his independence from all gods, can feel free to use of all god-terms; I imagine he will be a hedger against his own bets, a user of any faith that lends itself to therapeutic use* (Reiff, 1966, pp. 126-127).

Psychological man, in full bloom with Reiff and later discussions of societal narcissism (Lasch, 1979), is the child of an earlier crisis of faith, the same crisis which produces some aspects of spiritualism and in a different sense, fundamentalism.

To extricate ourselves from these potential dangers we must start with social work practice and inquire about what the role of spirituality in social work practice is. Answering this question in its many aspects we come up with a functional definition. Just as the blind beggars describing the elephant, the whole which emerges from its partial manifestations provides a definition and simultaneously a range of issues to be addressed.

Spirituality in social work has been related to three dimensions of practice. First, it has been from and for the client(s), that is there is the recognition of the spiritual needs of each person and that these needs are inextricably related to the growth and development of the whole person (Joseph, 1987). To ignore this aspect of human life is to ignore persons in their wholeness. As social work moves toward holistic, ecological models of practice, it cannot ignore the spiritual dimension of human life (Canda, 1988a). Spirituality is inherent in human life. Second, it has been from and for the agency. Religious sponsored agencies reflect a communal striving to maintain identification and implicitly to foster an interpretation of spirituality associated with the sectarian community. Struggling with modern norms of homogeneity, this is a major reason for sectarian agencies. In the Jewish Communal Services area the struggle between sectarian and modernizing tendencies generated a remarkable literature in the 1950s, a metaphor for the nearly identical struggles of other groups (1). In this second sense spirituality is communal and environmental. Third, and most recently, spirituality is a quality and capacity of the worker. The long-delayed recognition of the worker’s spirituality can be seen in the recent discussion of religion and spirituality and of its effects on practice (Canda, 1988b), in the popularity of conference presentations, and in the development of a literature to include specialized journals in the area of religion and spirituality. In this third sense spirituality is recognized as a personal quality and capacity. Each approach to spirituality, as a human phenomenon, as a communal phenomenon and as a personal phenomenon, is one part of something more complex. Missing one aspect would distort the whole.

Spirituality involves a picture of human persons and their capacity to act, to know, to will, to reflect, to meditate. Is it a realistic perception of one’s nature and one’s purposes and the good, to include more than biological life. It is a picture of universal human destiny. Based on this picture, Augustine opened his Confessions with the statement "You have made us for yourself alone, O Lord, and our hearts cannot rest until they rest in you." It is thus a broader picture of relations and obligations with fellow human beings and

1. This discussion may be seen in the pages of the Journal of Jewish Communal Services over the decade of the 1950s.

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Spirituality and Social Work: Issues to be Addressed, Robert Constable.

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with God, no longer private, but personal, no longer purely material, but built upon a natural order. This recognition paradoxically propels the social worker to assist in the building of a relational world where it is possible for each person to achieve a personal spiritual destiny and this is Justice. This relational world is not just with ourselves, as having a spiritual and corporeal nature, or with others, with reciprocal duties and rights from that nature, but first of all to God, and thence from God to others and ourselves. For social workers spirituality is private and simultaneously and unavoidably public, since professional acts are public acts. It has a relation to a picture of the human good, thus to a picture of morality and thus to professional ethics. It has a relation to organized religion in various ways, but social workers need to distinguish their activity from the clergy. If indeed spirituality is in the nature of each person, each person ought then to acquire the personal and communal resources to become what he or she already is, using the phrase of John Paul II (2). For John Paul II, the recognition of human destiny and divine transcendence at the personal and social levels is the strategic spiritual response to the crisis of modernity, with each person making the recognition of transcendence permeate the institutions of society and all human activity (Holland, 1987). The echoes of this powerful and paradoxically secular idea are resounding in the societies of Eastern Europe, to some extent in modernized and individualistic Western Europe and even in a faint whisper for a brief moment in Beijing.

Recognition of spirituality generates a number of questions for social workers:

What is the place of spirituality in social work and how should it be addressed?

What general legitimacy should be accorded different schools of spirituality? Without criteria the term could contain a variety of perverse personal and institutional manifestations. What are the boundaries imposed by the worker’s own spiritual tradition? How does/should that influence his/her actions? Should the social worker pray with the client? If yes, under what circumstances and with what goals?

2. The concept that I become what I choose through my actions because what I choose is in accord with my essential nature is developed in greater detail in St. John of the Cross (1958), Ascent of Mount Carmel, and in writings of John Paul II (Wojtyla, 1979; Wozniki, 1980), who did his doctoral dissertation on St. John of the Cross.

REFERENCES


Robert Constable, DSW, LCSW is a professor at the Loyola University of Chicago School of Social Work.
Critical Issues in Operationalizing the Spiritual Dimension of Social Work Practice

Sadye L. Logan

In considering those issues that must be addressed by the social work profession if it were to respond in a sensitive and effective manner to operationalizing the spiritual dimension of social work practice, one must first establish a context for identifying such issues.

A useful starting point is the profession's earlier historical commitment to moral upliftment as its primary function. This focus was heavily influenced by the religious convictions of the friendly visitors of the charity organization movement. Over time the focus of helping became centered on the enhancement of social functioning (Bartlett, 1970). Inherent in this broad base purpose and function is the profession's commitment to the whole person. Complementing this view was the profession's search for more effective ways of responding to and understanding the person in context (Germain, 1970). As a result, ecological and systems concepts have been applied in this effort. Despite the expanded concept of helping, the profession has not incorporated religion or spirituality as a part of its knowledge base, values, or process.

With a resurgence of interest in spirituality and religion in the general population, in social work, and other helping professions, it is timely to move toward a stronger level of commitment. Such a shift can create the necessary atmosphere for the inclusion of specific content and experiences into the graduate curriculum that may contribute to a spiritual dimension of social work practice.

To identify major issues connected with this process, it is useful to assume a broad base perspective about a spiritual dimension of social work practice. In this regard, this paper conceptualizes the spiritual dimension to include a conceptualization of human nature and strategies for dealing with ethnic/racial concerns, women's issues, and practice issues.

CONCEPTUALIZATIONS of HUMAN NATURE

Incorporating new information and knowledge from a variety of sources is not new to the profession. However, the inclusion of knowledge that will stretch our conceptual foundations is another matter. The first step in addressing this paradigm shift relates to a clear, working definition of spirituality and its relevance as an important component of human growth and development. There is, however, growing substantive literature on this topic (Beck, 1986; Bergin, 1988; Canda, 1988a, 1988b; Siporin, 1985). Some literature has a tendency to distort the term by dualist thinking or naive religious assumptions. This distortion is often expressed when (a) spirit is described as "the opposite of matter," and spirituality associated only with intangible thoughts or feeling; (b) spirit is described as "what God is," and spirituality becomes a restrictive religious concept (Conn, 1986). But when spirituality is understood as an experience that encompasses every dimension of human life, it transcends as well as incorporates specific spiritualities. Additionally, it becomes clear that the spiritual dimension of human life exists whether one believes in a God or in any form of organized religion. In considering this broader view of spirituality and human nature, an important question would be whether it is necessary for the profession to agree on a comprehensive definition of spirituality or accept differential definitions that address specific perspectives: religious, ethnic/racial, and women?

ETHNIC/RACIAL CONCERNS

The discussion related to conceptual concerns serves as one layer of complexity upon which the issues of ethnic/racial issues and other value concerns are laid. Despite the profession's emphasis on issues of diversity, the focus has not included spiritual concerns. In recent times, however, there has been a growing emphasis in the literature not only on the importance of spirituality, religious teachings, rituals, folk beliefs and practices, but also on the need for professional knowledge and sensitivity about the impact of ethnicity on spiritual and religious needs (Queralt, 1984; Spero, 1985; Timberlake & Cooke, 1984). Timberlake and Cooke illustrate this point. They acknowledge the integration of Buddhist ontology, Confucianist ethics, and Taoist epistemology in serving as the moral and practical guidance for linking personal, family, social, and biological existence for the Vietnamese. Similarly, Queralt speaks of the widespread influence of santeria, a syncretic religion, on the personal, emotional, and spiritual needs of some Cubans in the United States as well as on the island of Cuba. This author speaks of the spiritual needs that are addressed in the context of santeria beliefs and rituals as folk illnesses: mal de ojo (evil eye), empacho (a form of indigestion), desmayo o decaimiento (fainting spells), decaimiento (lack of energy), and barrenillos (obscene thinking).

From the perspective of African-Americans the church or religion has always been emphasized as a central focus in their lives. Currently, however, there is a movement that provides alternatives to the traditional religious beliefs and assumptions of African-Americans (Simmons, 1987). One "new orientation" proposes an Afrocentric view of spirituality--a spirituality that is defined as being connected to a higher source of power which is a part of us and is neither physical nor psychological but divine (an eternal

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Critical Issues in Operationalizing the Spiritual Dimension of Social Work Practice, Sadie Logan
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presence. This perspective views God, religion or spirituality in terms of understanding the reality of nature and the environment that surrounds and conditions our lives. In this view the cosmic universe is made of the harmonious coming together of polar opposites—a coming together that transcends duality and differences. This understanding and experience of spirituality emerges through reconnecting with ancestors and challenging established theology that oppresses the spirit (the divine presence) in human beings (Simmons, 1987).

Further, the African-American view of spirituality is prefaced by the challenge to African-Americans to claim the African influence in the Judeo-Christian heritage. It is purported that this influence is highlighted “when geographical, archaeological and cultural facts are considered in relation to names and events in the Old Testament, for example, it becomes clear that major figures such as Moses, his wife Zipporah (‘The Ethiopian’), her father Jethro, the Canaanites and others were of African lineage either ethnically or culturally. (This has been said of other early church fathers such as Cyripar, Tertullian and even renowned St. Augustine, whose mother was an African woman named Monica” (Simmons, 1987, p. 128).

It is obvious from the foregoing observations that these few examples reflect rich and complex spiritual and religious orientations. In view of the various ethnic/racial groups within this country, a unique challenge exists for the profession if it is to comprehensively move toward conceptualizing and institutionalizing the spiritual dimension of social work practice and education.

WOMEN’S ISSUES

Central to issues regarding women’s spirituality is the type and nature of their socialization. Historically, most women have been socialized into conforming to passive roles of living for others and of being desirable objects. These roles have been reinforced by most, if not all, religions (Ochs, 1983). Essentially, religious teachings continue to encourage, to a great extent, women’s passivity, whereas men’s autonomy and self-assertion are encouraged. Conn (1986) very astutely observes that the primary concern is not so much with models of religious teachings as with their application.

In view of the sexist nature of most religious traditions, women’s spiritual development has been restricted to a great extent. However, in the past few years a movement to renounce patriarchy in religious institutions has created an atmosphere in which women’s spirituality is being supported.

Although this discussion did not differentiate women in terms of race, social class, and levels of feminism, it acknowledges that as the profession addresses the issue of women’s spirituality, these factors must be included also. Further, the influence of sexism on women’s spiritual development within religious traditions and the general society must be addressed as well.

PRACTICE ISSUES

Although this section will primarily address practice issues and concerns, implications may also be drawn for education. Despite the increasing awareness among practitioners and educators regarding the importance of the spiritual dimension of human life as a vital component of growth and development, there is much work to be done in developing as well as teaching appropriate intervention strategies related to this perspective. Within this context, it appears that the major focus of concern should include the social worker’s level of self-awareness and capacity for self-inquiry, a working language of concepts and their application to appropriately describe and explain clients’ spiritual experiences, and a range of treatment strategies that evolve out of such experiences.

To reconstruct a curriculum that incorporates the spiritual dimension will require the entire social work community to expand personal and professional awareness in terms of values, beliefs and its members’ own spiritual and religious traditions. In other words, is there enough commitment by educators and practitioners to effectively create a teaching and practice arena that would do the following:

1. Appreciate and support diverse spiritual beliefs and practices,

2. Comfortably utilize religious concepts and techniques, such as healing prayers, meditations, biblical readings, and rituals,

3. Expand the person-in-environment paradigm to include the world of ancestors (nonhuman world), a greater understanding of the reality of nature, and the existence of an alternate Source of being.

Ultimately, the beneficiaries of the profession’s timely and insightful move toward making social work a spiritual reality are the service consumers. Therefore, if we are to truly empower our clients, we must work to create an environment in which spirituality is explored and addressed as any other area of practice and education inquiry.

REFERENCES


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Critical Issues in Operationalizing the Spiritual Dimension of Social Work Practice, Sadye Logan
(References continued from page 8).


Sadye Logan, DSW, ACSW, is an Associate Professor at the University of Kansas School of Social Welfare.

HANUKKAH
is the Jewish festival of eight days, beginning on the 25th day of Kislev (the third month in the religious calendar). It commemorates the rededication of the Second Temple by Judah the Maccabee in 165 B.C.E. The main feature of the celebration is the lighting of the branched candelabrum (menorah) and the singing of hymns. Work is not prohibited during the festival, but all signs of sadness are to be avoided. A custom of giving gifts to children has become associated with Hanukkah. [Summarized from the following sources: R.J. Zwi Werblowsky, The Encyclopedia of Jewish Religion (New York: Holt, Rinehart, & Winston, 1966), p. 172; and I. Klein, A Guide to Jewish Religious Practice (New York: Jewish Theological Seminary of America, 1979), p. 229.]

--Editor

WINTER SOLSTICE
is the turning point in the year's solar cycle when the duration of sunlight during the day begins to increase. It occurs around December 22 and marks the beginning of winter in the northern hemisphere. Celebrations of the victory of the power of light associated with the winter solstice have an ancient origin and are distributed widely around the world. For example, many megalithic western European tomb shrines (built during the fifth to second millennium B.C.E.) are aligned with the position of the moon at winter solstice, suggesting an association with the lunar goddess of cosmic regenerative power. Some Native American medicine wheel earthworks are aligned to mark the movements of the sun across the horizon between summer and winter solstices. [Summarized from the following sources: M. Eliade, ed., Encyclopedia of Religion, Vol. 9, (New York: Macmillan, 1987): pp. 342-343; and E.C. Krupp, ed., In Search of Ancient Astronomies (New York: McGraw-Hill, 1978).]

--Editor
Reflections on Teenage Suicide and Adult Addictions
Donald F. Krill

A few years ago I attended a public meeting on the subject of teen suicide and was dismayed with the discussion. A school counselor facilitated a panel presentation by teenagers, all of whom were student peer counselors, some of whom had previously made suicide attempts. The question of why the wealthiest county in our state should be plagued by a rising teen suicide rate was not addressed. None of the audience, including clergy, raised the question of values. Yet an obvious question was why life was not worth living for some teens surrounded by plenty and opportunity? The teens themselves spoke of the same problems troubling adolescents 35 years ago, when I was in high school: broken love affairs, social rejection, academic failures. They affirmed their parents as caring people. Neither the panel nor the audience mentioned the popular causes of trauma from physical, sexual or emotional abuse. I had already suspected these causes as being more the "victim psychology" of client-hungry helping professionals than the teen age reality.

In recent years my own professional interests had focused more and more on problems troubling many adults in our society: addictions and burnout. These problems seemed to be growing in number and had social, psychological and spiritual dimensions. I began to look for connections with these adult maladies and possible linkages to teen suicide.

A common ingredient between addictions, burnout and teen suicides seems to be the sense of self imprisonment. Whether adult or teen, a person experienced a profound sense of "stuckness" in life. Chosen routes for happiness, excitement, pleasure and meaning had produced a checkmate of disappointment. One might figure out how one got into such a state, but could not see a way out. There would be a mounting sense of desperation. Some would try the roller-coaster pursuit of new avenues, trading one addictive habit, job or spouse for another, yet a similar despair lurked in the shadows of one's future.

I discovered an interesting correlation between descriptions of the American character and typical characteristics of teenagers. Americans are often described as prizing freedom and independence and maintaining a boundless hope in progress. They are pragmatic in lifestyle orientation with a rather superficial interest in the more profound philosophical and spiritual complexities of life. While exhibiting skepticism and at times outright rebellion toward varied authorities (including disdain toward intellectuals) they also exhibit considerable conformity and are predisposed to follow the directions of a myriad of self-help literature, scientifically garbed helping professionals and emotive ministries termed "religious." These hopes stem from both their allegiance to social-technological progress and from their inclination toward self-preoccupation of pursuing security, pleasure, status, excitement and the avoidance of pain and confusion. The more the complexities of modern life bombard them through the media, busy schedules, and troubling family problems, the more they look to experts to sort out their bewilderment. The more chaotic life becomes, the more they cling to simplistic, black/white (either/or) solutions. Distracting activities are plentiful and feed the needs of a consumer-oriented society.

The similarities of such descriptions of American character and of teenagers are so obvious they need not be further elaborated. Generalizations have their limitations, of course, but can suggest some useful ideas. One might hazard a guess that what has been termed "midlife crisis" is the later adult version of the teen's identity crisis. Two differences are worth noting, however. First, the teenager is experiencing stronger passions (and therefore more intense disappointments) than the adult in the forties or fifties. Second, teenagers commonly turn for help to their peers and the societal values of the teenage culture for new direction. The possibility of wisdom is far more restricted.

There was a time when elders, parents and extended family members provided a context for a teenager's floundering efforts to find oneself. But family mobility has parted company with extended family, elders have been relegated to "old fashioned" and parents are commonly in the throes of their own midlife crises when their children are teenagers.

The value crises for parents in today's world do have some important differences from the struggles of parents in decades gone by. I will not attempt to pinpoint these changes, but simply refer the reader to the reality of a world of increasing complexities. An "age of narcissism" may be an apt description for parents who burrow into the holes of self-preoccupation in order not to be overwhelmed by outer confusions. Ernest Becker (1973) spoke of our need for "hideouts" from a world of both intense awesomeness as well as horror. It would appear that there has resulted a grave loss for modern people of that edge of intensity that once inflamed great passions, hopes and personal missions. Profound passion has been dissipated by a multitude of desires chasing phantom satisfactions. Faith in progress maintains false hopes in controlled versions of "happiness." But when the bubbles burst, we do not realize how we have been duped, or fool ourselves, because the cause of progress calls for a scapegoat upon which we can heap blame. If we believe ourselves a part of a society on the right track, we require ideologies about victimization to explain our suffering. These ideologies are offered in the form of disease models of mental illness and addictions as well as conspiratorial models that declare entire groups of people to be at fault. These ideologies are no less

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Reflections on Teenage Suicide and Adult Addictions, Donald F. Krill
(Continued from page 10).

common among the political left than among the political right. Insurance companies, mental “health” institutions and agencies, as well as inpatient settings for addicts and teenagers all play their parts in this grand scapegoating melodrama. While the libertarian Thomas Szasz (1984) has been dismissed by many because of his provocative opinions, he has certainly been one of the clear-sighted prophets in this particular shuffle.

Allan Bloom’s (1987) Closing of the American Mind suggests that the woes of our present society, especially among the young people, are philosophical in nature. While Bloom opposes the existentialists, these too are philosophers, theologians, artists, and authors who have conveyed a similar concern for more than half a century (Krill, 1986). Perhaps American society has come near that state of anomie that had plagued Europeans decades ago.

If a central ingredient of our modern value confusion is the loss of the edge of intensity, that is, of profound passion, what corrections are indicated? How do we move beyond our protective personal-social screens to experience the tragedy, the mystery, and the personal anguish of the human experience? Can we risk facing our deepest yearnings so as to be able to recognize the absurdities concerning happiness hawked by societal values? A personal awareness of approaching death does this spontaneously for many people, yet their resulting awakening is usually too late to impact others.

Our popularized “pursuit of excellence” has been a useful concern for vitality in the realm of pragmatic-technological endeavors. How can this commitment address the pursuit of truth in the worlds of philosophy, religion, great art and literature? There must first of all be a confrontation with our personal insufficiencies in these realms. From a springboard of “the absurd” perhaps we as parents and helping professionals may begin to open ourselves to the wisdom of past and even ancient knowledge. Graduate programs and staff development seminars might then stimulate hunger not for new theories, but for old truths.

Teenagers are hungering for heroes, not more of the comics and Hollywood variety, but wise models. They need to hear that adults of importance to them are not afraid of the ambiguities and tragedies of life. They need to see that we are passionately interested in the great questions with which humanity has always struggled. We cannot fool them with superficial, neatly packaged systems for happiness. Parents need not run like sheep to the social and psychological scientists for explanations and havens of rest. If parents are afraid of what they do not know (including the dark sides of progress and achievement) let them share these uncertainties with their teenagers. Counselors can do the same. We can demonstrate to teenagers that we are more than thoughtless consumers or followers of propaganda. We can use our anxiety creatively and demonstrate our independent spirit. We can dialogue with family, friends and fellow professionals about our current life complexities and of some important possible linkages with the wisdom from the past. And we can dare assert what a moral life is about in our everyday confrontations with a world of false lures and deceitful solutions.

Nicholas Berdyaev (1962), the Russian existential philosopher, was called “the apostle of freedom.” He stressed the creativity of our spirit, of our primal freedom, in contrast to adapting ourselves to the heaviness, the objectification or solidification of bourgeois values. For Berdyaev the individual bears the universe, the cosmos, within oneself and it is each person’s duty to express this through creative acts. The creation of God is carried on in this world through the creation of men and women who are willing to sacrifice their attachments to worldly structures. God is personal, suffers and is in need of people willing to carry forth His work in an oppositional world (Berdyaev, 1962).

Nikos Kazantzakis (1960) reveals the needed intensity:

The Cry within me is a call to arms. It shouts: “I, the Cry, am the Lord your God! I am not an asylum. I am not hope and a home. I am the Father nor the Son nor the Holy Ghost. I am your General!” . . .

Love danger. What is most difficult? That is what I want! Which road would you take? The most craggy ascent! It is the one I also take: follow me! (p. 67).

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Editor

Common Boundary is a journal dedicated to exploring the interface between spirituality and psychotherapy. It has concerns and a history of origin similar to this newsletter. There are also some differences of focus. As a convenient source of concise articles on issues likely to be of interest to our readers, it seems appropriate to review Common Boundary as the first installment in "Transdisciplinary News."

According to Charles Simpkinson (1989), the publisher, the journal grew out of networking efforts, begun in 1980, connected with conferences on spirituality and family therapy. An informal newsletter established in 1981 expanded into a formal 36 page journal with 10,000 subscribers by 1989. The journal publication uses a brief article format of essays and reviews to cover a wide variety of current topics ranging from conventional spiritually-oriented psychotherapies to popularized "New Age" helping practices. Views that support and oppose specific spiritually-oriented therapies and theories are presented. For example, the Jan/Feb 1989 issue discussed the esoteric Christian "Course in Miracles" and standards for discriminating valid psychic practices (such as "channeling"). The March/April 1989 issue featured an article about a Jungian analyst (Marion Woodman) discussing the importance of feminine spiritual symbolism. The May/June 1989 issue featured a review of the anthropologist, Felicitas Goodman, and her development of body postures to facilitate trance experiences, derived from ethnographic studies of shamanism. The Nov/Dec 1989 issue presented some views of the Vietnamese Buddhist monk, Thich Nhat Han, on psychotherapy and Buddhism.

The journal conducted a survey of readers (619 responded out of 6,500) in 1987. The results (Simpkinson & Bruck, 1988) indicate the type of interests among readers (not reported consistently). The third largest occupational group of respondents was social workers (34) and the second largest group of respondents involved in counseling was social workers (52). Many respondents were originally Roman Catholic (163/614), currently identify their "faith tradition" as spiritual (125/610) or none (95/610), and are primarily involved in individual private practice (146/414). The five "most interesting topics" were rated as transpersonal psychology (220), intuition (176), dreamwork (171), spiritual direction (170), and meditation (165). The "top" three books were rated as The Bible (65), The Road Less Traveled by M. Scott Peck (42), and A Course In Miracles by the Foundation for Inner Peace (36).

Unfortunately, correlations between variables are not made and the reliability and validity of the methodology are not discussed. So it is not possible to take speculations on these figures very far. Yet there is a clear implication that many of the Common Boundary readers are helping professionals who would consider themselves highly spiritual but little involved in conventional religious institutions. The contributions to the journal also de-emphasize conventional religious perspectives, such as Jewish and Christian community based helping. Eastern traditions, such as Buddhism, receive more attention in articles, but even these have not been discussed with regard to traditional culture-specific community-based contexts for spirituality in much detail. Further, both survey responses and articles emphasize professional and unconventional psychotherapeutic helping with individuals, families, and groups. Agency-based practice, administrative activity, community organization, and macro scale issues of social policy are barely treated beyond some broad criticism of social injustice (e.g. Grof, 1989). This is not to imply that the journal should be expected to deal with these matters—after all, it is focused on psychotherapy. However, I would hope that the social work readership of Common Boundary would ask its editors to increase their attention to the connections between the personal and the political, the psychological and the sociological, the spiritual and the religious, and the private and the communal. Indeed I attempted to alert the editors to current developments in spiritually-sensitive social work, but I never received a reply. Nor has any social work book or journal article been reviewed in Common Boundary. I will send a copy of this newsletter to the publisher and invite a reply.

If Common Boundary was already dealing with these matters, it might not have been necessary to begin the Spirituality and Social Work Communicator. My comments above should not be read as a negative judgment of Common Boundary. I subscribe to it because it is a highly useful and thoughtful publication. Despite its popularized layout and profuse advertisements, I would recommend it as a reference for clinically-oriented social workers who are interested in current popular developments in spiritually-sensitive psychotherapy. My comments are intended to emphasize the limitations of the journal for social work purposes and to clarify some of the issues that I hope the Communicator will address.

REFERENCES
Afterword
Spirituality Reexamined

The invitational essays of this inaugural issue of the *Communicator* highlight the importance of clarifying what we mean by *spirituality*. This is not merely an academic concern. The conceptualization of spirituality implies theoretical, theological and philosophical positions. It establishes assumptions for dealing in a helpful or harmful manner with religious and spiritual diversity in social work practice. Siporin suggests that certain forms of prevalent psychopathology, criminal behavior, and social injustice are rooted in moral and spiritual malaise. Kilrilli similarly relates crises of meaning for American teenagers and adults to narcissism, superficiality, and spiritual banality. Constan's observations caution us about the dangers of severing the link between private and public, individual and communal, personalistic and institutional, humanly constructed and divinely inspired dimensions of spirituality. Logan reaffirms the need to celebrate and incorporate diverse and even disparate forms of spirituality. If we agree that spirituality is a crucial factor in personal and societal well-being, then it is critical to explicate what it is.

I set forth a conceptualization of spirituality in order to stimulate dialogue on the subject and to establish a basis for further efforts to clarify a definition suitable for social work purposes (Canda, 1986, 1988a, 1988b, 1989). Given the above considerations and continuing misunderstanding (Sanzbenbach, Canda, & Joseph, 1989), it seems appropriate to reconsider this conceptualization. I will not repeat the details of this conceptualization, its origin, or its practice implications, since these can be found in the original writings.

To summarize, conceptualized spirituality as the gestalt of the total process of human life and development, encompassing biological, mental, social, and spiritual aspects. It is not reducible to any of these components; rather, it is the wholeness of what it is to be human. This is the broadest meaning of the term. Of course, a person's spirituality is concerned significantly with the spiritual aspect of experience. In the narrow sense of the term spirituality, it relates to the spiritual component of an individual or group's experience. The *spiritual* relates to the person's search for a sense of meaning and morally fulfilling relationships between oneself, other people, the encompassing universe, and the ontological ground of existence, whether a person understands this in terms that are theistic, atheistic, nontheistic, or any combination of these.

While I take responsibility for the flaws of this conceptualization, its merits are due to the insights of the informants from my original research. The merits are noteworthy. First, it is inclusive of diverse beliefs and behaviors, without making a priori disputational judgments about them. Second, it addresses the holistic nature of spirituality: it is the whole of the person in relationship. It does not imply alienating dichotomies such as spirit versus nature, individual versus community, immanent versus transcendent, or soul versus body. Third, it appreciates religious institutional contexts for expressing spirituality, but it does not assume that spirituality is limited to them. Fourth, it expands the social work concept of person-in-environment to include the wholeness of the person in the context of cosmological and ontological understandings of the environment, such as beliefs and experiences pertaining to a soul, spirit powers, God, demons, or cosmic consciousness. This is to say that professional recognition of spirituality mandates agreement with such beliefs or experiences; rather, it takes them into account as prevalent within all human cultures throughout history.

However, there are peculiarities about such a conceptualization. I would like to consider several of these in order to advocate for the merits of using the conceptualization despite its limitations. First, the word spirituality includes the root *spirit*. The term spirit denotes some kind of nonphysical entity or force, such as a soul or a divine (or malign) noncorporeal being. Yet not all spiritual perspectives accept belief in such an entity or force. Certainly, some of the atheist respondents in my study did not believe in spirit or spirits, but they employed the term spirituality usefully anyway. So spirituality as defined here does not necessarily (although it may) have the common connotation of relating to a noncorporeal realm, force, or entity. So, for philosophical materialists (such as atheists) or for believers in a soul, spirits, or God, this may be awkward. Yet I believe that the imperative to be inclusive should outweigh concern over this unconventional usage.

Second, some people will insist that valid spirituality cannot be separated from their own particular belief systems. People who insist on linking spirituality with particular religions or beliefs may find this conceptualization objectionable. Yet again, in view of professional commitment to inclusion of diversity, a general conceptualization of spirituality for social work purposes cannot be based upon exclusivist and competitive assumptions. We need a term that is descriptive and nonjudgmental. This poses a paradoxical challenge— that a truly inclusive understanding of spirituality needs to include exclusivist views without being limited to them.

Third, if spirituality is the totality of human life, one may ask why use the term at all? Why not just refer to human existence, being, or life? Actually, I would not have a problem with this under two conditions: that in referring to human life, social workers did not so often leave out consideration of ontological, moral, and mystical issues; and that in using terms such as existence or being we customarily understood these in metaphysical as well as physical terms. In Sanskrit, this is not such a problem (e.g. *atman* can mean

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Afterword: Spirituality Reexamined, Editor (Continued from page 13.)

soul, self, or ultimate reality). But in common use of English, social workers often have materialistic or reductionist understandings of human life in mind unless they explicitly use terms such as spiritual or transpersonal. If social workers established a consensus on a truly holistic understanding of human life, then perhaps the term spirituality, in the broad sense, could be dispensed with.

Fourth, spirituality is asserted to relate to the totality or gestalt of human life. It is a nonreducible sui generis phenomenon. But that leaves a critical philosophical question glaring: Is this gestalt a property that emerges from and transcends the complex synergistic interaction of the constituent aspects of human life (the bio-psycho-social-environmental) as general systems theory might suggest? Or is it something granted to human existence by divine action? Or is it something else? It seems to me that these quandaries ought to be left unanswered within the general conceptualization. Yet at the specific level of identifying and comparing particular individuals' and groups' spiritualities and religious behaviors, we need to attend to their views of these matters.

Fifth, the conceptualization does not lend itself to simple operationalizations. Spirituality, as a sui generis phenomenon, cannot be reduced to constituent elements. Therefore, it cannot be captured and measured in the operational terms that experimentalists and statisticians enjoy. For example, a variable such as ‘religiosity’ may be measured by counting how many times per month a person attends a church, synagogue, or temple. Yet this says nothing about the person’s moral development, level of commitment to a religious institution, inner mystical experiences, or private devotional practice. It is fraught with cultural and religious bias as well. That is not to say that aspects of spiritual and religious behavior cannot be defined in more careful, measurable terms for the sake of research expedience. However, limitations due to the expedient and unrealistic nature of such reductionism should always be specified in studies.

Finally, while the term spirituality, as distinct from institutionalized religion, is becoming popular in the general public and within the helping professions, it has a narrow use among our colleagues in academic religious studies. In interdisciplinary communication, we need to specify the meanings of our terms. For example, The Encyclopedia of Religion (Eliade, 1987) and The Penguin Dictionary of Religion (Hinnells, 1984) do not even include the term in their general meaning. It is included only in the form Christian Spirituality (Eliade, 1987). The Encyclopedic Dictionary of Religion (Meager, 1979), produced under Catholic auspices, defines spirituality as “the form or manner of living the Christian life in such a way as to advance in Christian perfection, mainly through the practice of prayer” (p. 3371). Indeed, among my original study informants, those who were not Christian had many reservations about using the word if defined in theistic/trinitarian terms. The Christians also cautioned about the dangers of setting up dichotomies such as spiritual/physical or spiritual/worldly.

Perhaps in order to avoid limitations of Christian language, the field of comparative religious studies uses the term religion to refer to the general human concern with meaning, sacredness, and ultimate priorities, as well as to specific institutional and noninstitutional forms of religious behavior (King, 1987). Thus, the term religion in religious studies has much the same range of application as the term spirituality in my definition. We could, as a profession, adopt the term religion in place of spirituality. Yet many social workers have a toxic reaction to the term religion because of its association with competing sectarian perspectives within the history of our profession. Also, the term religion does not avoid ambiguity or controversy even within the field of religious studies. So, as an expedient measure, it seems useful to employ the term spirituality as conceptualized here. Hopefully, its definition will be refined. It may be desirable, given the ineffable quality of spirituality, that some ambiguity and imprecision is intentionally accepted within its conceptualization. Perhaps, as Constable suggests in his essay, the term, used in its broad sense, is transitional. If social workers become sufficiently holistic and inclusivist, it may no longer be necessary. But that does not seem likely in the near future.

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Foreword
Editor

INTRODUCTION
This second issue of the Communicator marks the completion of the first year's existence for the Spirituality and Social Work Network. It has been exciting for me to witness the expansion of professional interest in this topic as demonstrated by conference presentations, articles, personal correspondence, and network membership growth. The growth of membership in the Spirituality and Social Work Network is remarkable. With very little investment in publicity, word of the network has spread throughout the United States and internationally. Membership expanded from approximately 50 at the time of the first issue to approximately 150. Members represent 29 states, Washington, D.C., and Israel. International connections have been made with the International Association of Schools of Social Work that promise to extend our vantage beyond North America further. The world is experiencing many wonderful transformations and terrible conflicts that have religious and spiritual aspects. I am very enthusiastic about this network's potential to continue to stimulate the social work profession to play an important and creative part in the spiritual development of local, national, and global levels of the human community. Please continue to spread the word about the network to interested friends and colleagues.

ISSUE THEME
This issue is dedicated to promote professional understanding and appreciation of spiritual diversity. In particular, it honors one of the most neglected and persecuted spiritual traditions in the United States—that of Native American Indians. It is my pleasure to include two essays in this issue that address Native American spirituality and social work. The first article, by Venida Chenault, describes a Native American social worker's attempt to integrate her native spirituality into a conceptual framework for social work practice. I selected her essay from those submitted for my course, Spring 1990, on Spirituality and Social Work Practice. I am impressed by her ability to articulate a convergence of Native American and social work values, beliefs, and behaviors especially considering that there is little precedence for this in the literature. The second article, by Maikwe Parsons Cross, describes an innovation in clinical practice that utilizes the Grof Holotropic Breathwork technique with Native American clients. This article illustrates the fascinating challenge of applying new developments in transpersonal psychology to culturally and spiritually diverse clients.

THANKS TO SUPPORTERS
I would like to thank the people who have offered advice and support to me during this first year of the network's operation. These include: Moni Cheung, University of Hawaii; Robert Constable, Loyola University of Chicago; Maikwe Parsons Cross, Lansing, Michigan; Lowell Jenkins, Colorado State University; M. Vincentia Joseph, Catholic University of America; Donald Krill, University of Denver; Daniel Lee, Loyola University of Chicago; Sadye Logan, University of Kansas; Patrick J. O'Brien, San Francisco; Max Siporin, SUNY-Albany. I am also very grateful to Dean Ann Weick and the KU School of Social Welfare for supporting this effort with institutional sponsorship and secretarial assistance in production of the Communicator.

NEW DIRECTIONS
I would like to offer some suggestions for new or expanded activities of the network, based upon comments I've received and my own ideas. All readers

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CALL FOR PAPERS

The *Spirituality and Social Work Communicator* invites essays on these and other topics:
1. Diverse perspectives on spirituality and social work.
2. Transpersonal psychology and social work.
3. Application of religious practices to social work.
4. Spiritual aspects of self-help movements (e.g., Alcoholics Anonymous).

Articles appropriate for *Transdisciplinary News, Updates, Readers' Responses, and Working Paper Exchange* are also welcome. See the guidelines in Vol. 1, Issue 1. Use APA style; 6-7 double spaced pages in length; Wordstar 5 word processing is desirable; Self-addressed stamped envelope please.

Deadline for next issue: November 15, 1990.

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SUBSCRIPTION FORM

*RENEW NOW OR SUBSCRIPTION EXPIRES*

Includes Winter and Summer issues, 1991.

Mail to: Edward R. Canda, *Spirituality and Social Work Network*, School of Social Welfare, Twente Hall, University of Kansas, Lawrence, KS 66045-2310, USA.

NAME ____________________________________________

STREET __________________________________________

CITY, STATE ______________________________________

ZIP CODE, COUNTRY ______________________________

I wish to have my name and address listed in a public directory of social workers and other helping professionals interested in spirituality for the purpose of networking.

☐ YES ☐ NO

Enclosed is my check, payable to *Spirituality and Social Work Network*, for: $8.00

* PLEASE SPREAD THE NEWS *

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Foreword, (Continued from page 1.)

are invited to write or call me about your reactions. I will also be in touch with the informal advisory group, mentioned above, for guidance.

I am in the process of applying for nonprofit organizational status. This will involve formalizing a statement of purpose, an organizational structure, and officers. I am also considering establishing a procedure for formal refereeing of articles submitted for the Essays portion of the Communicator. If there is sufficient interest, we may eventually move toward a journal format. I hope to connect our network with similar activities in other countries, so that we support and strengthen spiritually-sensitive social work internationally. I would like to consider whether a conference on spirituality and social work would be useful and how it could be implemented. I would also be interested in pursuing the possibility of producing a special issue of a major social work journal on spirituality. Finally, I wish to update the bibliography on religion and social work that was sent to network members. I am seeking volunteers to assist that project. I will appreciate the suggestions and help of the membership regarding any of these activities.

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The traditional Indians, when they prayed, their prayers were always
"Not only for myself do I ask this,
but that the people may live, the people may live." Any of us can dream,
but when you seek a vision,
you do this not only for yourself
but that people may live,
that life may be better for all of us...
Yes, the earth itself is in need of healing.
And I feel that any way I can help,
that is my mission: to make it whole,
to pay attention to that wholeness,
not only in ourselves
but also in relation to the earth.
- Brooke Medicine Eagle
Quoted from *Shamanic Voices*, edited by Joan Halifax (New York: Dutton, 1979, p. 90).
It was wonderful to find the inaugural issue of SSWC in the mailbox when I returned to my field placement after the holidays. The diverse, complex, inclusive, and respectful approach to the study of spirituality was refreshing. I enjoyed reading the articles, making notes, and adding each one to my thesis references. A global perspective on spirituality seems to be emerging from the research notes. It is a delight to discover other workers exploring spirituality related to social work practice. Jacquelyn Marshall, Houston, Texas.

Congratulations! The inaugural issue of the Spirituality and Social Work Communicator is superb. It certainly reflects a lot of hard work on your part as editor to bring together the contributing authors and to form the nucleus of what promises to be a vital source for the profession. I am anxious and ever-ready to participate with you in establishing a working network to promote a spirited investigation into transpersonal/spiritual issues. How exciting to watch the coming-together of some of the great scholars in social work today around a topic so important as this. Max Siporin’s contribution had me nodding in agreement throughout. Elizabeth D. Smith, Laurel, MD.

As a graduate student currently pursuing an MSW who also experienced a spiritual awakening during the charismatic renewal of the early ‘70’s, I have been both challenged and frustrated. Believing as I do that my values and principles are no more than vain and empty rhetoric without some practical application, I wanted to enter the helping professions. In my academic pursuits both at the undergraduate and graduate level I quickly found that, even though we were encouraged to get in touch with and evaluate our own belief systems, I was tempted to become a closet believer. (However, I have never succumbed to the temptation.) Surrounded by students and faculty who were of the liberal, humanistic persuasion I was definitely in the minority—part of an eccentric, fringe element to be tolerated but with no credibility. Joining the profession’s national association only reinforced my feelings of isolation. This in turn began to impact my attempts to reconcile what I was hearing in the classroom and experiencing in the field from supervisors and other professionals with what I believed to be true. In their generalist approach to the human condition and environmental influences—looking at the whole system—a very obvious and essential component was missing: the spiritual.

Client/patient case studies were analyzed and discussed from every other imaginable angle...treatment strategies rose and fell...impressive sounding theories were espoused only to be replaced by even more elaborate (and often ludicrous) ones. Among all this intense and fervent study, which left us students, regardless of our theoretical inclinations, dazed in a kind of post-traumatic stress syndrome, nothing was ever directly addressed with regard to spirituality (either our own or our clients).

With such emphasis on respecting client values and beliefs and the obvious import of our spirituality (however it may be defined) this is incredulous to me and could almost seem to be a blatantly conscious effort. It certainly is an essential omission whose absence implicates those guilty of it.

Then I began to hear about organizations such as yours. I look forward with great anticipation to future articles and responses that too long have been neglected. Hopefully the additional insight into problems presented by clients will enhance and complement those areas already being addressed. I for one am confident that this is a definite step in the right direction—one that should have been taken long before now. Ray E. Burmood, Columbia, MO.

Congratulations on the first issue of the COMMUNICATOR. You did a great job. Even a “little newsletter” takes a lot of work. There are not many who are prepared to invest the kind of time that this takes. Keep up the effort!

Your “Afterword” makes a real contribution to the use and misuse of both “spirituality” and “religion.” Unlike you, I am not convinced that the use of the term spirituality, rather than religion, really solves the problems that you raise. In fact, I am convinced that using spirituality adds one more problem, that of misunderstanding what we mean. Religion, such as in “civil religion”, need not be tied to any specific theistic, organizational framework; on the other hand, it is a term that is in common use and understood. As long as we hold out for a pluralism in religion, as we do in all other areas of life, I think it would be preferable to use it. Anyhow, that is how I would vote.

Frank M. Loewenberg, Bar-Ilan University, Israel.

READERS’ RESPONSES

Grandfather, Great Spirit, once more behold me
on earth and lean to hear my feeble voice.
You lived first, and you are older than all need,
older than all prayer.
All things belong to you -- the two leggeds,
the four leggeds, the wings of the air
and all green things that live.
You have set the powers of the four quarters
to cross each other.
The good road and the road of difficulties
you have made to cross;
and where they cross, the place is holy.
Day in and day out, forever,
you are the life of things.

- from a prayer by (Nicholas) Black Elk, as written
by John G. Neihardt, quoted from Black Elk
Speaks (New York: Washington Square Press,
1932, p. 232).
UPDATES

* The NASW Annual Conference "Social Work 90" will include a networking session on spirituality, November 14 - 17 in Boston. For information, call the NASW Conference Office at 1-800-638-8799. - Ed.

* The International Association of Schools of Social Work sponsored a workshop on "Spiritual, Philosophical and Ideological Crises: Dilemmas in Social Work Education and Practice," March 12 - 16, 1990 in Dubrovnik, Yugoslavia. My correspondence with the IASSW Secretary-General, Dr. Vera Mehta, and one of the workshop coordinators, Professor David Brandon (author of Zen in the Art of Helping) indicates that there is growing interest in the spirituality/social work connection in Europe. For more information, write: Dr. Vera Mehta, Secretary-General, IASSW, Palais Pallfy, Josefplatz 6, 1010 Vienna, Austria. - Ed.

* Thanks to Patrick L. O'Brien, MSW (formerly of Honolulu, recently moved to San Francisco). In support of the Network on Spirituality and Social Work, he placed a related ad in NASW News. His summary report follows. - Ed.

A one-time ad in the NASW News (Jan 90, p. 39) was placed to assess the level of interest regarding the neglect or integration of spirituality in social work. Thirty-two colleagues from twenty-one different states responded and indicated strong agreement with the need to address the neglect of spirituality by the profession. Many shared how spirituality directly relates to their work context (terminal illness, addictions, healing relationships, and personal growth). The ad led to additional colleagues being connected to the Communicator, initiated the exchange of helpful resources, and circulated a working paper on a trans-religious model of integrating spirituality into practice. - Patrick J. O'Brien.

* The Gandhi Society of Social Workers is a forum for social workers interested in pursuing peace and justice through nonviolent, spiritually-sensitive means. The director, Tom Walz, has been conducting research and conferences on this topic in India, Latin America, and the United States. For information, write: Dr. Thomas Walz, University of Iowa, School of Social Work, North Hall, Iowa City, Iowa 52242. - Ed.

* Social Thought is a journal that supports strongly the publication of articles linking issues of philosophy, spirituality, and social work. The editor especially invites members of our network to submit articles. Also, be sure that your library maintains this subscription, since it is an important reference source on this topic. Write: Eleanor Hannon Judah, Editor, Social Thought, 1319 F. Street N.W., Suite 400, Washington, D.C. 20004. - Ed.

* The Study Group for Philosophical Issues in Social Work is an evolving group which began with ten of us at a weekend meeting in May 1985. Until that point we had known of each other and our common interests for the most part only through our publications or conference presentations. We all, however, had felt the need for a collegial group in which to share ideas and find mutual support for the search for more adequate philosophical foundations for this profession. All of us were frustrated by the largely unchallenged, and often unrecognized, dominance of the philosophy of positivism in academic social work. While we recognized the cultural origins of this philosophy and the ways it has permeated most areas of our society, including most disciplines in academia, we felt it was particularly inappropriate for a field concerned with complex human problems and the need to understand in some depth what it means to be a human being and what is most valuable and important in human lives.

In the five years since that first meeting we have expanded to a mailing list of about 250 academics, practitioners and students, with about one fifth of that group subscribing to our recently inaugurated newsletter edited by Stan Witkin at the School of Social Work at Florida State University. Because of the wide geographical area represented by our membership, until now our activities have largely been associated with the Annual Program Meetings of the Council on Social Work Education. At the 1986 conference in Miami we began what has become an annual open discussion meeting, usually on Saturday afternoon. In addition, we have participated in the development of the symposium structure of the conferences and have qualified for a symposium each year. At these symposia refereed papers of relevance to philosophical concerns are presented and discussed. Many good ideas and personal friendships have grown from these meetings and some new activities have had their beginnings there, as for example, the newsletter and an independent small discussion group meeting regularly in the Boston area.

We would like to invite anyone from the group subscribing to this newsletter on issues of spirituality and social work to join us in our endeavors. Perhaps our most notable common ground is the emphasis on the importance of openness to possibilities of learning from a wide variety of perspectives. We believe that new insights for the improvement of social work can come from many different directions and that an unnecessarily narrow philosophical position should not be allowed to foreclose the use of common and uncommon resources for this purpose. From the content of your first newsletter it seems that you share our concern for clarifying and strengthening our understanding of how to teach and practice good social work as emotionally connected and simultaneously morally and intellectually disciplined. Such a practice requires a receptiveness to whatever resources have the potential to help us in our efforts to understand the many important dimensions of human life.

(Continued on page 5.)
INTRODUCTION

In my search to find meaning and purpose in life, I returned to Native American people for answers. The teachings which were given and which I continue to seek understanding of, were instrumental in my decision to continue my professional education in social work. These teachings continue to provide direction and meaning for my life and have sustained me throughout my formal education.

The intent of this paper is to explore how my spirituality relates to my social work practice.

KNOWLEDGE BASE

Spirituality or the wholeness of a person as one strives to attain a sense of meaning in relationship to individuals, communities and the universe (Canda, 1988a, pg. 35), can be related to a shamanistic perspective (Canda, 1988a, pg. 33). Although I do not consider myself to be a shaman, the beliefs, values and practice related ideas of this conceptualization reflect most accurately the base from which I perceive my spirituality. A shamanistic perspective emphasizes beliefs that include: the need for people to remain in harmony with nature and the spirits, as well as beliefs in cultural traditions and spiritual visions (Canda, 1988a, pg. 33).

In the beliefs of a shamanistic perspective, the concepts of worldview and cosmic harmony are important. Worldview refers to a people's concept of existence and their view of the universe and its powers (Hultkrantz, 1987, pgs. 21-26). A recognition of the powers of both the natural and supernatural world and the interplay between the two is a consideration that frequently arises in my assessment of certain events and occurrences in which a state of imbalance is suggested. In addition to Creator, my spiritual understanding extends itself to include other powers of life, equally as important, i.e., Mother Earth, Grandmother Moon, Grandfather Sun, the Grandfathers of the East, South, West and North. These teachings of the Drum Religion of the Prairie Band Potawatomi share similarities to the beliefs of other Native American people. For example, supernatural powers can be found in the mythic world of the Navajo people, as well (Hultkrantz, 1987, pg. 25). I have observed the four sacred mountains (Mount Blanca, Navajo Mountain, Mount Taylor and the San Francisco Peaks) and witnessed the respect demonstrated for these sacred places in the spiritual practices of Navajo people. My acceptance of my own tribal teachings about the supernatural powers of life enables me to transfer an understanding and respect for the beliefs of other tribes' spiritual practices.

Cosmic harmony refers to the balance which exists between all of life and from which respect for life is derived (Hultkrantz, 1987, pgs. 27-29). My personal experience participating in the Drum religion of the Potawatomi is one avenue through which I’ve learned about cosmic harmony. My participation in various ceremonies has enabled me to learn about the songs and prayers that honor all of life. As a result, I’ve received a greater awareness of the need for balance in life and the responsibility of each living creature towards the maintenance of balance.

In addition to Drum "doings", balance is also sought through the use of the sweat lodge. This sacrifice of self through suffering also seeks to restore balance in life, including balance of self. Participation in these lodges has enabled me to rid myself of ailments (both physical and mental) which have created situations of imbalance.

I have also participated in the Beauty Way ceremony of the Navajo. This ceremony was performed after I’d been told by my physician that my child would be born with genetic defects. The
A Native American Practice Framework, Venida S. Chenault.

(Continued from p. 5.)

ceremony was undertaken to correct the imbalance. Upon its completion, we were told that all would be well and to think positive. When I returned to the doctor to have another series of tests taken, the results gave no indication of any problem and the first set of results were declared in error. The medicine man who performed the ceremony had also told us that this would happen.

My belief in the strengths of the cultural traditions of Native Americans and the teachings derived from traditional practices provides me with an alternative way of viewing existence and reinforces my commitment to all of life. The similarities I’ve found among tribes in relationship to worldview and cosmic harmony provides me with a foundation for a holistic approach to the provision of services for Native Americans.

VALUE ORIENTATION

The values identified as reflective of a shamanistic perspective include: (1) a primary task of upholding harmony in the universe and well-being of people (2) a commitment to help people and to honor the earth and sky powers (3) the cultivation of skill, wisdom and compassion (Canda, 1988a, pg. 33).

These values are also reflected in social work practice. The practice of social work has as its purposes: (1) assist individuals and groups to identify and resolve problems arising out of disequilibrium between themselves and their environment (2) to identify potential areas of disequilibrium between individuals and groups and the environment in order to prevent the occurrence of disequilibrium and (3) to seek out, identify and strengthen the maximum potential in individuals, groups and communities.

RELEVANT PRACTICE STRATEGIES AND TECHNIQUES:

The practice implications identified for a shamanistic perspective include: (1) caring and directive helping relationships (2) aim of helping client towards wholeness and harmony with the world and (3) the potential for use of meditation, ritual and nature retreats in the work (Canda, 1988a, pg. 33-34).

My commitment to helping people and to honoring the earth and all the powers of life is ever present. Depending on the client, and the individual perspective, I may choose to discuss the concept of harmony/balance in identifying where imbalance is occurring, or I may choose to use prayer (outside the session) for the individual for whom I feel imbalance exists but who may not share my perspective. My belief that problems result from a lack of balance in life and my commitment to assisting people to regain balance are values which form guidelines for my work. My appeal, by prayer, to the powers of life, that may be considered as supernatural, is important for the client, as well as for myself.

The recognition of the shamanistic perspective rooted in cultural tradition is very important. In determining what resources may be available to assist the client, I believe it important to assess the role (if any) of cultural traditions. I do not hesitate to refer clients to traditional medicine people when work is not progressing. An example of this can be found in the following example in which I was attempting to provide services to a Hmong refugee, who continually failed to meet the requirements of a work program because of stomach pains. Medical exemptions had been provided but when several statements were received that indicated no medical reason had been found for his stomach pain, this exemption could no longer be used. In exploring the Hmong culture further, I asked whether there were traditional healers in the community and suggested the client seek services for his problem through this avenue. He eventually moved out of state to be closer to his family - where a traditional healer was available. It could be argued that the illness was only an attempt to avoid working and a penalty could have been applied that would have closed the state aid case for this family. My commitment to help people, to respect cultural tradition and to work towards balance contributed, in my mind, to a more positive outcome.

This family moved hundreds of miles closer to their extended family and traditional support system. They were also encouraged to make use of that which made sense to them, i.e. the traditional healer and the ceremonies that go with this way of life, which in itself is likely to produce a more positive outlook.

The potential for use of cultural traditions in work with Native Americans is also important to consider. The sweat lodge, as with other traditional healing practices, can serve as an important ritual for healing of both the worker and client. The rebirth and strengthening which occurs in each lodge, enables the participants to identify areas with which they struggle as well as joining with the powers of life to invite healing and resolution of difficulties. The combination of Native American practices with social work practice offers the potential for a culturally sensitive approach to services. As a Native American who is living in two worlds (Native and Euro-American), I have found that my budding spirituality has provided me with a foundation for service which extends to a diversity of tribes and cultures. Although there are differences in particular ceremonies from people to people, my personal experience has increased my awareness of basic similarities among practices which are reflected in the values and beliefs of a shamanistic perspective. My worldview and the importance I place on cosmic harmony enable me to negotiate and respect ways that are different from my own. In many ways, my spirituality has developed into an eclectic one in which I have incorporated that which has worked and which makes sense from other Native people.

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A Native American Practice Framework,
Venida S. Chenault.
(Continued from p. 6.)

The professional values of social work and the development of my practice skills contribute to the formation of a powerful holistic practice strategy for work with Native and non-Native clients. As I come to understand my own spirituality, my scope of concern for all of life continues to expand.

* Venida S. Chenault, MSW, is a Social Worker in Lawrence, Kansas.

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Everett, Frances. Providing services to American Indian children and families. Professional Psychology: Research and Practice, 14(5).

Holotropic Breathwork and Native Americans
Maikwe Parsons Cross

This article presents a brief overview of Holotropic Breathwork, developed by Stanislav Grof, M.D. and Christina Grof, with a focus on its use with Native Americans. It is my experience in social work with Native Americans that traditional Western therapeutic approaches often do not fit with their indigenous spirituality and world view. Breathwork is a technique I have used in clinical practice for two years to incorporate a spiritual or transpersonal perspective that is consistent with the world view of Native Americans.

Holotropic Breathwork is a powerful and comprehensive approach to self-exploration and healing, combining insights from modern consciousness research, depth psychology, and various spiritual practices, including shamanism. The name holotropic means aiming for totality or moving toward wholeness (Grof, 1988). As in shamanism, the approach mobilizes the spontaneous healing potential of the psyche in non-ordinary states of consciousness. The goals of Holotropic Breathwork are pursuit of a more rewarding life strategy, self-discovery, personality transformation, philosophical and spiritual quest and consciousness evolution.

The holotropic model respects the social work values of honoring the worth, dignity and uniqueness of the client and client self-determination. It validates the client's core experience and places the locus of control within him or her, fostering a sense of mastery and independence. The client is the real expert because of his or her immediate and direct access to the intrinsic wisdom in the experiential process. The expertise of the breathwork facilitator, or clinician, is the capacity to be present in a powerful transformative process, to remain unperturbed no matter what arises and to instill confidence.

Grof's model differs from the thinking of mechanistic science and parallels that of Native American philosophy in several respects. He views the universe as an infinitely complex and interconnected creation involving from the beginning cosmic intelligence as a critical factor. The phenomenal world of holotropic consciousness, or ordinary reality, is just one of many experiential realms. Consciousness is mediated by the brain but does not originate in the brain, and there is potentially extrasensory access to any aspect of existence (Wilber, et al., 1985).

The main objective of Holotropic Breathwork is not gradual exploration of the individual unconscious as in most verbal Western psychotherapies, but facilitation of a powerful transforming experience of a transcendental nature, which is similar to shamanistic

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Holotropic Breathwork and Native Americans, Maikwe Parsons Cross

(Continued from p. 7.)

experience. This transforming experience is also similar in many cases to the “spiritual experience” or “spiritual awakening” as referred to in the program of Alcoholics Anonymous (Alcoholics Anonymous, 1976).

Holotropic Breathwork seeks to activate the unconscious within the context of a safe and supportive set and setting, to unblock the energy bound in emotional and psychosomatic symptoms and to convert the stationary balance of this energy into a stream of dynamic experience by supporting the emerging symptoms as they arise until resolution is reached (Grod, 1988). Symptoms represent not only a problem but an opportunity, since they are the place at which the healing process begins to manifest. They typically have a multilevel arrangement with biographical, perinatal and transpersonal bands of consciousness of the client having a common emotional theme which Grof calls systems of condensed experience, or COEX systems (Grod, 1988).

The breathwork technique is simple since it consists basically of an increased rate of respiration, music or sound technology, focused bodywork, and subsequent mandala drawing. However, it should only be attempted under the guidance of a trained facilitator, ideally in the context of a group setting in a retreat environment. During the sessions, the participants are encouraged to suspend analytical activity and to let whatever experience emerges be there with acceptance and full trust in the process. They focus attention on the breath and body sensations and maintain a respiratory pattern that is faster and more effective than usual, while intensely stimulating music is played for a period of two to three hours. Some of the music, such a shamanic drumming, is developed in other cultures specifically for the purpose of changing consciousness. Participants may experience strong emotions and physical tensions which build up to spontaneous release and resolution. There may be powerful biographical, perinatal and transpersonal experiences, or phenomena characterized as “death and rebirth” phenomena such as those described in shamanic initiation rites. Most participants naturally reach a stage of deep relaxation, peace and serenity, but if not, resolution may be facilitated at the end by focused body work. At the end of the actual breathwork session participants draw mandalas related to their breathwork experience and then verbally process their experience in a group setting. During this processing stage, Grof’s map of consciousness, which has many parallels to the worldview of Native Americans, is presented as a useful way to order the experience. He maps four bands of consciousness. The first is the sensory barrier that one passes through before the journey into the psyche begins. The second is the recollective-biographical level and the individual unconscious to which most traditional verbal psychotherapeutic approaches are limited. The third is the level of birth and death, or the encounter with the dynamics of four basic perinatal matrices. These death and rebirth phenomena are typical of those experienced in shamanic initiation rites. The fourth is the transpersonal dimension in which the participant commonly feels his or her ego boundaries have expanded. There are three major categories within this rich and varied band of transpersonal dimension: transcendence of linear time, transcendence of spatial boundaries, and experiential exploration of domains that Western culture does not consider to be part of objective reality. Many of the latter non-ordinary realities are described in shamanic traditions. Experiences in the collective unconscious or transpersonal dimension challenge the traditional worldview of Western mechanistic science and more closely resemble various branches of mystical or perennial philosophy, like that of Native Americans.

A well-known Native-American Kiowa educator has expressed that it is commonly known among Indians familiar with traditional ways that Native American tribes used the breath for purposes of spirituality and healing (J. Bread, personal communication, November 10, 1989). An Ottawa pipe-carrier, or spiritual leader, has reported that in his experience, both Holotropic Breathwork and shamanism provide direct lines to the spiritual process. He views breathwork experiences the same as experiences in the native sweat lodge ceremony. In his opinion it is the spirit which gives the experience validity no matter what the channel. (L. Sawaquat, personal communication, April 11, 1989).

A case example. A male Native American client was raised in a Native American community. He was jailed and then court-ordered to alcoholism treatment and therapy after a series of convictions for driving while intoxicated. Although he worked the twelve-step program of recovery, sobriety was a constant struggle for him until he participated in breathwork. During the experiential process he experienced a variety of extremely intense physical symptoms and other phenomena. Afterward, he expressed that for the first time ever he had a deep “knowing” of the existence of his higher power and its operation in his life. Later, he reported that there was no longer a sense of struggle in working his twelve-step program or living his daily life.

Many types of people benefit from Holotropic Breathwork, regardless of their worldview or spiritual discipline, such as those simply seeking personal growth, mental health professionals wishing to open new levels of awareness and knowledge about the healing process, and those suffering emotional and psychosomatic symptoms, including addictions. It appears to be very helpful for clients with posttraumatic stress disorders and sexual abuse survivors.

Since Holotropic Breathwork is a relatively new technique there are several questions which need further study, such as issues involving screening of clients for the technique, effectiveness with different types of clients, safeguards to be taken with certain

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Holotropic Breathwork and Native Americans, Maikwe Parsons Cross
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types of client problems (particularly severe dissociative disorders), the nature and degree of integrative work that should be required outside the experiential sessions and with whom, the effect of practitioner skill, pacing between sessions, and whether its best clinical use is as an adjunct to traditional therapy.

There appear to be advantages to the use of breathwork. It can be a powerful adjunct to the clinical process since it helps release blocked emotions and makes material available for processing and integration into the personality. It appears to greatly shorten the time the client needs to remain in therapy. It gives many clients a sense of purpose and value and the strength to work through their pain, especially when they experientially connect with their spirituality.

Maikwe Parsons Cross, MSW, is a social worker in Lansing, Michigan (see directory).

BOOK REVIEW
Frank M. Loewenberg
Religion and Social Work Practice in Contemporary American Society.

Reviewed by Sadye L. Logan

A little over three decades ago F. Ernest Johnson edited a textbook entitled Religion and Social Work. The focus of this text was on the role and nature of social welfare activities in American churches and synagogues; it also identified and discussed issues related to theology, social policy, and the impact of religion on social work. Loewenberg's book Religion and Social Work Practice extends Johnson's text and serves to refocus the profession's attention at the interface between the practice of social work and religious values and practices.

The author has done a credible job in addressing a timely and important area of social work practice and education. Emphasis is placed on the need for social workers to understand religion and its impact on human behavior as a prerequisite for effective practice.

Loewenberg stated that his intent in writing this book was to indicate points of departure for further study and research. He attempts to approach this line of inquiry in an objective way. For example, he describes himself as a believer, stating that "this book is not about my belief or about my theology" (p. XII). A major constraint on his attempt at objectivity is his narrow focus on belief systems defined in terms of Christianity and Judaism. Further, it is not clear what is meant by being a believer. Despite these shortcomings, the author for the most part has approached the subject matter in a comparatively neutral way.

The book is divided into three parts. Part I begins with attention to the broad area of values, but more specifically religious values within the context of social work practice. This section develops the background against which practice issues and problems are later examined. Also identified are some of the general attitudes of social workers. For instance, the author asserts that "most social workers ignore religion as if it were not relevant"; "a much smaller number attack religion ... as being harmful to the client ... and the profession", and "still other social workers, less prominent in the literature and fewer in number, attribute to religion a central role in both their personal and professional lives" (p. 5).

Part 2 examines various practice issues and dilemmas encountered by social workers. It is pointed out that all social workers, those holding religious and non-religious values, encounter practice dilemmas that involve religious issues. Sensitivity and empathy are emphasized as important but not sufficient treatment tools in working with religious clients.

One might consider part 2 the heart of the book, because it is here that the author not only identifies major practice concerns, but also discusses specific treatment strategies. One of the most important questions raised in this section is how a religious social worker can reconcile his or her beliefs with the professional ideology when there is conflict between the

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two. Practice situations are used to illustrate and resolve some of these conflicting value sets as well as to define problems and units of attention. The case vignettes, their analysis, and suggested interventions, however, are somewhat simplistic. One of the several cases that reflects this simplicity is Gladys' Cheats On Her Husband. Gladys was referred to the social worker by her physician because she complained of constant headaches for which there appeared to be no physical cause. The author cautioned that before analyzing this vignette, it should be recognized that not everyone who is involved in an extramarital affair will feel guilty or have headaches. However, for many others the traditional sanctions against adultery are very strong. The case analysis becomes fuzzy when the author attempts to illustrate differences in practice decisions of the practitioner who is guided by religious values and the practitioner who is guided by secular values. Essentially, it is suggested that the religiously oriented social worker would define Gladys' problem in terms of deviant behavior and identify change in that behavior as a desirable goal. The social worker whose decision is based primarily on secular values, on the other hand, may identify Gladys' guilt as the problem that must be corrected without trying to achieve behavioral changes. The factor most overlooked in these suggestions for intervention is the client's right to self-determination in deciding what she defines as the problem and how she wishes to change it. Further the emphasis on behavioral change as the most desirable goal for the religiously oriented social worker as opposed to the secular oriented social worker is not substantiated. The practice issues considered within this section include religious diversity, rituals, sin, guilt, and work with sectarian agencies and members of the clergy.

Part 3 contains the epilogue, which concludes the book. This section is concerned with the next steps for the social work profession in general and for social work research and education in particular. Specific research questions are proposed with emphasis on the need for further study in the area of practice and education.

Despite the author's attempt to remain neutral and to focus on the need to provide the practice and education community with additional knowledge about the religious aspects of social work practice, several ambiguous areas emerged. These include lack of clarity about the concepts of spirituality and religion and their relationship and meaning to each other, and, the seemingly false dichotomies between secular humanist principles and religious beliefs and between social values and spiritual values. These supposed dichotomies, not unlike the topology of client-worker value relationships (p. 86-94) oversimplify a very complex reality to make the author's point. This oversimplification is also reflected in the narrow focus and definition of religion. Overall, however, the book represents a major contribution to a difficult and often neglected aspect of the social work literature. It is an important first step in comprehensively addressing this area of study which is now on the cutting edge of research, practice, and education.

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AFTERWORD
Native American Spirituality
and Social Work
Editor

Native American Indian peoples have been subjected to policies of genocide, assimilation, and isolation throughout United States history. It is especially ironic to consider the ways in which avowedly religious clergy and laypeople, mainly Christians, have participated in this. As the Catholic monk, Thomas Merton (1966), pointed out, European and American Christians conveniently justified the destruction of native peoples by appealing to such ideas as "saving their souls may require destroying their culture." "they are not really human anyway," "their religious beliefs are the work of the devil." "our divine manifest destiny is to expand from the Atlantic to the Pacific." Many of the settlers who came here to the United States had fled religious persecution in Europe, only to spread persecution here. As a Chippewa-Cree remarked to me, when his ancestors were forced to flee from the Eastern great lakes states down through Pennsylvania and further west, finally up into the remote Canadian Rockies, the only religious group that opposed the bounty killing of his people were the Quakers.

The life of the famous Lakota shaman Black Elk, until his death in 1950, epitomized the strained effort of many Indian people to harmoniously converge Christian and native spiritualities. Besides being a shaman, guided by sacred vision to help heal his people of the wounds of genocide, he was a Catholic Catechist. (Brown, 1971; De Mallice, 1984; Neihardt, 1959). Unfortunately, certain priests did not approve of his continued practice of traditional rituals. Brown (personal communication) tells the story of how Black Elk and his friends carried on their rituals in private. If they saw a cloud of dust blow up the trail leading to Black Elk's home, they knew the priest's car was coming. So they put away their sacred things until after the visit was over. Fortunately, an attitude of mutual respect between Christian clergy and Lakota medicine people has increased in the past twenty years. Some clergy have become students of native medicine people, engaged in interreligious dialogue, and incorporated Indian religious objects and practices within the liturgical celebration (for example, see Stolzman, 1986; Zeilinger, no date). Indian/Christian reconciliation has been encouraged by a widely publicized declaration of formal apology by nine major denominations to the Indian and Eskimo peoples of the Pacific Northwest for participating in the destruction of traditional spiritual practices (Blevins, et al., 1987).

Most social workers may not have practiced sectarian motivated persecution of Indians, but some have certainly practiced secular motivated persecution. For example, the Indian Child Welfare Act was established in part to stop the coercive taking of Indian children by white people who wished to adopt or impose missionary education upon them (Unger, 1977).

It would be overly simplistic and unfair to portray this attempt to destroy the traditional lifeways of native peoples as only a "white against Indian" situation. Genocide against Indian peoples continues on a horrific scale throughout Latin America, where people of Anglo, Spanish, Portuguese, and mestizo heritage are often engaged in the persecution of Indians and the exploitation of their lands for timbering, conversion to cattle pasture, building hydroelectric dams, and oppression of liberationist movements (see the journal, Cultural Survival, for documentation of these problems).

Indians also experience conflict among themselves regarding such matters as cultural preservation versus assimilation or economic empowerment versus economic cooptation. Intertribal conflict is evident in the ongoing Hopi-Navajo land dispute, for example. Thousands of Navajo people, who have settled on land formerly permitted for joint Hopi/Navajo use, are being forced to relocate by the U.S. government as the land converts to exclusive Hopi use. Yet this conflict is more complicated than simple tribal competition. Some Hopi and Navajo are allied in opposing the relocation as a veiled scheme by government and resource industries to take control of traditional sacred lands and mountains for the purpose of economic exploitation. Among the Hopi, some traditional spiritual leaders are strongly opposed to this threat to sacred places and have come into conflict with other Hopi who might benefit from the plan.

On August 2, I conducted a workshop on the use of DSM III-R in the context of culturally sensitive practice with Native Americans. This was part of a three day annual conference for mental health and psychoactive substance abuse workers in the Oklahoma Area Indian Health Service. The conference organizers asked me to include consideration of spiritual issues. This conference was an excellent opportunity to ascertain some of the spiritual and religious concerns of Native American workers in the human services. I will summarize my major observations of spiritual strengths and difficulties as mentioned by Indian participants.

Spiritual Strengths
A few presentations included delivery of a prayer. As one participant expressed, a traditional strength of the Native American is to begin and end all activities and each day in prayer. In this way things are done in a sacred manner, with proper intention. Given the

(Continued on page 12.)
prevalence of Christian belief among participants, the prayers all used a combination of Christian and traditional ideas.

Religious resources for prayer and ritual were recommended for personal and professional use in helping people as well. One participant explained that he helps his children deal with nightmares and spiritual fears by fanning them with cedar smoke, a traditional way to purify. A participant mentioned that his substance abuse treatment program has had success by combining Native American Church peyote ceremonies for healing with the conventional treatment programs. Similarly, some other participants’ programs use the sweat lodge for helping people overcome substance abuse and mental health problems. There was much interest in linking 12 Step recovery programs with Native American spirituality. Several people expressed strong support for the idea that effective service for Native Americans must be sensitive to the distinctive cultural and spiritual experience of the client. Some participants are cultivating the ability to be comfortable in multiple cultural and religious contexts in order to serve as mediator and promoter of intertribal, interreligious, and intercultural understanding.

**Spiritual Difficulties**

All of the above listed strengths were recommended as resources to address the many difficulties associated with genocide, such as sociocultural disintegration, family violence, substance abuse, suicide, public violence, and religious conflict. On the micro level, ethnic identity confusion resultant from macro policies of genocide and assimilation, is a frequent problem. Some participants emphasized the need to revitalize traditional Native American culture and spirituality as a way of providing a sense of identity, meaning, and self-esteem. Yet, participants pointed out various ways in which this effort is made difficult.

Some participants mentioned that there are religious conflicts at times between Native Americans who are Christians and traditionalists. Some Native American Church members also expressed concern over the intent of certain state governments and professional helpers to restrict and persecute their sacramental use of peyote. Another cited problem was that the health and mental health service systems for Native Americans often neglect or belittle the use of culture-specific religious ways of healing.

Several participants said that my presentation was a rare occasion to hear a helping professional emphasize the strength and beauty of Indian cultures and to advocate for culturally and spiritually sensitive service. While I was gratified for the praise, I was saddened that such a view is not often expressed. My fervent hope is that participants in the Spirituality and Social Work Network will play a part in raising helping professionals’ consciousnesses (in both political and spiritual senses of the term) about Native American issues.

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This issue contains articles dealing with two controversial topics: inclusion of Christian perspectives within social work generally and inclusion of content on spirituality within social work education. The Society for Spirituality and Social Work includes members of diverse Christian and non-Christian perspectives. We share a sense of the importance of dealing with spirituality in social work in a way that creatively accommodates spiritual diversity. So we may be in a unique position to promote dialogue about these two controversies in a way that is honest about disagreement and serious about finding common ground.

It is well known that American and European social work owes much of its early historical impetus to Christian individuals and sectarian institutions. Much of social work continues to be practiced in Christian church or social service agency contexts. Yet the social work profession as a whole, and its organizations such as NASW and CSWE, exist in tension with many Christian sectarian beliefs and practices. There is no consensus in the profession about how to transform this tension into a more creative interaction or even whether this is desirable.

This issue of the Spirituality and Social Work Communicator does not attempt to solve these difficulties. It does attempt to let Christian social workers speak for themselves in a way that might illuminate further some of the potential benefits of creative interaction as well as some of the obstacles to attempting it. I would also like to direct the readers’ attention to the Updates section, which gives information about significant opportunities to move this dialogue further. In addition, I wish to emphasize the need for respectful yet contentious point-and-counterpoint debate within the pages of this publication. While I appreciate the letters of support from readers, I also seek more letters of constructive criticism in response to our articles. Hopefully, our “Readers’ Response” section will be a forum for this lively debate.

Gluchman’s article offers an unusual glimpse of the role of a Christian church in social action, both at times of state oppression and revolutionary social change. His description of the Slovak Lutheran Church’s situation in Czechoslovakia is extremely timely. Lee’s article, adapted from an Asian-American United Methodist Fellowship Meeting keynote address, reverses the usual vantage of writings on Christians in social work. Rather than focusing on the impact of Christian witness on social work activity, the article reveals the impact of social work values on Christian witnessing, yet still from a Christian faith stance. While Lee draws from Biblical sources and theological language, his emphasis upon egalitarian cooperation between clergy and laity reflects a creative mutual influence between Christian social gospel (or its current manifestations in liberation theology and Korean minjung theology) and social work professional values. Judah shares her observations and suggestions about publishing articles on Christian social work. As editor of Social Thought, her advice and insights are cogent and useful. Titone is a clinical social worker who presents some considerations for dealing with spirituality in psychotherapy. Her case examples illustrate application of a spiritually-inclusive perspective to helping clients of Judeo-Christian backgrounds.

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Marshall's article gives historical context for the urgent present task of advocating with the Council on Social Work Education to include standards in its curriculum policy that support course and practicum content about the spiritual aspect of human behavior. One of the most common reactions I receive from present and former students to my teaching about spirituality is that they never received information about this from another social work educator. The main exceptions to this have been those who reported classroom or practicum instructors making insulting comments about the topic, declaring it off limits for discussion, or making general recommendations to be sensitive to the religious aspects of clients' cultural backgrounds. Advocacy efforts are urgently needed because the CSWE curriculum policy is now being revised. Marshall offers valuable suggestions for such advocacy efforts.

**CHALLENGE OF INCLUSIVENESS**

SSSW advocates for inclusion and accommodation of diverse perspectives on spirituality. Each of us, as persons committed to particular values or faiths, have different preferences for how to accomplish this. Each of us sets different limits for what is unacceptable to include. For example, many social workers, including some Christians, object to inclusion of Fundamentalist and Evangelical Christian perspectives within social work. This may be due to incompatibility between social work values and the conservative theological and political values promoted by some fundamentalists and evangelicals. Contrarily, some Christians view the social work profession as helplessly coopted by secularism and narcissism. Yet sometimes the incompatibility is more a matter of mutual misunderstanding than actual irreconcilable differences. Dialogue toward mutual understanding is necessary. Certainly, when we advocate for a spiritually-sensitive approach to social work that accommodates and appreciates diversity, we are presenting a difficult challenge for both the profession as a whole and Christian social workers. In particular, how can the profession have an inclusive approach toward exclusivist denominations or groups? How can exclusivist religious groups respond effectively to the human service needs of spiritually diverse clients? If we cannot resolve these dilemmas, if we cannot dissolve the apparent paradox inherent in them, we may be trapped in endless conflict.

Perhaps reflection upon the New Testament book of Acts would be illuminating. It recounts the debate between the initial Jerusalem-based Christian community and the expanding Gentile Christian communities. Some members of the Jerusalem community were skeptical of allowing Gentile converts to avoid Jewish religious customs and regulations, such as prohibition of eating certain foods. At one point, a perplexed Peter in prayer had a vision as if in response to this quandary. He saw a large sheet, filled with animals of every kind, descend from heaven. Peter was told that it was acceptable to eat such things, since nothing God made can be unclean. Then, messengers came to invite Peter to the home of a Roman Centurian. Peter accepted for he understood the vision to mean he should spurn no one (Acts 10:1-11:18). This story illustrates a perennial question for all religious traditions and spiritual perspectives. Perhaps it can serve as a challenge to all of us, Christians and otherwise, to be clear about whom we exclude, and why, and whether this is in accord with our most profound understandings of reality and our most deep commitments to help people deal with suffering.

**NEW DEVELOPMENTS FOR SSSW**

Having completed one year of activities, I consulted with several members of the advisory group in order to reflect on our current status and consider new developments. I would like to acquaint the membership with these new developments.

We continue to operate primarily on a volunteer basis. Subscription payments ($8 for 1991) cover the costs of copying and mailing this publication, as well as incidental costs related to publicity and outreach. The University of Kansas School of Social Welfare donates clerical support for preparation of our publication. Editorial, advisory, and other help are all volunteer. In recognition of the volunteer and nonprofit nature of this organization, we have applied for nonprofit corporation status with the state of Kansas. We hope to be granted this status by the necessary government authorities and the Internal Revenue Service in the near future. I will confirm this in the next issue.

In conformance with regulations for acquiring nonprofit status, we have changed the name of the organization from the Spirituality and Social Work Network to the Society for Spirituality and Social Work (SSSW). Also, in order to support scholarly standards for quality and colleague review, all future article submissions for publication will be refereed anonymously. However, we will continue to encourage informal style and innovative perspectives that would be less likely accepted in "mainstream" social work journals. In recognition of the referee process and expanded size of the newsletter, we will in future issues refer to it as a journal.

I will continue to consult members of the advisory group in a flexible manner by mail, telephone, and conference gatherings. Advisory group members expressed
support for this informal, non-bureaucratic approach. In any case, we do not have resources for formal regular meetings between people located in different parts of the country. Also, I am eager to hear from any member who has suggestions for promoting the work of the SSSW.

We wish to extend the international connections of SSSW, in order to increase the range of perspectives and insights of people working together for the development of spiritually-sensitive social work. International understanding and cooperation among spiritually diverse people is urgently needed at this time of war and strife. This effort is impeded by the difficulty of people in many countries to send subscription payments in U.S. dollars or foreign currency accepted by local banks. For this reason, I am offering free subscriptions for 1991 to international subscribers. Please spread the word about our activities and the free subscriptions to interested colleagues in other countries.

As an additional benefit to all subscribers, the Summer 1991 issue of the Spirituality and Social Work Journal will include a directory of members and an updated topical bibliography on spiritual diversity in social work.

Early Christian depiction of a peacock, symbol of resurrection.

All designs in this issue are from:

**TRANSDISCIPLINARY NEWS**

**Editor**

**SOCIETY FOR BIBLICAL LITERATURE**

The Society for Biblical Literature is an academic organization for biblical scholars. It holds joint national meetings with the American Academy of Religion (see last issue of SSWC). SBL will hold an international meeting in Rome during July 1991. For information on the Society and its activities, contact Assistant Director Eugene H. Lovering, Jr., Society for Biblical Literature, 1549 Clairmont Rd., Suite 204, Decatur, GA 30033-4635.

**NATIONAL COUNCIL ON RELIGION AND PUBLIC EDUCATION**

NCRPE provides a forum for organizations and individuals who are concerned with issues involving religion and public education, including academic non-sectarian perspectives. Its journal, Religion and Public Education, provides articles and information about legal issues, current events, and educational resources. For information, contact: John E. Donovan, National Council on Religion and Public Education, 508 Cedar Crest Drive, West Des Moines, IA 50265.

"BOOKS AND RELIGION"

This new quarterly magazine provides reviews and advertisements of a wide range of publications on religion. It is useful for keeping abreast of current developments in many academic, literary, and popular fields of religious writing. For information, write Books and Religion, P.O. Box 3000, Dept. LL, Denville, NJ 07834.

**THE SOCIAL ACTIVITIES OF THE SLOVAK LUTHERAN CHURCH**

Vasil Gluchman

The Slovak Lutheran Church (official name is The Slovak Evangelical Church of the Augsburg Confession in CSFR) is a minority church in Czechoslovakia, but it is the most numerous among the other Protestant churches in our country. The Lutheran Church has approximately 300,000 members (1980). This is about 6 percent of the inhabitants of Slovakia.

The historical roots of the Slovak Lutheran Church are in the 16th century, but it formed organizationally after the arising of the Czechoslovak Republic in 1919. Its social activities began to form at the turn of the 20th century. In this time arose the first social institute in Stara Tura. The social activities of this church increased in the period after World War I. There were established other social Evangelical unions and institutes in Liptovsky Svaty Mikulas and Banska Stiavnica. The social organizations of the Evangelical Church included, for example, the hospital, orphanage, workhouse and also the help which was organized in each individual church body.

The situation of social activity of churches was worse after the communist revolution in Czechoslovakia in 1948.
All official social activities of churches were finished gradually under the pressure of the state in the 1950s. The state took control of the whole of social policy in the 1950s in order to prevent the church from influencing society. For all churches, including the Slovak Lutheran Church, there was only the possibility of limited and individual activity in society; for example through pastoral activity and service to their own members. But this activity was also under strong police and political pressures by the state.

When the Slovak Lutheran Church was in a very complicated and difficult situation, a new theology was created. This theology emerged thanks to J. Michalke in the 1950s. Its name is "theology face to life". This theology focused on service to the secularized world, on solidarity with the world, and efforts to overcome and remove its mistakes and shortcomings. Theologians emphasized Christians' responsibility for the society in which believers are living and the role of religion and church in secularized society. They emphasized especially the role of believers to protect life on earth, to protect nature, and also to improve human relations. The problem of this theological thinking was that it didn't sufficiently consider the political, economical and social problems of the society in which we were living, including the violation of political and religious liberty. Of course, it was influenced by the police oppression of the church and also the effort of the church and its representatives to survive this period of oppression and non-liberty.

The Slovak Lutheran Church began to increase the effort for spiritual and moral revival of humanity and society during the increasing moral, political and economical crisis of society in Czechoslovakia in the 1970s and 1980s. According to Evangelicals, there is an urge for people to return to Christian values and to faith in God.

"The faith is the heart which keeps an organism alive, it is an engine, which drives us forward... From this belief emerges a virtuous life, a pure morality and honest work" (Filó, 1972, p. 65).

The belief in God is for them the source of all human power; it helps people to overcome obstacles, fear, and mistrust. This is possible because the love of God is infinite and human beings are only the administrators of God's grace.

The effort to bring about spiritual and moral revival of society had positive social moments for the work and the life of Evangelicals in this society. The Christian has to grant the service of life for everyone who needs it, because God loves all people alike and all people who need help are one's own people. Human service is a display of the belief of God because "those who don't believe in God, don't love their own people" (Michalke, 1985, p. 58).

The believers must understand the needs of contemporary humanity and strive to forgive mistakes, shortcomings and faults. The Christian has to be the refuge, the asylum for contemporary humanity in isolation and abandonment. On the other hand the believers must demonstrate in their life that they have been called in from the darkness to the light. Their life principle is the respect of person to person. They must demonstrate the ability to live not only for themselves but for God and their own people. They have to respect God's interest and the interest of humankind. The lives of the believers have to emit peace, pleasure, love, and moral purity. Believers have to show their coherence to Jesus Christ so that they prove to overcome every grudge and disfavor in relation to their own people. They include everybody, they don't omit anybody from the range of their service regardless of differences of world outlook. The Christian service mustn't cool and relax. The need of service will be actual as long as humanity will be sinful. Christians witness to God about the source of their activity through their service.

The aim of this Christian service is to remove all alienation between persons, nations, and races. Above all, it is the effort to overcome the alienation between people and God. The believer can show with his/her own service the overcoming of this alienation and the return of the human to God.

This Christian service to people is oriented above all toward the solution of complicated social problems of society like help for the physically stricken, for abusers of alcohol and drugs, for divorcees, and for the reformation of all human relations. The form of this help was limited only to activity of individuals, because the state didn't permit to organize any church social institute.

The theology "face to life" contributed to forming the relationship of the Evangelical believers to the social problems of the contemporary world. All the world is the creation of God; humanity has to help in the realization of God's intention for this world.

"Only an active life is pleasing to God; an inactive life witnesses about a dead faith and love. The duty of a Christian is to follow Christ in active thinking and making" (Filó, 1972, p. 65).

Believers should have open eyes for real life. They should act on threats of danger. They mustn't distract from life and its problems, but they must investigate this world and think about it and try to understand its events. They must do it with all Christian responsibility for the fate of this world in all spheres of life. Christian service to the world is oriented to the search for ways of removing injustice, poverty, hunger, and other social problems.
The Slovak Lutheran Church performed almost the maximum possible in the social sphere in the political situation which existed in Czechoslovakia before the 17th of November 1989. The Slovak Lutheran Church roused the consciousness of the believers into a struggle with the indifference that was a symptom of the great moral crisis of this society.

The November revolution in 1989 in Czechoslovakia brought the revolutionary removal of the dictatorship of one party, and also brought other democratic changes into our society. This revolution allowed for the extension of social activity of all churches, including the Slovak Lutheran Church. Today’s possibilities for the social activity of the Slovak Lutheran Church are marked by the oppression which existed for more than 40 years. The plans for social activity are extensive but this social work emerges very slowly. Now the social activity of the Slovak Evangelicals concentrates above all on health services for long time patients. There are also efforts to establish services and an institute for mentally ill people. The Slovak Lutheran Church will unfold this social work on an ecumenical basis in cooperation with other Protestant churches in Slovakia. In the future, there will be greater space for the social activity of the church, because the restoration of a democratic society will reveal problems such as the increase of criminality, unemployment, and adjustment difficulties of discharged prisoners. There is a space for churches and believers to show their love to people who need their help. We believe that the members of the Slovak Lutheran Church contribute to the happiness and contentment of our people.

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REFERENCES


BRIDGING THE GAP BETWEEN CLERGY AND LAITY
Daniel B. Lee

Adapted from a keynote address delivered at The United Methodist Church North Central Jurisdiction Asian-American Fellowship, 1982 Annual General Meeting, November 26-27, 1982, Dixon, Illinois.

"Bridging the Gap: Clergy and Laity, Our Weakest Link" is the theme and task set before us for the 1982 General Meeting. Today, we, the Asian-American Methodists, are gathered here at Camp Reynoldswood to meet this crucial challenge of Christian discipleship. I am deeply grateful for the wisdom of our Lord in allowing the Asian fellowship to be responsive to such a cardinal issue and for letting me witness about some essential aspects of our weakest link, laity and clergy, as we are attempting to bridge the gap.

Then, what is central to the issue of clergy and laity? All begins with the very fundamental issue of human relationship. I believe that God does not need theology, rather God needs humanism and love of humanity. It is human beings who need theology because of our failure to relate to other human beings properly in God’s love. The roots of true theology are reflections of God’s love in God’s image—human beings. Let us consider what makes human relationships dichotomous in Christandom.

Rather than making Christ the center of the mystical body and all the believers its members, arbitrary institutional sanctions and role dichotomies in churches are set up. "Superior," "more responsible," "more qualified," "more
committed," these distinctions are all false dichotomies separating the equally important spiritual functions and gifts of different members. These distinctions derive from the elitist concept of "the specially elect," which is a false image of God's messenger creating distance and alienation rather than love and unity in Christ. In contrast, this is the true central theme: all authority belongs to Christ. Laity and clergy need to find a common commitment and shared responsibilities. Different functions of disciples refer to individual gifts from the Spirit, various talents and training, not rigid roles and hierarchy. The head of the church is Christ; all are members of the mystical body--no one greater than another.

What are the contributing factors to role rigidity, hierarchy, and alienation between laity and clergy? Human relations begin with dependency, like the child depending upon parents for survival and care. This is also the early stage of faith development, that is, dependency of believers upon "religious experts" or leaders for guidance. But, as our faith matures, we are all called to grow beyond such dependency.

John Wesley and other early European Christian immigrant leaders' experiences are relevant to modern Asian immigrant situations. This century is seeing a large Asian immigrant influx. The American Asian Christians need to devote all energy to remaining true to Christ's message.

Many clergy who have trained extensively may believe that laity are less crucial to the Christian community or even unnecessary. Many experienced laity may believe that clergy are not necessary. Thus mutual exclusion alienates clergy and lay leaders, hindering mutual partnership and satisfaction. Ministers are paid to be mediators, not dictators; they are called to serve, not to be glorified. God's work is not limited to paid staff. Many laity feel manipulated, abused, and exploited by clergy who pass off their responsibilities. Yet, many clergy complain of their burden of the cross because of scapegoating upon paid staff by laity. Such self-enhancing displacement of responsibility is not the work of Christ. The gospel of Matthew, chapter twenty three, reveals the warning of Jesus:

But be not ye called Rabbi: for one is your Master, even Christ; and all ye are brethren. And call no man your father upon the earth; for one is your Father, which is in Heaven. Neither be ye called masters; for one is your Master, even Christ. But he that is greatest among you shall be your servant. (verses 8-11)

What can we do to share between clergy and laity?

1. We work together with God in seeking and saving the lost (2 Cor. 5:18-20). To bring people to harmony between themselves and deity is Christ's mandate for his disciples, both clergy and laity. But harmony is easy to lose and hard to find. The missing link only increases loss rather than gain. Clergy and laity conflict scandalizes and creates dissonance.

2. Two developmental principles must be observed: Glorification of Deity and Actualization of Humanity. Human development is regulated by two principles of growth. The cephalocaudal principle refers to the developmental process in which growth begins at the brain and continues down the body. The other developmental principle is that growth begins from the heart, the center of the body, to the peripheral extremities. These principles apply to church development also. The authority of the church structurally begins with the head which is God and the love of God. Christ Jesus is the center of harmony from which all members of the church are united (1 Cor. 11:3, Col. 1:18, Eph.15-16). The central theme is that the church is Christ's body--all are useful (1 Cor. 12:23-31). A healthy organism has harmonious relations among all parts according to natural law and God's mandate.

There is no exception! Asians must use ethnicity as a resource to come together. Professionalization should not be a barrier.

3. We need to recognize and overcome barriers. To do this, we must view the church as an integrated living system-the body of Christ. In the gestalt of the church, the whole depends upon every member. Individual differences should not be viewed in terms of superiority/inferiority. Clergy unfortunately may view their professional role as prior to the equality of all in Christ. Clergy must remember that their role distinction does not belong to the Kingdom of God or the communion of saints. It is only a practical and provisional means toward community service. Anyone can serve as teacher, preacher, or leader depending upon talents and spiritual gifts. Rigid role differentiation between laity and clergy is arbitrary. Leadership structure and the religious bureaucracy must only serve the needs of the community in the body of Christ. We must be always reevaluated and realigned with Christ's message.

4. We need a biblical, progressive view requiring the concepts of complementarity, interdependence, partnership, and role sharing. This can help actualize the Kingdom of God through the church, Christ's body. Struggling over who does what, when, and where wastes energy and hampers love.

No members, clergy or laity, are superior to the head (Christ) or any member. Mutual inclusion requires spiritually mature behavior including the abilities to listen, to empathize, to risk, to heal, and to forgive. It requires parity and accommodation between all the parts of Christ's body.
The following principles are important for achievement of harmonious mutuality between clergy and laity:

1. Glorification only of Christ the Head.
2. Actualization of love in the community of saints.
3. Recognition of the institutional church organization as a means to actualizing love, not as an end in itself.
4. In love, no one is superior; functional difference is not superiority or inferiority.
5. Glory goes to God not to ministers.
6. If a person is glorified in the name of the church, then there is idolatry. Even Paul said, "It is not I, but Christ in me."

5. There is no human between a human and God.Spiritual pride, like the hubris of Icarus who flew into the sun, separates and destroys. Structural separation can cause functional disharmony, conflict, and ineffectiveness in the church. Many clergy like to dictate to laity what to do while receiving glory themselves. Putting one's self in God's place will create tension among laity. Some laity feel they are 'getting the dirty jobs while clergy get the glory.' Clergy often do not know how to empower laity because it threatens their own power. It is critical for clergy to overcome this fear and the belief that clergy must control.

6. We need to uphold the concept of fellowship. The purpose of theology is to discover our true selves in God's love and the unity of all together as the body of Christ, the church. We must actualize God's love in society to accomplish a universal human connection to God. In this context, lay/clergy separation is the worst threat to the living communion. This problem is especially serious regarding Asian Christians. Raised in patriarchal unquestioning authority systems, clergy become like Monarch or Father, rather than as brother or sister. This deformes Christ's body; its parts are put in the wrong places. If clergy are regarded as the head, laity become dependent and submissive. By avoiding spiritual responsibility, pathological symbiosis develops.

Let Christ reign in His church. We, both clergy and laity together, as brothers and sisters, must be united in Asian fellowship in the spirit of Methodism, to exalt Christ's glory and to fulfill his everlasting love by actualizing our Christian mandate to bring harmony between all people and God.

In conclusion, let me recall to you an appropriate story. A Christian was once invited to visit Heaven. During the tour, the gatekeeper first brought the person to the eastern hall which was filled with thousands of gaping mouths. In surprise, the person asked what could they be. The gatekeeper replied, "These are the mouths of ministers who always preached but never acted according to their words. Therefore, only their mouths came to Heaven." In wonderment, the person proceeded with the gatekeeper to the western hall. There were thousands of ears. With awe, the visitor asked the meaning of this. The gatekeeper answered, "These are the ears of lay people who enjoyed listening to ministers but never acted on what they heard." The visitor was shocked at these experiences. But the gatekeeper instructed the visitor that there was one more place to visit. They came to a center hall hidden behind closed doors. From behind the doors could be heard laughter of happiness and merriment. But the gatekeeper told the person that the time had not come to open the doors. Instead, the visitor was told to first visit the Asian-American Fellowship of the UMC NCI to find out if the clergy and laity were working together in harmony. Let us prove that there will be good reason for laughter in Heaven by our harmonious fellowship, today, tomorrow, and always.

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SPIRITUALITY AND PSYCHOTHERAPY IN SOCIAL WORK PRACTICE

Anita M. Titone

Adapted from Presentation to the Dallas Unit of the National Association of Social Workers, 1989.

My topic is healthy spirituality in the context of psychotherapy in social work practice. Let me give you my definitions of spirituality and religion so we can set some
boundaries around this thing. Spirituality may or may not include belief in God. It is one's personalized experience and identity pertaining to a sense of worth, meaning, vitality, and connectedness to others and to the universe. It is incorporated faith—one's pattern of response to the uncertainty inherent in life where the limits of material and human effectiveness are exceeded. It pertains to one's relationship with ultimate sources of inspiration, energy, and motivation; it pertains to an object of worship and reverence; and it pertains to the natural human tendency toward healing and growth. Spirituality is a basic ingredient in the human condition, and, if it is not nurtured, the individual personality will be less integrated and less individuated and less fulfilled.

The definition of religion I use is: a set of beliefs and practices concerning the relationship between a superhuman power and humanity. Religion may or may not be organized. So religion is a set of beliefs, whereas spirituality is a much more internal, incorporated process. Faith is an assent to belief which cannot be scientifically or historically proven.

Not only is there a psychological context to this, but I think that, in the context of our culture, there is currently a strong undercurrent of interest in spirituality. I think an awareness of our limits has grown. We are much more vulnerable to anxieties based on lack of anchors, or lack of solutions to all that we deal with, and I think that is the context for a great deal of spirituality. Spirituality deals with ways of responding in a hopeful way to things that cannot be controlled. In order to further define this, and how it relates to clinical practice, I want to share with you some experiences with a few clients.

My client, Bob, had been working a great deal on some of these issues and had attended some of my seminars. He wrote:

The spirituality seminars, together with my psychotherapy, have helped me to focus on the fact that what I initially understood as a "mid-life crisis" was (and is) more fundamentally a spiritual crisis. By this I mean a need—at mid-life, after twenty-plus years of hard work and above-average success in a law practice and civil work—to find a deeper meaning in my life apart from my work and to come to terms with the inevitability of my own death. The seminars have helped me to get in touch with the fact that I am seeking a greater sense of connectedness with others, with myself, and with the transcendent and infinite (God). Through the seminars and the therapy, I have been able to identify a lack of trust (or faith) as being a fundamental barrier which I must work through to achieve this connectedness; and I have learned that my high need to be in control (or my fear of not being in control) lies at the bottom of my reluctance to trust.

Perhaps, most important, my work in the seminars and the therapy has enabled me to let go of much of my compulsive need for control, to establish a greater degree of intimacy with others and with myself, and thereby to open the way for greater trust, connectedness, faith, and a sense of being a part of something much greater than myself.

So in his own words, that is what Bob's own spiritual integration has been about. It involved, as he stated, a fear of not being in control, which is not uncommon. In crisis points throughout life and transitional stages of development periods, there is a lack of control. There is a movement from one stage of stability and balance to another stage, and, in the meantime, we're not in balance; we are in disequilibrium. So there is a vacuum there in which uncertainty is the name of the game. Then at mid-life when one faces the peak of one's success or whatever one has done with one's life, one faces aging and loss of abilities, loss of life itself, loss of important relationships. Carl Jung said that this is the age—mid-forties—where spirituality becomes extremely important for people.

Bob came into therapy with some suicidal tendencies; I never felt like he was high on the lethality scale, but he had a definite suicidal ideation, and I think it was related to his fear of losing control with the recognition that he was going to die. And since he was going to die, he was going to control when he died rather than go through some kind of slow process of losing his prowess and his many abilities. He, I think, fits very well into the theme that Alice Miller presents in her book Prisoner of Childhood. He was really squelched in his childhood in terms of his "free child". At a very early age, he was groomed to take over a huge law practice. So he has obsessive-compulsive and narcissistic traits.

He would parenthetically mention his interest in faith and his habit of praying when he would wake up at 4 a.m. with the jitters about what he was going to do with himself. So there were little hints that he was open to spiritual issues. When he went into one of the spirituality seminars and we gave permission and assistance to talk about spirituality, this man became more genuinely excited than I have ever seen him before.

Another client: I'll call him Pierre. Pierre was a young minister. He was in therapy at this time with a mild depression, talking about feeling that his work was losing its vitality. He was in a group with Bob. At one point, he said, "I'm getting real frustrated with you, Bob. I feel like I keep trying to help you and tell you things and tell you how I feel, and I don't get anything back." That sounded like an
important statement to him, so one of us therapists asked him to think about it and where else it might apply in his life that he's "giving all this and not getting anything back." He said, "Well, it definitely applies to my father." So we asked, "What about anywhere else?" He thought a minute, then said, "Oh, my God, it applies to my prayer life, too." So we had a transference situation in this group; he was able to make a connection with his relationship to God, which was very meaningful to this young minister.

And then there was Melissa, who had been abused very severely emotionally, physically, and sexually. In response to this abuse, she did some things that were very self-protective and nurturing. Among them, she had a fantasy relationship with some stuffed animals; she did what she could do to protect herself from her parents; and she prayed. When I tried to explore her use of prayer, she didn't want to talk about that because "He" had let her down; "He" didn't answer her prayers to stop the abuse. A pastoral counselor with whom I consulted said, "Probably what you didn't do was connect with the dynamic of the relationship with God the same as you did with the parents." Unfortunately I didn't get into that because she had already terminated. I realized it would have been interesting to explore the transference in terms of the dynamic in her prayer life being the same as the dynamic in her relationship with her parents.

From these case examples, I think you can glean some indications about things that enriched my assessment of the person's dynamics. I was not able to achieve a thorough understanding of the clients until they dealt with their spiritual issues. This suggests relationship-building issues, in that, if I'm not willing to talk about any subject, that does something to diminish the nature and the quality of my relationship with my clients. Regarding treatment interventions, obviously we need to be willing and able to individualize our clients, to see them as clearly as we can and give them what they need. Also, there's the issue of transference and countertransference. So sometimes spirituality and therapy have nothing to do with each other, but sometimes they definitely affect and color each other.

Here is a list of eighteen questions which can be used in pursuing spiritual interests with your clients. They are pertinent to both assessment and relationship-building. They are:

1. What nourishes you spiritually? For example, music, nature, intimacy, witnessing heroism, meditation, creative expression, sharing another's joy?
2. What is the difference between shame and guilt? What is healthy and unhealthy shame and guilt?
3. Do you believe there is a Supreme Being?
4. If yes, what is that Being like? What does he/she look like?
5. What were some of the important faith or religious issues in your family background?
6. What do you mean when you say your spirits are low? Is that different from being sad or depressed?
7. What are the areas of compatibility and conflict between you and your spouse (or other significant persons) regarding spirituality?
8. What is an incident in your life that precipitated a change in your belief about the meaning of life?
9. What helps you maintain a sense of hope when there is no immediate apparent basis for it?
10. How and when have you prayed or meditated? What is the difference?
11. What does God think about your feeling angry, inadequate, guilty?
12. Do you need forgiveness from yourself or someone else?
13. How long do you think God wants you to feel guilty?
14. How is your spirituality a rebellion against your parents; a conformity to your parents (or one of them)?
15. Which is the most sensitive subject between you and your spouse: (or other significant persons): money, sex, spirituality, children's discipline?
16. What is most frightening to you about death? What do you think would help you have a peaceful death?
17. What is your opinion of the meaning of suffering?
18. Do you have rituals in your family? Have they diminished or stabilized or increased recently?

So, in terms of therapy, my opinion is that the area of spirituality is the last taboo for therapists. We have been unwilling to talk about people's spirituality, and now we are getting curious about it and we're doing something about it. The people who are talking about co-dependency and dysfunction are saying, "Hey, spirituality is important." So large numbers of therapists and other social workers are getting into seminars and learning about spirituality. Though I don't think spirituality is only relevant to those who have addictions or who are co-dependent or who have been abused. Let's not be co-dependent on co-dependency. Spirituality is relevant to people, period.

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CHRISTIANITY AND SOCIAL WORK PRACTICE: ONE EDITOR'S PERSPECTIVE
Eleanor Hannon Judah

I welcome the request of Dr. Canda to offer observations on writing about religion, specifically Christianity and social work practice, from my perspective as editor of Social Thought, a quarterly journal sponsored jointly by two professional organizations, the school of social service of the Catholic University of America and Catholic Charities USA. The need to develop a literature which relates religion and social work practice has never been more pressing, and the interest finally seems present to do so (Siporin, 1985). But the manuscripts which I have seen as editor are few in number.

Christianity is "the religion derived from Jesus Christ, based on the Bible as sacred scripture, and professed by Eastern, Roman Catholic and Protestant bodies" (Webster, 1973). The great diversity within Christianity as it is manifested today precludes any easy generalizations about its relation to social work practice (See Sanzenbach, with response from Canda and Joseph, 1989). Thus there is a need to identify and define precisely what is being discussed. There is great diversity among the various Christian denominations, and even within what some consider a monolithic Roman Catholic Church (Hehir, 1988; Ryle 1989). Further, "Christianity" may be viewed from many perspectives, for example, as a religious profession of faith, a social institution, and a body of literature and teachings.

One of the main challenges in developing the literature may be to demystify the process of doing so, in the sense of realizing that papers on religion and social work practice, as any scholarly papers, must adhere to the rigorous standards of scholarship to be credible. They must have a clear focus, a theoretical framework, define terms, reference the literature, state assumptions, identify biases, give examples of what is meant, and finally pass the test of relevance, the "so what?" test. And so, before proceeding further some terms as used here must be defined.

Canda's (1989) succinct exposition is most helpful here. He distinguishes "... religion, an institutionally patterned system of beliefs, values and rituals, and spirituality, the basic human drive for meaning, purpose, and moral relatedness among people, with the universe, and with the ground of our being" (p. 573).

Having made the point that papers must be held to standards of scholarship, if the writer tries to take on the truly transcendent, the "spiritual", it should be recognized that the writing may be somewhat idiosyncratic to the extent that it is arising out of the writer's own unique experience. Not only are words inadequate to capture spirit, but we and our society are painfully inarticulate and unaccustomed to trying to do this. Nonetheless, as the writings of the great mystic writer Teresa of Avila (1960) show, while repeatedly stating her inability to express what she means, she does her best, to the benefit of all who study her. Like Teresa, but conceding less ability, we can only do what we can do. Whatever is finally written, while explicitly recognizing its own inadequacy, should then be related to some existing or devised conceptual framework or scheme so as to be more intelligible, orderly, and of use to other scholars.

In order to write about social work and another body of knowledge, such as Christianity, writers must first of all know their own profession thoroughly, and in addition, must have a certain level of competence and comfort using the content, structures and concepts, that is, the literature and tools, of another discipline (for example, history, theology, psychology, sociology and the like). Dealing with knowledge and conceptual tools of another discipline is not unexpected nor unprecedented for social workers, for as a practice profession, we draw on knowledge from other disciplines repeatedly. Perhaps we are less acquainted with philosophy and its branches, particularly theology, epistemology, moral theology, and in the case of religion, dogmatic theology, ecclesiology, scripture and traditions of various religions. But we can learn. Certainly anyone writing about Christianity and social work practice must have some grasp of the contents, principles, precepts, and history of Christianity, as well as its plurality of manifestations and its base in Judaism.

We are social workers first, not theologians, sociologists, historians, or philosophers. Above all, as social workers, we have seen first hand, more than most, the trials, triumphs, fears, aspirations and beliefs of ordinary people; how they manage and are managed by others. We have seen, read, and heard about the use and abuse of religion in individuals and in institutions, and we, as self reflective professionals, have tried to make sense and to theorize about meanings in our own lives and practice with our clients. And we have tried to "put things together" in our lives and
I have been editor of Social Thought for only two years. I have thought about religion and social work practice, however, since my own religious convictions propelled me into the field four decades ago. My disappointment in the level of attempt or accomplishment of integration of these two spheres in literature, classroom and professional parlance then and now, has been profound. I have tried to integrate my professional persona, from time to time to write in this area and haltingly to bring it into the curriculum and classroom. I know that it is hard to do, will be resisted by some, but is worth the effort. I am convinced that this needed literature will, in many instances, be tentative and groping, needing to be nurtured and helped along if it is to develop. Interested editors are in a position to encourage and to help. They call upon their own expertise, but very importantly, upon that of others, from social work and other disciplines, as referees to critique papers and to offer comments and suggestions for revision to authors if the paper shows promise for publication. These suggestions and feedback have, in my experience, made the difference in the author’s being able to bring a paper to the degree of quality warranting publication.

Most papers addressed to this area which fail to measure up, do so, in my experience, because of inadequate clarity, scholarship and writing. Often statements seem more polemical than scholarly, based more on opinion than fact, without substantiation. They simply are not well done in that they may lack the attributes of a good paper.

Obviously, not all publications are equally interested in papers dealing with social work practice and religion or spirituality, although, in the current climate, writings of nontheistic spirituality would find a wider audience than ones on Christianity and social work (Peck, 1978). This might be due to perceived lack of relevance to the journal’s mission, level of scholarly interest, or even hostility to or fear of the subject.

Finally, it is important to note that social and political considerations also play a role in publications directed to Christianity and other religions and social work. Our secular society and the secular profession of which we are part, characteristically look with suspicion and in some cases hostility on what may be perceived as "mixing" religion and a profession. It is a well-known cliche that discussion of politics or religion in many quarters of "polite" society is taboo. A further inhibition is that, especially as social workers, we do not wish to even appear to exclude anyone, and our democratic values stress individual freedom of thought. There are varying positions on the role and value or disvalue of religion in the society. There are some who contend that professional social work service, if given through religious organizations, is not social work but the promotion of religion. With all the ramifications for public funding to sectarian agencies today, this pressure can be another powerful incentive to clarify the role and function of religious values and beliefs in social work practice. Secular nonprofit organizations are certainly energized to address this issue today, for, as Dr. Johnson once observed to Boswell, the threat of hanging concentrates the mind wonderfully. The time is ripe it appears, for many reasons then, to seize the moment of opportunity we now have, to concentrate our individual and collective minds wonderfully.

* Eleanor Hannon Judah, DSW, ACSW, is editor of Social Thought in Washington, DC.

REFERENCES


The study showed that social work thought on spirituality is critical for core CSWE curriculum content and professional foundation areas. Major conclusions derived from the analysis of the professional literature on spirituality suggest that spirituality is an essential social work value, necessary to theory, practice, and research. This finding contains clear implications for the future of social work education. Yet, an examination of four CSWE curriculum policy statements suggests changing perspectives over time toward the spiritual dimension in social work education.

History

In the early 1950s, the newly formed CSWE established standards and goals for social work education that served as an evaluation tool in accreditation procedures. Educational principles supported the curriculum policy statement that included requirements for social work degree programs. Under the Human Growth and Behavior section in the first CSWE Curriculum Policy Statement (1953), the Commission on Accreditation set forth the following standard for social work education and activity:

"Normal physical, mental, and emotional growth should be considered with due regard to social, cultural, and spiritual influences upon the development of the individual (Section 3543). References to the bio-psycho-socio-spiritual dimensions of human growth and development were easily understood in this statement.

Toward the end of the decade, Boehm (1959) presented the results of a major CSWE curriculum study that included the spiritual needs of people within a list of essential social work values in the volume that outlines future educational objectives. Similarly, Pumphrey (1959) distinguished between social values and spiritual values in another volume from the same study that discusses teaching values in social work education. Social values, she says, refer to appropriate behaviors while spiritual values refer to nonobjective ways of knowing the mystery of the universe and humanity's relationship with it.

The next decade's Official Statement of Curriculum Policy (1962) for the Master's Degree Program in Graduate Professional Schools of Social Work continued to acknowledge "spiritual...influences and attributes" under the content area designed to help the student understand "the essential wholeness of the human being." (p. 12). During this period, the literature review shows an expansion of the professional perspective beyond Jewish and Christian spiritual perspectives as social workers formulated theories based upon existential thought and Eastern spiritual philosophies for application to casework practice.

The Curriculum Policy Statement (1970), in the decade
that followed, no longer contained direct guidelines about spiritual values, needs, influences, or attributes. Under the Content Pertaining to Human Behavior and the Social Environment section, the statement reads as follows:

"This objective is achieved through the retrieval, specification, and extension of theories and bodies of knowledge derived from the biological, psychological, and social sciences as well as from the humanities which are needed for an understanding of social work values and practice" (p. 2).

Here the educational emphasis is on the bio-psycho-social dimensions. Inclusion of the spiritual dimension in education and practice becomes ambiguous. Whether the reference to "the humanities" includes the spiritual dimension is subject to interpretation.

The latest Curriculum Policy Statement (1984) includes neither direct nor indirect references to human spiritual growth and development. Although the policy states that the curriculum should contain content about oppressed special population groups who are distinguished by their religion, the statement makes no distinction between religious belief systems and the spiritual dimension. Also, the document does not provide guidelines to facilitate student knowledge and understanding of diverse spiritual perspectives that influence both special and other population clients. Ironically, the absence of formal recognition of the spiritual dimension in this statement occurred during the 1980s, a period when more was written about the subject of spirituality in the social work literature than in the previous six decades.

**Discussion**

The premiere CSWE foundation curriculum study and early policy statements in the 1950s and 1960s identified concern about the spiritual needs of people as a social work value through the incorporation of the spiritual dimension into educational objectives and guidelines. Yet, changes in curriculum policy statements promulgated during the 1970s and 1980s no longer support the social work values and educational objectives related to the spiritual aspect of human growth and development in social work practice. Therefore, many students have not had the opportunity to explore and clarify their knowledge and understanding of the spiritual dimension in social work. Yet, clients continue bringing their spiritual concerns to social work practice settings. This situation suggests that social work practitioners without an adequate understanding and knowledge base for responding to spiritual issues in practice may be ineffective in serving some clients. The need for guidelines on the topic of spirituality in social work practice leads to the question about what students and practitioners can do to express their concern about this dilemma to social work education leaders.

A discussion about this problem is timely since the task force responsible for the upcoming curriculum policy statement has already begun the revision process. The Commission met at CSWE in September before meeting again at the 1990 NASW Annual Conference in November. The next scheduled meeting will take place at the CSWE Annual Program Meeting (APM) in New Orleans, March 14-17, 1991, where presentations about values, ethics, Eastern and Western philosophies, as well as religious issues in social work education are on the agenda. According to R. Gershenson, APM Director (personal communication, December 4, 1990) social work students, faculty, and practitioners can ask that the spiritual dimension be raised as a topic for discussion by writing Don Beless, CSWE Executive Director, and Grace Harris, Chairwoman of the Commission on Educational Policy (see address at conclusion). Open forum meetings at APM provide another opportunity for social workers to express their concerns about restoring the spiritual dimension to the next curriculum policy statement (see "updates" for information).

This top-down approach that advocates curriculum policy change may present a challenge to educators who hold different political positions and spiritual perspectives at the national leadership level. Many policymakers who work amidst ongoing unresolved conflicts inherent in the task of setting guidelines and goals for social work education may be reluctant to take up another issue. Some may want to examine spiritual factors in social work practice, but fear that doing so might weaken or discredit the profession. For example, there is concern that the social work value of self-determination might be distorted by well-intentioned missionary-minded practitioners. Others who recognize the merit of professional interest in the spiritual dimension may simply prefer limiting social work to the bio-psycho-social dimensions, arguing against the feasibility of dealing with everything.

The impetus for the restoration of the spiritual dimension in social work education can come also from bottom-up activity. Students and seasoned professionals can contribute to the integration of spiritual content in the curriculum and course objectives at the social work school within the realm of their influence. School administrators can conduct assessments to decide the need for elective courses on the subject of spirituality. Teachers can incorporate the spiritual dimension into social work content and professional foundation course objectives. Students can circulate petitions requesting elective course offerings that address the spiritual needs of clients. Researchers can focus
projects on spiritual issues in social work. Scholars can meet the need for well-written integrative materials on spirituality applied to different social work practice settings.

Finally, some educators have already responded to the relevance of the spiritual dimension in social work graduate training. For example, Smith College School For Social Work offered an elective course entitled The Role of Religion and Spirituality in Psychotherapy in the summer of 1989. According to instructor, T. Northcut (personal communication, June 12, 1990), course evaluations suggest that students "benefited by having the opportunity to think about and discuss spiritual issues openly with colleagues." In the summer of 1990, the spiritual dimension was integrated into Female Development course objectives, Senior Integrative Treatment seminar discussions, and a continuing education course on Non-Western Healing: An Alternative Approach to Our Internal World. During the same academic summer, social work students and faculty spontaneously formed different groups for meditation and the sharing of spiritual perspectives in the evenings. Thesis colloquia about spiritual topics were also well attended. Further research can be designed to discover to what extent other state and private schools across the nation are responding to the need for including the spiritual dimension in social work education.

**Conclusion**

From the 1920s through the 1980s, scholars have documented the educational need for professional knowledge and understanding about the spiritual dimension in social work practice, which shows something of the tenacity and strength of spiritual awareness in the social work culture. Spirituality is a long held social work value firmly rooted in the contemporary social work culture as reflected in the professional literature. Yet, a significant value discrepancy currently exists between the social work culture and the CSWE Curriculum Policy Statement (1984) about the place of the spiritual dimension in social work education. Still, the restoration of the spiritual dimension to social work education can come from state and private social work school elective curriculum changes as well as future national CSWE curriculum policy statement recommendations or mandates. Persons who hold the position that the spiritual dimension has a place in social work education can initiate discussions about the spiritual aspect of practice in classrooms, supervision, workshops, conferences, research projects, professional publications and policy meetings.

The multifarious dimension of spirituality presents social work educators in the United States with an ongoing challenge as researchers continue to study the subject in macro, meso, and micro practice settings in the 1990s. The final decade of the twentieth century seems opportune for studies on spirituality that require the cooperation of international social work researchers. A global exploration of social work thought on the question about the essential nature of humanity might contribute to the profession's knowledge and understanding of spirituality. Research from diverse spiritual perspectives throughout the world will enrich both workers and clients as it enhances the future of social work education and practice.

*Jacquelyn Marshall, MSW, CSW, is a social worker in Houston, Texas.

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Council on Social Work Education. (1972). Curriculum policy for the master's degree program in graduate schools of social work. (Found in Social Welfare History Archives, CSWE Collection, Series VII, Box 14).


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BOOK REVIEW
Reviewed by the Editor

Don Krill is recognized in the social work profession as a major proponent of an existential perspective on helping. His book, Existential Social Work (Free Press, 1978) is a detailed exposition of this perspective applied to practice. The Beat Worker (University Press of America, 1986) is a criticism of dehumanizing trends in social work and psychotherapy. His course at the University of Denver, on existential social work, has a reputation for popularity, controversy, and vitality. He once described himself to me as a gadfly—someone who enjoys prodding us to examine our consciences. I have admired this quality of his for the several years of our acquaintance. He is an advisor for the Spirituality and Social Work, a task that requires willingness to take on a controversial but crucial subject. So I was excited to learn of his newest book Practice Wisdom, about a much touted but evasive attribute of successful practitioners. In this review, I will focus on the spiritual aspects of the book.

The book can be understood as an existential nonsecular approach to what Catholics call "examination of conscience." It is a guide to experiential learning about who we are, and how our distinct personhood affects our practice, for better or for worse. The major strength of the book is that ideas and activities are offered as starting points for self-exploration, rather than for intellectual analysis or for a "quick fix" approach to practice. This is consistent with Krill's existentialist emphasis on the primacy of moment-to-moment clarity of awareness and integrity of relationship in helping.

Chapters one through nine serve as a guide for students to reflect on themselves by the use of structured exercises, journaling, and discussion with a partner. Excerpts from student journals in reaction to exercises provide interesting examples of possible outcomes as well as food for thought. These chapters are written for use in a classroom, but the suggestions can be adapted easily for student field supervision, continuing education workshops, and self-guided study. Chapters ten through thirteen offer guidelines for a workshop tailored to continuing education and employee assistance program settings.

The term spirituality is not defined explicitly, despite the fact that chapter 8 is entitled, "Matters of Spirituality." Krill links spirituality with such ideas as archetypes (in the Jungian sense), concepts of God, institutional religion, personal belief systems, and questions of meaning and truth. His language and espoused religious perspective are primarily Judeo-Christian. Yet he encourages openness to diversity and disagreement concerning matters of religious belief and behavior. His approach is to heighten awareness of one's spiritual and religious views and their implications for practice. For example, on page 79, he suggests that the student write down brief answers to four queries: "Your concept of G-- when you were a child. Your concept of G-- now. A view of G-- you wish you had, but don't. Your response to views of G-- that differ from your own." He suggests filling in the blank of G-- any way one wishes, e.g. "God, Goddess, Godot, godlessness." Krill frequently refers to Twelve Step program approaches to self-help, which emphasize reliance upon a "Higher Power", however conceived, as a spiritual support for personal change.

Even where spirituality and religion are not mentioned explicitly, Krill focuses on profound existential issues of self-identity, meaning, morality and world view. For example, the first nine chapters explore the nature of individual subjectivity, characteristics of each person's "world design", moments of self-transcendence and deep insight, implications of basic values and ideals, quality of freedom or bondage with respect to conformity and social conditioning, distinguishing realistic from unrealistic guilt, and developing a truly client-centered helping relationship. Chapters ten through thirteen focus on the role of excess or insufficient desire in producing addictions and burnout. Certainly, self-identity, world view, and desire are central concerns for many religious traditions, as well.

Practice Wisdom is excellent as a handbook for self-exploration to be used by students and established helping professionals. It can be used in courses, continuing education workshops, student field supervision, and self-guided study. It is best read little by little, with performance of exercises, and self-reflection on one's own reactions as well as Krill's commentary. The book, when conscientiously used, does seem to be conducive to enhanced self-awareness and growth, prerequisites for effective practice.

The strength of the book, its experiential focus, is also its limitation. Insufficient attention is given to clarifying key
concepts, such as spirituality. It is also puzzling that Krill gives slight attention to political forces when dealing with issues of alienation and empowerment. The near exclusive emphasis on intrapsychic dynamics seems incongruous with existentialism's critique of social oppression. Many brief diagrams and lists are presented. Some of these are useful summaries and encapsulations. But one must repeatedly read the text in order to understand certain diagrams. Sometimes valuable ideas are simply listed without any explanation.

On page 14, Krill says that practice wisdom is the most crucial factor in effective practice, and defines it as "how a particular worker integrates what he or she knows about himself or herself and the client, and the present happening between the two (the creative factor)." He asserts that practitioners can be taught the ingredients of practice wisdom. Unfortunately, these ingredients are not stated explicitly, so one needs to infer what they are from the issues and themes addressed throughout the book. It would have been helpful to have a more precise description of "practice wisdom" as well as guidelines for evaluating one's own progress in developing it.

Nonetheless, I am impressed by this book as a guide for practitioner's self-exploration and growth. It is a rare attempt by a social worker to integrate experiential learning with formal education and to complement knowledge and skill with wisdom. I am sufficiently impressed to incorporate sections into my course on Spiritual Dimensions of Social Work Practice.

**READERS' RESPONSES**

"As a person of two disciplines, education and social work, I am especially appreciative of the *Spirituality and Social Work Communicator*. In both disciplines, there has appeared to be a scant middle ground between secularism based upon empiricism alone or a fundamentalist approach not radically different in epistemology from the secularism which the fundamentalists loathe. Thank you!" Charles H. Hill, MSW, E.D.D., Dallas, Texas.

"As an ordained minister, seminary graduate, and soon to be M.S.W. graduate (5-91, University of Kansas), I was excited and surprised to be handed a copy of "Spirituality and Social Work Communicator" by a fellow student. I had often felt that spirituality was dead within our profession. Your publication is a breath of fresh air..."This is a good thing and I'm glad to be a part of it. Thanks for being sensitive to the needs of the whole person." Fred H. Beshorn, Topeka, Kansas.

"I am excited with your development of Spirituality and Social Work Network. The timing both of your dissertation (which I have bought) and formation of the Network are very "in sync" with my work. In 1983 when I started my doctoral studies I was strongly discouraged from looking at spirituality and social work practice. However, I am now in the data collection phase of my dissertation which concerns spiritual growth and recovering alcoholic adult children of alcoholics." Maria Carroll, LCSW, Baltimore, Maryland.

**UPDATES**

Information regarding joint degree programs between theological seminaries and schools of social work is being sought. Any information about specific programs and how well they are working, would be most appreciated. Please contact Dr. Roberta Imre, at the Princeton Theological Seminary, CN 821, Princeton, NJ 08542, or at 697 Bement Ave., Staten Island, NY 10310.

The Study Group for Philosophical Issues in Social Work is planning its usual open meeting at the Annual Program Meeting of the Council on Social Work Education in New Orleans on March 14th. The Curriculum Policy Statement and possible input into the current work on revising it will be discussed. The Study Group meeting will be on Thursday, March 14, 2:30-4:30 in the Kenilworth room. Anyone interested is invited. In order to estimate numbers it is helpful if you let us know that you are coming, but advance notice is not required. Contact: Roberta Imre, 697 Bement Ave., Staten Island, NY 10310, or at Princeton Theological Seminary, CN 821, Princeton, NJ 08542.


**Upcoming CSWE-APM Events on Spirituality**

For those of you attending the Annual Program Meeting March 14-17 in New Orleans, there are many opportunities to meet and discuss issues relevant to spirituality and social work education. This is also an important opportunity to advocate for inclusion of spirituality as an area in the
revision of the Curriculum Policy Statement. In addition to related presentations in the Philosophical Issues Symposium, events include:

(1) March 14, 9 a.m.-noon, Elmwood room. Christians in Social Work Education Discussion. Sponsored by the North American Association of Christian Social Workers in cooperation with the Society for Spirituality and Social Work. Organized by Lawrence Ressler. 9-11 a.m. Will include presentations by Lawrence Ressler, "Life and Thought of Alan Keith-Lucas"; Ed Canda, "The Challenge of Diversity for Christian Social Workers"; other, to be announced. 11 a.m.-noon will include an open discussion of current issues. People of all spiritual perspectives are welcome.


(3) March 17, 8:30-10 a.m., Dauphine room. Religious Issues in Social Work Education. Supported by the CSWE long range planning committee. Larry Ortiz, presenter. Panelists will respond (tentative: Ann Davis, M. Vincentia Joseph).

The Spirituality and Social Work Communicator is a biannual journal (Winter and Summer) sponsored and edited by the Society for Spirituality and Social Work. It is published with the assistance of the School of Social Welfare at the University of Kansas. SSSW and its journal promote inquiry and dialogue about the connections between diverse perspectives on spirituality and social work. Editor and SSSW Director: Edward R. Canda. Advisors: Monit Cheung, University of Hawaii; Robert Constable, Loyola University of Chicago; Maikwe Parsons Cross, Lansing, Michigan; Lowell Jenkins, Colorado State University; M. Vincentia Joseph, Catholic University of America; Donald Krill, University of Denver; Daniel Lee, Loyola University of Chicago; Sadye Logan, University of Kansas; Patrick J. O'Brien, San Francisco; Max Siporin, SUNY-Albany. Thanks to student assistants Mitsuoko Nakashima and Regan Scantlin.

The opinions expressed in this journal are those of the contributors and do not necessarily reflect the views of the SSSW or its staff. Endorsement of these opinions should not be inferred unless it is indicated.

**CALL FOR PAPERS**

The Spirituality and Social Work Journal invites articles on these and other topics:

1. Diverse perspectives on spirituality and social work theory, research, practice, and education.
2. Transpersonal psychology and social work.
3. Application of religious practices to social work.
4. Spiritual aspects of self-help movements (e.g. Alcoholics Anonymous).

Items appropriate for Transdisciplinary News, Updates, and Readers' Responses are also welcome.

Use APA style; 6-7 double spaced pages in length; WordStar 6 (or WordPerfect) word processing on disk is desirable. Send 3 copies of manuscript.

Self-addressed stamped envelope please.

Deadline for next issue: June 1, 1991.

Articles will be refereed anonymously by two reviewers and the editor.

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**SUBSCRIPTION FORM**

Includes Winter (Jan/Feb) and Summer (July/Aug) issues, 1991.
Mail to: Edward R. Canda, Society for Spirituality and Social Work, School of Social Welfare, Twente Hall, University of Kansas, Lawrence, Kansas 66045.

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I wish to have my name and address listed in a public directory of social workers and other helping professionals interested in spirituality for the purpose of networking.

[ ] Yes [ ] No

Enclosed is my check, payable to Society for Spirituality and Social Work, for $8.00.

Please note: all subscriptions are automatically cycled on a calendar year basis. International subscriptions for 1991 are free.

*PLEASE SPREAD THE NEWS*
SPIRITUALITY AND SOCIAL WORK JOURNAL
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Editorial Foreword
by Edward R. Canda

Inauguration of the Journal

As promised in the last issue of the Spirituality and Social Work Communicator, this publication has now become a refereed journal. In this way, the Society for Spirituality and Social Work hopes to expand its contributions to scholarship and service. The journal will focus on high quality articles that reflect the insights of scholars, practitioners, and consumers pertaining to diverse spiritual perspectives and their relevance to social work and the human services.

The journal continues to be produced through a volunteer effort in order to keep subscription costs to a minimum. Faculty and staff of the University of Kansas School of Social Welfare provide most of the help in production. However, as we expand the manuscript review process, publicity, circulation, and sophistication of production format, this arrangement will not continue to be adequate. I am seeking suggestions from all interested persons concerning development of additional funding, staffing, publication assistance, and institutional sponsorship. During 1992, I hope to identify and implement ways to further refine the content and format of the journal.

In This Issue

This issue offers an opportunity for reflection upon basic professional concerns about the link between spirituality and social work. Sheridan and Bullis apply qualitative data analysis to shed light on the specific beliefs and helping activities of direct practitioners who are concerned about spiritually-sensitive practice. Ortiz provides insight from his vantage of close association with the North American Association of Christians in Social Work on current worries expressed by the Council on Social Work Education about the connection between religion and social work. Titone presents a practitioner's view of the development of a workshop that promotes the spiritual growth of clients by combining approaches from clinical social work and pastoral counseling.

I have included an updated Topical Bibliography on Spirituality and Social Work as a supplement to the bibliography provided to subscribers in the first issue of the Spirituality and Social Work Communicator. Finally, a directory of society members who indicated an interest in networking is available to assist collaboration and the formation of local groups of social workers interested in spirituality.

CALL FOR PAPERS

The Spirituality and Social Work Journal invites articles on these and other topics:

1. Diverse perspectives on spirituality and social work theory, research, practice, policy, and education.
2. Transpersonal psychology and social work.
3. Application of religious practices to social work.
4. Spiritual aspects of self-help movements (e.g. Alcoholics Anonymous)
5. Book reviews.

Use APA style; 12-16 double spaced pages in length. Send 3 copies of manuscript and, if possible, WordStar, WordPerfect or ASCII file on disk.

Articles will be refereed anonymously.
PRACTITIONERS' VIEWS ON RELIGION AND SPIRITUALITY: A QUALITATIVE STUDY

Michael J. Sheridan and Ronald K. Bullis

Both theologians and social workers recognize that the roots of social work are intimately connected with religious philosophy. Reinhold Niebuhr, writing in 1932, discussed the underlying religious and moral philosophies common to both religion and social work. For example, Niebuhr asserts that both targeted problems arising from the technological nature of our society and developed "techniques for increasing the range of human sympathy" (1932, p. 79).

More recently, Fauri (1988), a social work educator, proposed that religion is one of the principal historical themes of the social work profession. Indeed, some authors trace the religious foundations of social work into ancient times (Day, 1989; Popple & Leighninger, 1990). However, the mutual recognition and appreciation between social work and religion has not always been cordial. Much of the modern history between religion and social work has been characterized on both sides by ambivalence, if not outright hostility. Marty (1980) and Midgley (1990) outlined the objections of some conservative Christian groups to social work's "godless" ideologies during two different decades. On the other side, Biestek (1956) challenged what he took to be the prevailing intolerance of social work toward religious or spiritual subjects, while more recent authors have highlighted social work's neglect of the area (Siporin, 1980; Loewenberg, 1988; Joseph, 1987).

Current offerings in the social work literature have addressed the importance of religion and spirituality to different client groups (Delgado & Humm-Delgado, 1982; Haber, 1984; Lusk, 1986; Bell & Whitefield, 1987; Logan & Chambers, 1987; Greif & Perembaski, 1988; Barthold, 1989; Pinderhughes, 1989; Rauch & Kneen, 1989). Because social workers are becoming increasingly aware of the significance of this dimension to clients, other writers have begun to explore social worker beliefs, attitudes and practices regarding religion and spirituality. Joseph (1988) published the results of 61 responses from field instructors from the Washington, D.C. area. Canda (1988) interviewed 18 social workers, all of whom had published or presented on the topic, regarding their beliefs, values and practices in their work with clients. Fifty-three social work educators were surveyed by Dudley & Helfgott (1990) as to their views on integrating religious or spiritual content in social work curricula. Most recently, Sheridan & Bullis (1991) reported on responses from 328 practitioners including licensed clinical social workers, clinical psychologists and professional counselors, which revealed both similarities and differences in how these professional groups view the role of religion and spirituality in their respective clinical practices. The current paper contributes to this literature by presenting a qualitative summary and analysis of practitioner responses to an open-ended query on the topic of religion and spirituality.

Method

Subjects

One hundred fifty-nine subjects were drawn from a larger sample of 328 licensed clinical social workers, licensed clinical psychologists and licensed professional counselors. This larger sample, which was randomly selected from listings from the appropriate licensing boards in the state of Virginia, completed a multi-faceted questionnaire which included both closed format and open format questions. Findings regarding the responses to the closed format questions have been reported elsewhere (Sheridan & Bullis, 1991). The 159 subjects for the current analysis were selected because they all responded to an open-ended question about religion and spirituality.

Examination of these subjects reveals a fairly even distribution among the three professional groups (55 LCSWs, 49 Psychologists and 55 LPCs); thus, no one group is over or under represented by this subsample. Furthermore, there were no significant differences between responders and nonresponders in terms of age, race, gender, work setting, years working as a clinician, and average number of hours spent counseling. However, a significant difference did emerge for religious affiliation (chi square = 10.709, p = .03). Specifically, although responders and nonresponders did not show notable differences in their involvement with the major denominations (Protestant, Catholic and Jewish), they did show significant differences in reporting "no religious affiliation" (responders = 17%, nonresponders = 24%) and "other affiliation" (responders = 21%, nonresponders = 13%). These differences suggest that the responders may have more interest or stronger views concerning the general topic area than those who chose not to respond. Consequently, any attempts to generalize the current findings to the larger sample must take this possible sample bias into account.

Procedure and Data Analysis

The current study is exploratory in nature and does not involve the testing of any formal hypotheses. Therefore, the research question addresses what practitioners would deem important regarding religion and spirituality when given the stimulus of a very broad, open-ended question about the
topic:

"Please use the space below to make any additional comments you would like about the topic of religion and spirituality, especially as it relates to your professional or personal life. These remarks will be read and taken into account."

A full blank page was provided for responses to this question.

Given this exploratory focus, the constant comparative method, described by Glasser and Strauss (1967) in their discussion of grounded theory, was utilized in analysis. In this approach, analysis moves from individual data elements to larger categories based on an inductive processing of data in which each data element is compared with every other data element. To increase the validity and reliability of this process, a two member research team was involved in the various stages of analysis.

The first step of this procedure was to unitize the written comments into logical and consistent coding units, by enclosing each identified coding unit within brackets ([...]). The coding unit selected for our analysis was the "thought unit" (Danish, D'Augelli & Brock, 1976). Briefly, a thought unit refers to each comment by a respondent about one thought, idea or content area; and it may consist of one sentence, several sentences or a partial sentence. The first author initially identified the thought units, which were then reviewed by the second author. Discrepancies were resolved by consensus. The 159 questionnaires yielded from one to twenty thought units per questionnaire for a total of 668 thought units.

The next step involved each researcher independently assigning codes to each thought unit based on a coding schema comprised of 15 mutually exclusive categories. Following this coding process, category designations were compared and some reassignments were made based on consensus between the two researchers. During this initial coding process, an unacceptable number of "other" categories emerged. These thought units were reexamined and, based on their content, some additions and revisions of the original coding schema were made. The majority of "other" thought units were then assigned more specific categories, leaving only 28 thought units coded as "other." These ranged in content from comments about therapy in general, to statements about wanting to learn more about the topic, to references to particular books on the subject. Another 107 thought units were coded in referring to the study or questionnaire (61 "supportive of the study or questionnaire" and 46 "providing suggestions or critiques of the study or questionnaire"). The remaining 533 units pertained to either the respondents' personal or professional life relative to the topic of religion or spirituality. These were coded as one of 12 mutually exclusive subcategories under the major categories of Personal Life or Professional Life. It is these 533 units which will be presented and discussed below.

Findings

As stated, two major categories and 12 subcategories were derived for analysis. The first major category is Personal Life, which refers to all thought units which addressed some personal aspect of religion or spirituality. The five subcategories include: "personal experience" (previous history and current role of religion/spirituality in one's life); "personal beliefs" (orientation to one's own belief system and stance regarding others' beliefs); "personal practices" (attendance or participation in religious or spiritual services, rituals, activities, etc.); "changes/continuity of beliefs/traditions" (any shifts in either beliefs or practices over time); and "general beliefs about religion/spirituality" (views on the role, nature or processes of religion or spirituality for people in general).

The second major category is Professional Life, which refers to all thought units which addressed some aspect of religion or spirituality concerning subjects' lives as practitioners. The seven subcategories include: "professional experience" (current role of religion/spirituality as it impacts professional self and professional identity as a religious or spiritual counselor); "client and referral descriptions" (prevalence of clients presenting religious/spiritual issues, referrals to and from religious or spiritual sources, and types of clients or client issues which cause discomfort); "assessment and diagnosis" (importance of obtaining religious/spiritual information in assessment and role of religion/spirituality as either a positive or negative factor in clients' lives); "role of religious/spiritual dimension in practice" (importance to clients' lives); similarities with the process of therapy, role in effective practice, relationship to positive therapy outcomes, and presence of transcendent force in work with clients); "means of addressing topic in practice" (the if, when and how of addressing spiritual/religious concerns in practice); "clinical interventions of a religious/spiritual nature" (approaches and practices considered to be either appropriate or inappropriate); and "education/training in religion/spirituality" (views on previous education and training and participation in receiving or providing post-graduate training).

Based on this coding scheme, the first level of analysis computed the number of thought units and percentage of respondents addressing each major category and subcategory for the total data set. Table 1 provides a breakdown of these data.

In terms of both overall thought units and percentage of respondents, more data was generated about the subjects' professional lives than their personal lives. Specifically, the top four subcategories all fall within the major category of
Table 1
Number of Thought Units and Percentages of Respondents for Total Sample

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>% of Total Respondents (n = 139)</th>
<th># Thought Units</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Personal Life</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Personal Experience</td>
<td>18%</td>
<td>34</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Personal Beliefs</td>
<td>26%</td>
<td>49</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Personal Practice</td>
<td>5%</td>
<td>13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Changes/Continuity of Beliefs/Traditions</td>
<td>15%</td>
<td>24</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>General Beliefs about Religion/Spirituality</td>
<td>16%</td>
<td>26</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Professional Life</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Professional Experience</td>
<td>16%</td>
<td>33</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Client &amp; Referral Descriptions</td>
<td>13%</td>
<td>22</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Assessment &amp; Diagnosis</td>
<td>33%</td>
<td>61</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Role of Religious/Spiritual Dimension in Practice</td>
<td>37%</td>
<td>61</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Means of Addressing Religious/Spiritual Topics in Practice</td>
<td>36%</td>
<td>59</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Clinical Interventions of a Religious/Spiritual Nature</td>
<td>48%</td>
<td>117</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Education/Training in Area of Religion/Spirituality</td>
<td>22%</td>
<td>36</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total Thought Units re: Personal Life</td>
<td></td>
<td>144</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total Thought Units re: Professional Life</td>
<td></td>
<td>369</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total Thought Units</td>
<td></td>
<td>513</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note: Percentages do not equal 100% because most respondents provided data for more than one category.

Professional Life: "clinical interventions of a religious/spiritual nature"; "assessment and diagnosis"; "role of religious/spiritual dimension in practice"; and "means of addressing religious/spiritual topics in practice."

Comparisons of the number of thought units were also made between the three professional groups. Table 2 illustrates these data. A pattern similar to the total data set emerged from this analysis in that there were more comments about one’s professional life than comments about one’s personal life for all three groups. However, differences were noted for various subcategories. Specifically, LCSWs produced a higher number of thought units concerning "assessment and diagnosis" and "means of addressing topic," while LPCs generated more thought units about their "personal beliefs," "professional experience" and "role of religious/spiritual dimension in practice." Both LCSWs and LPCs commented more often on "general beliefs" and "education and training" than psychologists. Finally, both LCSWs and psychologists offered more comments concerning "clinical interventions" than LPCs. Although psychologists did not emerge as substantially higher in any one subcategory, it should be noted that there were six fewer respondents in this professional group than in the other two groups, which potentially reduces the number of thought units generated.

The percentage of respondents addressing each area was also analyzed for each professional group. In this analysis, the number of respondents in each group is not an issue because percentages are based on the total number of subjects within a particular group. As with the number of thought units, the subcategories receiving the highest percentages generally fell within the Professional Life subcategories for all three groups. However, differences between the three groups were also noted (see Table 3).
Specifically, LCSWs again emerged with the highest percentage of respondents in "means of addressing topic" and "assessment and diagnosis," as well as the "clinical interventions" subcategory. LPCs again revealed the highest percentage in "personal beliefs" and "professional experience," and also showed the highest percentage in "role of religious/spiritual dimension in practice." Both LCSWs and LPCs had higher percentages of respondents in "general beliefs" as compared to psychologists, while psychologists and LPCs both produced higher percentages in "personal experience" than LCSWs. Psychologists only showed notably higher percentages than the other two groups in "client and referral descriptions." In summary, analysis of the three professional groups shows similarity in overall focus, but also reveals differences in emphasis, especially in the area of clinical practice.

The next level of analysis was to examine in more detail particular experiences, views or positions reported in each subcategory by the total sample. Major themes or perspectives are summarized with examples below. It should be noted that the percentages reported for different types of comments in each section represent the percentage of respondents who addressed that particular subcategory, not the percentage of the total sample.

**Personal Life**

**Personal Experiences.** Eighteen percent of the total sample provided 34 thought units concerning either their previous history with religion or spirituality or the current role it plays in their personal lives today. In terms of past history, both positive (24%) and negative comments (11%) were offered: "I was reared in a strong, loving Christian home which provided much guidance and support for me" and "My parents' religion and beliefs had a strong negative impact on my adult life. My [.....] upbringing took years to overcome, especially guilt." As to the role of religion or spirituality in their current lives, all the comments (65%) were of a positive nature: "Provides a sense of tranquility in my personal life - always something to turn to in times of stress," "I find myself feeling more centered, calm and focused than ever before" and "Has given me values and direction in my own life."

**Personal Beliefs.** Twenty-six percent of the respondents produced 49 thought units about their personal beliefs. In this case, 46% reported a belief in the spiritual dimension of life rather than adherence to any specific religious faith (20%), and only 10% reported having no explicit religious belief system. Perhaps related to these positions, only one person (2%) suggested that there was only one true way to believe ("I think it is important for counselors to believe in and follow the teachings of Jesus Christ"), while the remaining subjects (22%) made comments which reflected acceptance of various beliefs and orientations ("I think that there are limitless possibilities to effective religious beliefs").

**Personal Practices.** Only 5% of the respondents commented on their personal practices, yielding 11 thought units. Of those who addressed this issue, 75% stated that they were involved in some regular religious or spiritual practices. Those practices most often mentioned were attendance at religious services, participation in other religious or spiritual activities (such as Sunday School classes) and the regular practice of meditation. Twenty-five percent of those commenting on this issue stated that they did not engage in any religious or spiritual practices.

**Changes/Continuity of Beliefs/Traditions.** Fifteen percent of all respondents provided 24 thought units on either changes or continuity in their beliefs or traditions. Of those remarking on this area, only 13% reported continuity by adhering to a particular faith throughout their lifetime. Others
stated that they had moved from one faith to another particular faith (8%), from no faith or tradition to a particular one (8%), or from a particular faith to no faith or tradition (8%). The greatest number of respondents reported a general shift in religiosity or spirituality during their lifetime (without reference to a particular faith), by finding themselves becoming more religious or spiritual as they grow older (55%). However, an additional 8% reported growing less religious or spiritual as they grow older.

General Beliefs about Religion and Spirituality. The remainder of thought units pertaining to one’s personal life addressed views on the role, nature or processes of religion or spirituality for people in general (26 thought units produced by 16% of the total sample). The greatest number of respondents addressing this subcategory (50%) spoke to beliefs that spirituality was a natural part or capacity of all people: “I believe that all persons have spiritual capacities, although not all clients access this,” “All people have a ‘religion’ even if they deny the existence of God and believe in man or themselves,” “All people are spiritual beings and are searching for harmony with that dimension of their being” and “We all have a sense of spirituality whether we recognize it or not.” Another 27% commented on the very personal nature of anyone’s religious or spiritual experience: “Spirituality is an individualistic, personal and internal process.”

Finally, 23% made a point of distinguishing religion from spirituality by offering their own definitions of the two terms: “I make a very clear distinction between religions (man made) and spiritual (of God, of nature, of connectedness between all men and nature),” “Spirituality can be a part of an individual’s life without a sense of connection to formalized religion” and “Spirituality is a more personalized set of beliefs that an individual attempts to sort out in relation to themselves and their place in the world. Religion can and does involve spirituality but can also be very separate from one’s search for personal meaning.” As can be seen by these examples, a common thread was to view religion as a socially-derived phenomenon involving formalized codes, dogmas, etc., whereas spirituality is characterized as being a process which involves a personal search for meaning and purpose in one’s life.

Professional Life

Professional Experience. Sixteen percent of all respondents produced 33 thought units related to aspects of religion or spirituality and their professional lives. The greatest number of respondents (27%) focused on the positive role that respondents felt that religion or spirituality played in their professional practice with clients. “As a clinician, being aware of my spiritual side was as important to me as ‘being in touch with feelings,’” “As a counselor, my own spirituality less me value myself and other humans and assist others in discovering personal assets and alternatives as they progress with the task of self-actualization” and “The integration of my spiritual understanding with my clinical training is a critically important part of my work.” The remainder of comments in this subcategory (28%) addressed whether or not respondents thought of themselves as a religious or spiritual counselor. Specifically, only one person claimed this identity, while six other persons stated explicitly that they did not consider themselves to fit this description.

Client and Referral Descriptions. Thirteen percent of the total sample provided 25 thought units which described either client characteristics or referral patterns. Of those falling within this subcategory, 25% stated that they had many clients who presented religious or spiritual issues in therapy, while another 25% commented that they had few or none such clients. Another 25% cited some discomfort with particular clients or client issues. The most frequently notes uncomfortable client issues related to fundamentalism and client situations involving abortion. The remaining 25% commenting about this subcategory remarked on significant referrals either to or from religious or spiritual sources (e.g., ministers, priests, rabbis, spiritual leaders, etc.).

Assessment and Diagnosis. Thirty-three percent of all respondents produced 61 thought units concerning the importance of religion or spirituality in assessment and diagnosis. About one-third (33%) of the respondents addressing this area stated that they consider religious/spiritual background and current status as very important for assessment and a general understanding of their clients: “It is extremely helpful in understanding clients’ belief systems and cognitive processes to have some understanding of their religious training and spiritual values,” “Spirituality must be taken into account in assessing a client just as any and all other values, beliefs . . . this is in order for me to understand the client in his/her context” and “I use a client’s spiritual beliefs as a way of knowing their values and their emotional and social supports.”

The remaining 67% commented on religion or spirituality as either a positive (37%) or negative (30%) factor in their clients’ lives. Examples of positive factors included: “as a source of strength, reassurance and comfort; emotional support and security; positive traditions and moral codes; sense of belonging, acceptance and pseudo-family; building of self esteem and conscience; capacity to accept death and aging; ability to empathize with others; sense of meaningfulness regarding one’s own existence and value; purpose and direction.” Conversely, religion or spirituality was considered to produce such negative effects as: “exploitation of naive and weak people; harmful views which prescribe that the wife
should be subservient to the husband; creation of separation, hatred, isolation and rigidity and prohibition of introspection and inquiry; negative self-concept and excessive guilt; discouragement of personal autonomy; dogma and authoritarianism of many organized religions is often antithetical to mental health, e.g., self-sacrifice, discouragement of questions, etc."

**Role of Religious/Spiritual Dimension in Practice.**
Thiry-seven percent of the total sample reported 61 thought units in this area. There were a variety of ways respondents commented on the religious/spiritual dimensions in practice with the greatest number of subjects (41%) stating that religious or spiritual matters were an important part of life and should be addressed like anything else that was of significance to clients. "Religious issues should be treated the same as other issues in the client's life, such as sexual orientation, marital values, etc.", "I have identified (spirituality) as a necessary part of the whole person which should be addressed in practice" and "I personally feel that one's spiritual being is an important aspect of life, and that those who deny this leave out a significant portion of personhood." Another 20% regarded the process of therapy itself to have a spiritual, if not religious, component—that spirituality was an integral part of practice: "I feel spirituality is part of the therapeutic process where we assist people in finding inner peace"; "I think that the intimacy of clinical work can be a deeply spiritual experience and I'm sure that is one of the attractive things for me"; "Given the assumption that religion or spirituality permeate all aspects of one's life and of course 'therapy,' ignoring something so essential is incompetent"; and "I view psychotherapy as similar to contemplation since there is a turning inward as well as reflection of one's feelings and concerns . . . the increased sensitivity and attention to one's inner life is both a psychological and spiritual journey."

Fifteen percent expressed the viewpoint that the ability to understand and work with religious and spiritual diversity was a positive asset for a practitioner to have and could increase his or her effectiveness: "It has been my experience that the therapist's understanding and appreciation of the client's faith tradition can have a significant influence on therapeutic outcome"; "It is helpful and comforting, according to clients themselves, to have this understanding (of belief systems)"; and "Clients feel more comfortable and free to communicate with someone who can understand their spiritual lingo."

Twelve percent addressed the issue of receptivity of the practitioner to religious or spiritual content, stating that non-receptivity may be a function of fear or discomfort on the part of the therapist: "Most counselors either are afraid to counsel a client in the fourth dimension (spiritual) or they don't know where they, themselves, stand in spiritual matters" and "Probably if I were more content and more well-founded in my own spirituality it would be easier to discuss religion some."

Several of these respondents also speculated that clients would probably present more of this content if they felt the practitioner would be open to it: "I suspect many clients are more concerned with the transcendent than they verbalize to therapists, for fear of being 'psychoanalyzed' or ridiculed" and "I do think when clients feel a therapist understands or is receptive to working on spiritual issues related to their lives, they produce more spiritual material."

Another seven percent stated that there was often a link between the degree of exploration of spiritual issues and other positive therapy outcomes: "My own personal and professional conviction is that for a person's well-being, those who have some cosmological view of their place in an infinite universe, are less prone to disturbances, or stress reactions, than those without or those who have not given time or thought to higher questions"; "I have noticed that the maturity clients gain through therapy and the peace of mind they achieve comes after, or along with, a reckoning with religious issues," and "I think that increased spirituality can represent a positive outcome of psychotherapy."

Finally, five percent reported having experienced a transcendent force which seemed to be supportive of the therapy process: "I have actually experienced a centeredness and harmony in the healing process with my clients in a kind of peak experience, although it is rare" and "I have sometimes felt a transcendent force of support in my work with clients which results in a deeper, richer process."

**Means of Addressing Religious/Spiritual Topics in Practice.**
This area was addressed by 36% of the total sample and yielded 59 thought units. Again, there were a variety of views on if, when and how practitioners should approach religious/spiritual issues with their clients. Thirty-seven percent stated that they only address the topic when there appears to be psychological or social implications which should be explored or when it otherwise seemed "appropriate."

Another 32% reported that they only dealt with this area when the client brought it up. Furthermore, only 21% stated that if the subject became a major focus or concern, they referred the client to some other appropriate source. Seven percent said that they addressed the topic in indirect ways and that it may never be targeted as "religious or spiritual."

Finally, three percent reported that they always addressed the subject as part of working with the whole person. The following are representative examples of these varying perspectives:

"I will bring up these issues if there is some indication that their beliefs or practices are interfering with their psychological or social well-being."
"I only deal with issues of religion or spirituality if a client is the one to bring the issue up first--otherwise, I never make mention of such issues in therapy."

"If our discussions go past a superficial discussion of such issues, I admit to my limitations and refer them to a more appropriate resource."

"This (religious or spiritual issues) can be expressed in a counseling session without any direct mention of religion or spirituality."

"In counseling clients I always feel that the client must examine his or her belief systems."

Clinical Interventions of a Religious/Spiritual Nature.
The highest percentage of all respondents (48%) produced the most thought units (117) on this topic. Comments primarily delineated what approaches and practices respondents did themselves or thought to be appropriate (57%) and those which they believed were not appropriate (43%). Sometimes the same interventions considered appropriate by some respondents were cited as inappropriate by others. The following summarizes approaches targeted as either acceptable or unacceptable for clinical practice.

1) Appropriate Interventions: *indicating respect and acceptance of client’s beliefs; using religious language or metaphors; supporting a family’s belief system when working with children; encouraging involvement in supportive religious or spiritual organizations; helping to clarify religious and spiritual issues and values; exploring personal meaning and purpose; identifying religious backgrounds and effects on clients’ lives; investigating defenses and negative views against religion; prayer in session if client requests; if same faith is shared and after determining that there is no negative psychological connotation to this request; prayer at deathbed; exploring religious involvement with certain groups or faiths if they appear to be damaging or dangerous; using Scripture when appropriate, e.g., as concept of forgiveness; asking client to do penance for a deed/action for which they feel guilt; and sharing own values and beliefs.* Many of these approaches or practices were expressed as appropriate only if they were consistent with the client’s own belief system or practices.

2) Inappropriate Interventions: *sharing own beliefs or imposing own beliefs on clients; disagreeing with clients’ beliefs; making recommendations about clients’ beliefs or practices; praying or meditating with a client; addressing the client’s religious life at all; using my values as the model for clients; and use of ‘God told me’ or extreme charismatic or fundamentalist positions.* Although the list of inappropriate interventions is relatively brief in comparison to appropriate interventions, many persons strongly stated the unacceptability of imposing one’s own beliefs on clients or disagreeing with their faith in any way.

Education/Training in Area of Religion/Spirituality.
Twenty-two percent of all respondents provided 36 thought units concerning education and training. Of those addressing this topic, 38% stated that religion and spirituality was addressed very little or not at all in their clinical training and believed that it should have been highlighted more. Conversely, another 14% felt that the amount of focus on the topic in their training was appropriate. Twenty-one percent reported receiving specific religious or spiritual training, either through formal theological programs or through training of therapy approaches which included a spiritual component. Another 15% stated that they have sought out post-graduate training on the subject, primarily through special workshops and seminars. An additional 12% reported that they themselves have provided religious/spiritual education through lectures, workshops and writings.

Discussion and Implications
Any interpretation of these findings must be done within the context of the study’s limitations. As stated previously, this subsample of respondents reported a higher percentage of "other religious affiliations" (primarily Eastern or other spiritual traditions) and a lower percentage of "no religious affiliations" than nonrespondents. Thus, the group may have a greater interest in the topic than the subjects who chose not to answer the open-ended question. This difference must be taken into account when generalizing the data to the larger, representatively drawn sample of licensed practitioners in Virginia. It should be noted, however, that this factor did not result in homogeneous views; a great deal of variety is apparent in the subsample’s comments. Secondly, analyzed comments only reflect views that the respondents chose to write about in the space provided. It is very likely that they have opinions on other areas that they did not address, as well. The data only represent those areas that the respondents targeted at the point they were completing the questionnaire.

Given these limitations, it is apparent from the data that there is a wide range of views concerning religion and spirituality held by this sample of practitioners. This variability is evident in comments about both their personal lives (history, beliefs and practices) and their professional lives (importance, clients’ presenting problems, assessment, role in practice, means of addressing topic, clinical interventions, and education and training). Regardless of this variability, however it is also apparent that this area is one with which many of these practitioners struggle, given the relative lack of direction provided by their clinical training. Thirty-eight percent of the respondents addressing training and education stated that they thought the topic should be presented more in graduate training and 15% reported seeking postgraduate training on the subject. These figures support recent writings
which call for the inclusion of more content on religion and spirituality in schools of social work (Canda, 1989; Dudley & Helfgott, 1990; Kilpatrick & Holland, 1990; Netting, Thibault & Ellor, 1990).

The findings also provide some implications about what areas might be most useful to highlight in professional education. The first area which produced much comment was that of assessment and diagnosis. Specifically, how much should practitioners attend to religious and spiritual factors when taking a history of their clients? Furthermore, how should practitioners weigh these factors as either potential supports or barriers to healthy functioning? Although there are no easy answers to these questions, particularly the second, it is apparent that students would benefit from content and discussion on assessment and diagnosis before they found themselves grappling with such issues upon graduation. Such content could include how to develop a religious and spiritual history, how to conduct a spiritually-sensitive interview, and how to determine the meaning and role of religion and spirituality to particular clients and evaluate its positive and negative impacts.

The second area addressed frequently by the respondents was the role of the religious/spiritual dimension in practice. How much emphasis should there be on this dimension in our work with clients and how should that emphasis be expressed by the practitioner? Comments from the survey suggest that there needs to be an awareness of this dimension both in terms of its importance to clients and the possible part it might play in the therapy process itself. Furthermore, it is apparent that the level of receptivity to religious and spiritual issues on the part of the practitioner may determine whether or not these issues are presented, even when they may be of prime importance to clients. The educational process could address these issues by encouraging students to critically explore their own beliefs, values and behaviors and the impact of these on their work with religiously diverse clients. Such exploration could include how one acknowledges and integrates the religious and spiritual dimension in practice while respecting the beliefs and values of clients and practitioner alike. Additionally, students would benefit from identifying which client situations or issues they can handle competently and comfortably and which they cannot. Thus, knowledge of referral sources and processes is also important, in order to facilitate the right fit between the client and religious or spiritual resource.

Related to this area is the issue of the means of addressing religious/spiritual concerns with clients, which was another major topic targeted by the respondents. A wide range of approaches was reported, from never discussing the topic unless the client brings it up to addressing it at some point with every client. Many stated that they only did so if "appropriate," such as when there was evidence of psychological or social problems or disturbance. Although there are probably no right or wrong answers to this issue, it is an important one to discuss. Graduate education could provide guidelines for when and how to address religious and spiritual issues with clients, which would allow practitioners to act from a more knowledgeable and confident position.

Finally, the area which received the most comment was that of appropriate and inappropriate clinical interventions of a religious/spiritual nature. Many acceptable approaches and practices were identified by respondents, while several others were noted as undivable or even unethical. Many of the same interventions (such as sharing one's own beliefs with clients, exploring or challenging client's beliefs, and the use of prayer) were cited as either appropriate or inappropriate by different respondents. Given this lack of agreement and the depth of feeling about the topic, it appears critical that this area be addressed by social work education. Again, although agreement may not, and perhaps should not, be reached, a critical look at actual practice interventions is warranted. Proposals for ethical guidelines to practice, such as Canda's (1990) recent discussion of the use of holistic prayer, are invaluable as a starting point for this critical look and could be used effectively in the educational process. With such guidelines, the indications and contraindications can be addressed along with the knowledge of how to appropriately use spiritual or religious techniques.

In addition to these areas concerning direct practice applications, additional content should be included in human behavior, macro practice and policy, and minorities and diversity courses. Such content is essential to a comprehensive understanding of human behavior, knowledge of the role of religion in developing policy and programs, and the ability to practice spiritually-sensitive social work. In order to put into practice the values of respect for the individual and acceptance of diversity, both social work practice and education must attend to the religious and spiritual dimensions of life and the role they play in people's lives.

Note

1. Data category decisions are available on request from the first author.

References


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**A SPIRITUALITY AND PERSONAL GROWTH SEMINAR FOR CLIENTS**

Anila M. Titone

This article describes the development of a seminar created to help clients to integrate spirituality into their psychotherapy. The seminar now takes place in a private practice of clinical social work; however it originated in an academic setting—a seminar—where I was a consultant. The process of moving it from the academic setting to a private practice office is one focus of this article. The other focus is the content of the current seminar, its structure and the results.

**FIRST STAGE: 1976-1988**

I first became interested professionally in integrating psychological growth and spirituality when I was a consultant...
to the ministerial training program at Perkins School of Theology at Southern Methodist University starting in 1976. As one of a group of mental health professionals who were consultants to the faculty, I led groups of ministerial interns on a rotating basis in what was called a "growth group." The purpose was to give the interns the opportunity to focus on personal growth issues, while in the process of his or her field placement in a church. Some of the seminary faculty were interested in the group leaders' finding ways to teach the interns in these groups how to integrate theological concepts into the experience. They were afraid that the growth group would otherwise be either irrelevant or detrimental to the seminary's purpose. In short, some perceived the growth groups to be emphasizing personal issues in such a way that the effect was promoting anti-Christian self centeredness: "naive-gazing", as one put it.

At the same time other faculty members were pessimistic about any effort to distract the interns from their personal issues--the proper nurturing of which they saw to be crucial to the purpose of the students' learning of the numerous personal and relationship skills essential to effective ministry. Still others liked the idea of introducing theological concepts because they felt that theology came alive best when related to concerns that carry emotional weight. I saw validity in all sides but was most committed to the latter. I felt that not only would the theological learning be brought alive, but also the personal learning might take on a new vitality, when seen through the language native to the "calling" of these men and women. Therefore I included a discussion of theology at the end of each group session.

The format of the group began with the interns exploring only personal concerns; there was no emphasis on theology for approximately the first two-thirds of the session. The last part was devoted to reflection on the theological significance of the first part. Initially, when it was time for this theological aspect, participants responded with awkward silence and/or verbal groping. The students were adept at sermonizing and writing papers on the whole gamut of theological concepts. But they were not practiced in the spontaneous application of those ideas. However, with gentle encouragement their silences and groping turned to fresh and moving insights. For example, common themes in the sessions were alienation and reconciliation. Once the themes were identified in such terms, the theological underpinnings of the interactions that had occurred in the first part of the session were accessible. Making that kind of insightful connection was exciting to the interns. Eventually the final segment of the session became its climax for many. From their reaction and my own, I began to wonder how I could introduce something similar into my private practice.

**EVOLUTION, 1988-1991**

In 1988 I introduced the seminar to my clients. All seminars held in the private practice setting have had a similar format. It consists of two basic activities: 1) free discussion of therapeutic goals, and 2) structured exercises pertaining to spirituality. An attempt is made to balance structured and unstructured time, in order to "set the stage" for each individual to internalize new learning. It is a nine-hour seminar, conducted for three hours on three consecutive evenings. I led the group with the assistance of pastoral counselors, thinking that they replaced the formal theological education of the interns in the seminary groups. Since 1988, I have led eight of these seminars with pastoral counselors and led the ninth and last one unassisted. A part of the paragraph from the flyer which describes the seminar is as follows:

There is a rich life experience which comes from integrating psychological growth with vital personal spirituality. The seminar leaders believe that many people are sincerely interested in such integration. Often, however, persons wonder if they have to sacrifice one for the other. The leaders do not believe such is the case. In fact, this seminar is based on the assumptions that genuine psychological growth and spiritual vitality are frequently interdependent and are always compatible.

Seminar enrollment has been limited to eight participants; each seminar has included six to eight clients. Participants have also given frank feedback, which I have begun to request in writing. In addition there are usually two or three therapists or pastoral counselors in attendance as observers, for the purpose of their learning; and they have given valuable input.

Along the way we have made changes in the format of the seminar in order to adapt to the interests and needs of the participants and to the talents and interests of the leaders. I gradually became aware that I would like to lead the seminar alone as I became more cognizant of my ability, and as my long-held definition of spirituality (Titone, 1991) became more internalized and more clearly distinguishable from religion/theology. In addition, my clients and colleagues who were not involved in organized religion expressed their reticence to participate in a group led by ordained ministers. This was the case even though the ministers with whom I worked were non-judgmental in their compassionate sensitivity to the needs and beliefs of members. Nevertheless, as suggested by Judah (1991), I did "not wish to even appear to exclude anyone." (p. 10). It was difficult enough to communicate the purpose of the seminar without adding to the misgivings of many who are wary of any activity (especially
one conducted by a psychotherapist) that may encourage the misinterpretation that I am promoting specific religious beliefs.  

A DESCRIPTION OF ONE SEMINAR: APRIL 5-6, 1991

The April, 1991, seminar was a departure from the others in my leading group alone. Another change was the intentional introduction of the creativity of group members and the elimination of any introduction of theological concepts except as they appeared spontaneously in the process. In that case they were taken as seriously as any other relevant subject.

I prepared registrants for participation by telling them to 1) decide upon a personal growth goal that was achievable in the allotted time; 2) select any object(s) which represented creativity to them, and which were favorites of theirs; and 3) bring and plan to display and talk about these object(s) with the group. The group consisted of six participants, including four women and two men, ranging in age from twenty-nine to sixty-four. They were all highly functioning persons with good ego strength. Another change in the last seminar was the schedule, which was as follows: Friday, 6-9PM; Saturday, 9AM to 4PM, with no time away from the Seminar setting, which was my home and large yard. They were asked to bring a sack lunch. All breaks including lunch were observed in silence.

With this structure and setting, and through the vehicle of creativity my intention was to support the participants' desire to explore their personal/spiritual goals. Just as the ministers reached spirituality through theology, I hoped these clients would reach theirs through creativity. Woodman (1983), a Jungian analyst, indicates that creativity and imagination are at the heart of spirituality and that spirituality is crucial to one's ongoing development. She believes that the process of integration is stymied when "cut off from instinctual and imaginative roots..." (p. 70).

On arrival for the seminar all brought artistic items, some which they had produced themselves, some created by others, but all which they liked. One of the participants, Cindy, who had expressed grave misgiving about her own "lack of creativity" before we started, brought three items: an arrangement made of flowers which she grew, dried, and arranged; a jar of pickles that she pickled; and a paper that she wrote chronicling her life story. She also showed the group pictures of her daughter in whose creation, she pointed out, she "had a hand". She described her experience as follows:

By sharing our creativity early on, I believe an atmosphere of safety and trust was created that allowed more personal disclosure and openness. For this reason I believe that what I shared and what others shared had more depth and personal relevance than would have been shared at other types of growth experiences.

Another example was that Sharyn brought a picture of a duck struggling to get out of the water, or splashing into the water, she didn't know which. She commented as follows:

I felt more open to the group after showing my paintings. I was not inclined to try to put on a false face when my paintings, which are, to me a representation of my real and honest self, were on display. The paintings set a suggestive mood for a spirituality seminar. Since art can't be consumed, serves no necessary function, being around artworks is like a break for me--like being in the mountains or at the ocean or watching birds--it's something very good in the world that makes me feel that there is some kind of good design to the universe.

By the end of the first evening I perceived the group to be a cohesive unit, looking forward to continuing the next day. I suspect that a major factor in the depth of the connection and the sound trust level was that, as Boszormenyi-Nagy (1990) said, "... the resources of stability, security, and trustworthiness in relationships..." had been tapped. And these resources go "beyond the psychology of the capacity for trusting" (p. 9). The way I think of it is that by way of the creative we touched the spiritual and also the deeply personal. Doing this in a group compounded the benefit.

Before we adjourned that evening, I gave the group two assignments: to 1) dream a dream for work the next day; 2) write their epitaphs for their tombstones, assuming that they had died on the day before the Seminar began. They all agreed to do their best on these assignments, even though some found it amusing that they might dream in order to fulfill an assignment.

Saturday morning began with our noticing a pretty painting of a bouquet of flowers that was not there the night before. Nick said he brought it, since we didn't have one like it. And Dea was especially inspiring. An artist in avocation, she expressed her struggle to justify her continued interest in pursuing art rather than commit to activities that she thought helped or pleased others. She displayed some of her art work and her obvious pleasure in it, as well as her fears that she was frittering away her life. The group empathized with her. They also expressed concern about her bloodshot eye. Dea then told us that she had noticed it and intended to get medical attention soon if needed but in the meantime she had assigned a certain meaning to it: uncharacteristic of herself, after registering for the seminar, she had asked God for some sign that she was doing a good thing by attending it. The prospect was frightening to her since she had misgivings about the validity of concentration on art work as a serious personal matter. But
discussing spirituality was also scary (since she is Jewish and she knew that I am Christian). She decided that God had sent this message by the eye problem: use your eyes while you have them . . . think about the connection with your spirituality.

Over lunch, the group wrote new epitaphs assuming that they would die five years from now, in contrast to the first one, which was written assuming that they had died the day before the seminar began. Don wrote this epitaph during lunch time: "She used her vision (physical, mental and spiritual) to find new realities and truths for herself and to share with others." Interestingly, the epitaph she had written earlier read, "She will let you determine her self worth." She was very pleased with the difference in the two.

Matt, a therapist, provided the work which I thought allowed the group to coalesce in a unique way most pertinent to our purpose of integration. At one point he was expressing good feelings about his work as a therapist, but also great angst that there is nothing creative about him or his work. He outlined what he felt good about in his work: helping clients to see patterns or issues they alone didn’t see; describing problems in a new, more meaningful way or taking something a client says and putting it in a therapeutic context. After listening intently, Billie told Matt that what he’s doing she thought was the heart of creativity: taking what you perceive in the way of patterns or essence, framing it in a personal way and then communicating it to others. At the time I wasn’t sure Matt really accepted what Billie said to him. But on Saturday he shared a dream he’d had Friday night. In the dream the group was standing behind him (he especially noticed Cindy and Billie). The group was encouraging him. It appears that he may have let in Billie’s positive reframing of his creativity.

At the end of the allotted time I asked the group to reflect upon and share the highlights of their learning and their regrets regarding their experience. The major regret expressed was that the time was too short; another was that no time was spent on an explicit discussion of spirituality. By far the majority of responses were favorable, indicating that the seminars stimulated insights for growth in an atmosphere of safety and trust.

CONCLUSION

The seminar demonstrates an effective means by which clients can learn to integrate psychological and spiritual learning. It may be useful for a clinician or faculty person to offer a similar learning experience in any setting where clients or students have an interest in spirituality and personal growth. Some obstacles to such a transfer might be the difficulties in screening registrants in order to increase the likelihood of success; the necessity to use a greater amount of time building the required trust and rapport than would be necessary in cases where one is working with clients with whom there is already a close working relationship; and insecurities in leadership skills on the part of the potential leader. A way of addressing the latter concern is to include experiences similar to this seminar in social work courses in which spirituality and/or group processes are being taught.

References


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RELIGIOUS ISSUES: THE MISSING LINK IN SOCIAL WORK EDUCATION

Larry P. A. Ortiz

The Council on Social Work Education’s Faculty Development and Program Committee extended an invitation to the author to present a concept paper on religious issues in social work education at the 1990 37th Annual Program Meeting. Three concerns raised by the Committee, which precipitated the invitation, were: (1) the increasing number of “fundamentalist” Christian students in social work programs, who are unwilling to work with clients experiencing difficulties with lifestyle or choice issues incompatible with the student’s Christian beliefs; (2) the increasing number of colleges and universities with strong religious ties which are either applying for or recently obtained accreditation; (3) questions regarding whether certain religiously oriented requests for service from clients are somehow incompatible with either social work values or accepted forms of service delivery, i.e. prayer, consultation with a faith healer, etc. This article is a revised version of that presentation. It summarizes major current scholarly work which responds to concerns raised by the Committee. Although there is an outstanding need for continued research and writing on the interface of religion and social work practice and education, the author believes there is currently sufficient material to respond to questions regarding incompatibility.

The three issues posed above need to be addressed in
terms of the historical relationship between religion and the profession as well as the curricular deficiencies that spawn such problems. These issues will be addressed through four basic points: (1) historically, religion and social work were viewed as intrinsically related; (2) social work curricula generally do not adequately address the religious and spiritual dimensions in practice or HBSE courses, nor do they deal sufficiently with the role of religion in social welfare institutions; (3) despite tensions, sectarian oriented social work education has a rich history and will continue to have a significant role in professional education; and, (4) not all Christians are suited for social work; but Christians do not have a corner on the unsuitability market.

Before developing these points further, there is a need to briefly define terms such as religion, spirituality and faith, which are used somewhat interchangeably throughout this paper. Of the three terms, religion is the easiest to distinguish. Religion generally refers to an external expression of one's faith reflected in a code of living (Joseph, 1987). Faith and spirituality refer to similar ideas: the quest for meaning. Faith refers to the knowledge of the source of power and value that is at the center of a person's life. This knowledge is developmental; it evolves throughout one's life in a manner consistent with and dependent upon personality, cognitive and moral maturation (Fowler, 1975; 1981; 1984). Spirituality is a pervasive drive of the person toward finding meaning in relationship with the physical and social environment and an ultimate source of power (Canda, 1983a; Joseph, 1987). Dudley and Helfgott (1990) give a narrower definition, stating that spirituality requires a belief in the existence of a soul.

Historical connections between religion and social work

Religion and social work are not inherently contradictory. Professional social work was born from three historic perspectives of which one was religion (Leiby, 1985). Judeo-Christian values are deeply embedded in social work values and ethics (Biestek and Gehrig, 1978; Bubis, 1976; Canda, 1983a; Joseph, 1988; Keith-Lucas, 1985; Kohs, 1966; and, Leiby, 1977). Leiby (1985) states, "The oldest rationale for our work was religious and rested on notions of personal and social responsibility that were found in the Bible" (p. 324). For example, Micah 6:8 states, "And what does the Lord require of you, But to do justice, to love kindness, And walk humbly with your God?" (New American Standard Bible, 1976). In Mark 12:28-31, there is a command to love your God and neighbor as much as oneself; and, in Matthew 5:40 Christ states that to do love and act justly..."towards one of the least of these my brethren, you have also done it unto me". Scriptural passages like these were used as rationales for doing social work. Besides acting rightly and justly, the social gospel theology in the late 19th century also had a motive of bringing an age of harmony to the earth. Social gospel proponents stated that the "...essential purpose of Christianity is to transform human society into the Kingdom of God by regenerating all human relationships" (Stott, 1984, p. 7). Besides the church, the social agency and the profession of social work were regarded as an acceptable vehicle to meet this objective. A reciprocal relationship existed between the church and the profession, as evidenced by Mary Richmond who wrote in 1930, "The Church furnishes us with the motive for all our work...and sends us forward...in a campaign that involves wider issues" (cited in Netting, Thibault and Ellor, 1990, p. 17).

There is some evidence that social work is an ecumenical product. Joseph (1989) identifies "dignity and worth of persons, social responsibility, self determination, confidentiality, justice and equality, social welfare and altruism" (p. 7) as professional social work values that emerged from Judeo-Christian and humanistic traditions. Canda's (1988a) research demonstrated that ecumenism is still present in contemporary social work literature and practice. In the analysis of five different spiritual perspectives with respect to beliefs, values, practice and concepts of spirituality, Canda found there was convergence among social workers from Buddhist, Christian, Existential, Judaic and Shamenist traditions. Convergence was found in values which stress: dignity of persons; compassion towards others; helping relationships as mutual respect and caring; holistic perspectives that included the physical and spiritual; and, the willingness to use ritual, prayer or meditation as well as consultation with religious helpers as legitimate professional techniques of helping (pp. 34-35).

Because of the rich religious heritage of the social work profession, spiritual and religious values are rationally a part of social work practice. It has been suggested that social work, by its very nature is spiritual. Comments like, "...social workers are like sleep walkers. They are engaged in deeply spiritual activities but often lack awareness of this" (Canda, 1988a, p. 45); or, Keith-Lucas's reference to social workers as "unconscious Christians," i.e. God's use of people to carry out the work of love and justice without their knowledge of the plan (personal communication 1991), underscore this theme.

Considering the history of the profession and contemporary practices which integrate faith systems and social work, it seems incomprehensible that social work and religion in general will ever be truly incompatible. The question it seems, is not whether these two are incompatible, but rather what causes tension between them? What kind of social work practice and what sort of religious beliefs seem incompatible? Keith-Lucas (1960, p. 87) noted "the really
important question in the rapprochement between religion and social work has not been, 'how do social workers and religious workers cooperate?' or even, 'how do we as social workers take into account a client's religious beliefs?' Instead, the question has essentially been, 'How does a social worker who professes through religion a particular world view reconcile this view with ... professional practice, in which (s)he also believes?' Keith-Lucas' point is well made. Far too often important specific questions regarding the interface between religion and social work are not asked. Instead, there has tended to be a general suspicion toward religious issues and social workers who advocate these concerns.

Social work education and religion

Social work educators are not adequately preparing students to deal with faith, religion, or spirituality in the lives of clients (Canda, 1983; 1988a; 1988b; 1989; Denton, 1990; Loewenberg, 1988; Joseph, 1987; 1988; Siporin, 1985). Accreditation standards do not require content on religion or faith in the curriculum, there are very few books which address these issues, and there are only a handful of publications with small circulations which address this topic at all. This curriculum deficiency is constrained in professional education which stresses an holistic approach to practice (Canda, 1983; Denton, 1990; Dudley and Helfgott, 1990; Towl, 1957).

Although all major areas in the social work curriculum need to have an infusion of religious content, HBSE and practice are the two which receive the most attention in the literature. In human behavior courses changes in the curriculum need to consider an understanding of the role of religion in the lives of clients, from cultural, developmental and existential perspectives (Canda 1988a; 1989; Joseph 1978). Specifically, attention needs to be given to the developmental nature of faith throughout the life cycle. For example, James Fowler's (1975; 1981; 1984) paradigm considers faith throughout the lifecycle in relation to cognitive and moral development within the context of life experiences. Life experiences gain meaning in view of one's spiritual or religious understanding of ultimate truth. Without such a paradigm to understand the existential meaning of a client's experiences, social worker's responses to client's needs are limited and potentially harmful (Canda, 1988b).

Practice curriculum also needs to be expanded in the areas of assessment and intervention. Social workers need to know how to assess the saliency of religion and the operative level of spirituality in client's lives, as well as the functional and dysfunctional uses of religion (Denton, 1990; Joseph, 1988). Practitioners also need to know when and how to use client's faith/religious beliefs therapeutically. The intent of this point is not to advocate proselytizing, a fear which seems to grip the social work profession. Rather, it is intended to suggest workers use the client's faith system as a resource in problem solving or management. This could involve encouraging the client to use their religious rituals/practices, i.e., prayer, meditation, etc., or obtaining consultation from a person familiar with the client's religion, as a means of promoting greater use of this resource (Denton, 1990). At the same time, Joseph (1988) states that, "...workers need to know when to ... help the client ventilate anger, separate feelings about God from significant others, and differentiate between passive and healthy dependence on God and religion (Ibid, 1988; p. 448)." However, as both Canda (1988b) and Joseph (1988) point out, unless social workers, themselves, are aware of their own religious/spiritual/faith development and perspectives, they will be unable to help clients with these issues. Like values clarification exercises, religious clarification exercises for social workers are also warranted.

Because social workers are more inclined to confront religious/spiritual issues in direct service contexts, there tends to be an overemphasis on the relevance of these issues in HBSE and individual and family practice courses. However, these concerns permeate well beyond direct service. Noting, Thibault and Ellor (1990) present a convincing argument for integrating content on religion into administration and policy courses, too. This is pertinent to the unique role the private sector plays in delivering social welfare services in this country. In consideration of the large percentage of services delivered under the auspices of religious institutions and churches, it seems imperative that knowledge of religious participation in social welfare services be included in policy and administration courses. Throughout the history of social welfare as well as today, religious groups have played an integral role in the delivery of social services.

Presently, our social work curricula inadequately prepare students to consider the spiritual dimension of human life. This is an inadequacy that merits attention at all levels of social work education, from the classroom to the accreditation standards. Currently, very few models or frameworks exist that explore, assess, and intervene in this area. Canda's (1989) comparative approach for teaching religious content in social work, and Fowler's (1981, 1984) texts on faith development, are good references for beginning to formulate such a framework. Further research should be directed towards identifying functional and dysfunctional uses of religion by clients and in social work practice. However, beyond the classroom, CSWE curriculum guidelines need to require content on religion and spirituality. Without such a requirement, inclusion in social work curricula of important and relevant material such as this will be dependent upon the enlightenment of social work faculty members. Without
CSWE commitment to inclusion of content on spirituality, social work education falls short of its stated claim to be holistic. 

Social work education in religious institutions

Social work educational programs in religious institutions have existed for decades. The relationship between religiously oriented instruction and social work education has not been compromised; this is affirmed by the quality control mechanism of accreditation. Therefore, when the issue of increased numbers of religious institutions gaining accreditation is raised as a concern, the problem is not altogether clear. One might assume that these concerns are related to questions of whether social work education is being compromised by religious values; and if perhaps these programs are turning out "evangelist social workers." However, if accreditation is working as it is intended, this fear can be put to rest. The integrity of social work education will be protected.

However, there are two related issues which need to be raised. One, there may indeed be tensions which social work educators experience in religiously oriented institutions; and, two, social work education is always an ideological/value activity.

Especially in conservative Christian institutions there are inherent structural values or plausibility structures that mitigate against social work precepts. Tensions often emerge over the different value orientations of the profession, college and faculty persons. Social work faculty in these settings are constantly working with the tension of reconciling these values. Although a wearisome task, this tension can also produce an integrative balance that benefits students, the profession and institution. It is important to appreciate the tightrope these faculty walk, balancing the varied interests of program, profession and the institution.

This sort of tension or working out process is not an uncommon experience in social work education. Social work education, like the profession, is value laden. Although accreditation standards are elaborate guidelines for social work education, the pedagogy itself is not prescribed. During a site review, an evaluator does not assess whether a program follows a lock step approach in their education, but rather how closely the curriculum conforms to guidelines. What goes on day to day in the classroom is largely up to the professor's interpretation of the guidelines, based on his/her own values, ideology, professional and educational experiences. On any given day in any social work classroom across the country, this interpretive process takes place, whether the instructor is religious, politically conservative, feminist, or Marxist. This interpretive process is a healthy dialogue that is important to the profession that no one believes should be ideologically regulated. Since social work education is at all times ideologically based, the role of accreditation ought to be to promote dialogue, synthesis, and dialectical analysis, within the context of the standards. This process should be protected, promoted and not influenced by political or religious persuasions of institutions which fall outside the professional comfort zone.

Despite concern regarding social work programs in religious colleges and universities, the overarching question that is most important is: Are they teaching good quality social work which is consistent with the curriculum guidelines as they are reflective of professional values? This qualitative goal can be met, whether the faculty person is a fundamentalist Christian, feminist, Marxist or psychoanalyst. Values and ideology play a major role in social work education and practice (Ortiz, 1990). These should not be ignored or otherwise sacrificed on the altar of scientific technology. Ignoring values in social work is neglecting the foundation of the profession. Regardless of the need to promote the profession as more empirically based, the value roots of social work remain the distinctive feature which separates it from the academic disciplines. Failure to work with the disparate values and inherent tensions within the profession is unwise. Merely because a faculty member or institution is identified as Christian, is not by itself, an adequate reason for concern.

Students and religious intolerance

There is cause for concern when educators are confronted by students who cite religious conviction as the reason to either work prescriptively or not at all with certain client groups. Mostly, students who take this position are misguided or confused. In this case it is incumbent upon educators to provide counsel for these students designed to help them clarify the implications of their religious commitments for social work. There are many social workers who view their practice as an extension, or at least consistent with their religious values (Bubis, 1976; Canda 1988a; Keith-Lucas, 1985; Leiby, 1985; Poppel and Leininger, 1990). However, if conflict is not reconcilable, it should receive the same attention and be subject to the same process of professional ethical review as any other student performance problem.

To be sure, there are some Christians who, because of their doctrinal beliefs, are not well suited for the social work profession. Of the dominant religions practiced in America, certain Christian doctrinal beliefs are probably the most problematic (Poppel and Leininger, 1990). Keith-Lucas (1983; and personal communication) supports this point when he states that there are at least four different "religions" in Christianity, that have nothing to do necessarily with denominations. Of these four religious types, two are consistent or at least reconcilable with social work values while
two are more problematic. Keith-Lucas identifies these four "religions" as:

(1) Christians of Grace, whose values are similar to social work's, but who add an understanding of spiritual values to their perception of humanity. They are, in a sense, God's clients sharing with their clients the Love they have received.

(2) Christians of Ethics are people who express their values in religious terms, but in comparison to Christians of grace don't believe in it, nor think in theological terms. They have little problem integrating social work values with their religious beliefs.

(3) Christians of Law are those who are likened to the welfare client. They are eligible for God's grace, but only if they are very sure to keep all the regulations, i.e., doing everything the Bible commands. Accommodation of social work values for people in this group is somewhat difficult, but possible.

(4) Christians of Morality are those people who, believing themselves to be 'saved' or 'justified', stop being God's clients and join his staff. Their job, as they see it, is to stop people from sinning. They believe they have been commissioned by God to stop other people from sinning, and rid the world of particular evils which offend them. In the 19th century these vices were alcohol, promiscuity and sloth. Today it is abortion and homosexuality. They also feel justified in using harsh measures to achieve their aims. For these folks, the social work profession is quite incompatible (Personal communication, 1991).

Knowing how students interpret their religious beliefs is of crucial importance in helping them resolve perceived dilemmas between their faith and profession. However, this can only be done by educators who are comfortable addressing these issues. Otherwise the issue will be avoided.

Given the pluralistic nature of the profession, tensions between various belief systems within the profession are likely. Concerns about how one group interprets and practices are natural questions which will occasionally arise. As long as there is instructive dialogue, tension is desirable and necessary for growth within the profession. Value or ideology based tension is no stranger to the social work profession (Germain and Hartman, 1980). However, ignoring these differences benefits no one in the profession and possibly victimizes clients whose needs may be misunderstood or inadequately met because of their religious orientation. It is a mistake to ignore the role of religion in social work as an integral part of social work history, social welfare institutions, and the lives of individuals and families served. Recognizing the role of religion and acknowledging the spiritual nature of humans does not make the profession any less empirical or rational. Or, for that matter, more or less judgmental - just more responsive to human nature. Increased dialogue and reconciliation regarding spirituality, religion and faith in social work education and practice is very much needed.

References


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Topical Bibliography on Spirituality and Social Work
Edward R. Canda

Introduction

This bibliography is intended as a resource for social workers and other helping professionals who are conducting research on the connections between spirituality, religion, social work, and social welfare. It serves as an expansion of the Topical Bibliography on Religion and Social Work provided in volume 1, issue 1 of The Spirituality and Social Work Communicator (1990). The bibliography is arranged according to topical categories in order to assist comparative study. Topical category names have been revised to reflect current themes in social work scholarship. Entries have been assigned to categories according to the spiritual perspective predominant in each text. Whenever possible, the bibliographer has read the full article or book; however, in some cases decisions were based on reading of an abstract or title. Topical categories are: Asian and East/West Synthetics Perspectives; Christian Perspectives; Existentialist Perspectives; Jewish Perspectives; Shamanic, Spiritist and Native American Perspectives; Nonsectarian or General Perspectives; Other.

A. Asian and East/West Synthetic Perspectives


B. Christian Perspectives


C. Existentialist Perspectives


D. Jewish Perspectives


E. Shamanic, Spiritist, and Native American Perspectives


F. Nonsectarian or General Perspectives


G. Other Perspectives


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An Urgent Call for Support

In the Winter 1991 issue of the *Spirituality and Social Work Communicator*, Jacquelyn Marshall presented an historical review of the connection between spirituality and social work education. She pointed out that during the 1950s and 1960s the Curriculum Policy Statement, which governs our educational accreditation, explicitly recognized that the person-in-environment perspective of social work education should attend to the biological, psychological, social, and spiritual aspects of human behavior. During the 1970s, references to spirituality were dropped. This policy change mirrored the general professional trend of divorcing spirituality from social work practice.

Presently, there is a brief window of opportunity for supporters of spiritually sensitive social work to impact the history of social work education. The Council on Social Work Education’s Commission on Educational Policy and Planning is working on the final draft of the new policy statement. This statement will establish guiding principles for accreditation of social work education for the 1990s. Now is the time to make our concerns known to the commission so that social work education can return to a truly holistic perspective, by re forging the link with spirituality.

At the CSWE Annual Program Meeting in Kansas City at the beginning of March, this issue emerged at my faculty development institute on Teaching Spiritual and Religious Content in Social Work Education and the North American Association of Christians in Social Work’s panel on the thought of Alan Keith-Lucas, who has been a pioneer and champion of spiritual awareness in social work. Momentum of concern built in these two forums, so that a petition was circulated in support of dealing with spirituality in the Curriculum Policy Statement (CPS). This petition was submitted to the commission and had a positive impact.

At the open session on the MSW version of the CPS, commission members indicated a genuine willingness to consider ways of addressing the topic of spirituality. They already have recommended making reference to religious diversity in sections dealing with human behavior and human diversity educational content. They are also willing to consider restoring the term “spiritual” to the expression bio-psycho-social-spiritual when referring to the person-in-environment perspective of social work education, whether in private or state institutions. This would go a long way toward overcoming the bias against such discussion that many of us have encountered.

The commission is struggling, however, with finding a way to mention spirituality without implying support for exclusivism, sectarian competition, or proselytization. Since constructive dialogue and mutual understanding among diverse spiritual perspectives are exactly what the Society for Spirituality and Social Work stands for, we can play an important role in helping the commission to resolve this problem. Therefore, it is crucial that concerned members write to the commission expressing support by April 15. This is certainly a rare historic opportunity which should not be missed!

Readers are encouraged to write to the following address:

Grace E. Harris, Chair
Commission on Educational Policy and Planning
Council on Social Work Education
1600 Duke Street
Alexandria, VA 22314

It would be helpful to send copies to: Roland Meinert and Julia Norlin, in care of the same address.

In This Issue

This journal is intended as a forum for diverse viewpoints, not only in terms of spiritual perspectives, but also in terms of vantages on the helping process. Accordingly, this issue presents insights from the vantages of scholars, practitioners, and consumers. This helps to break down the divisions between these vantages, which are so prevalent in social work journals and the field in general. The contributions in this issue reveal that each of these vantages share concern and capacity for critical, insightful reflection. Indeed, the strict distinction between these vantages may be recognized to be artificial, and we might explore the possible strengths of the "scholar-practitioner," "practitioner-consumer" and other possible combinations. The varying strengths of the three vantage points and their combinations are crucial to join in a creative professional dialogue.

O’Brien, a practitioner, returns our consideration to conceptual basics—what do we mean by spirituality? In particular, he proposes a conceptual framework that attempts to image and explicate various subcomponents of spirituality. Simons also deals with this basic level of understanding "what do we mean." As a consumer of mental health services, he emphasizes the importance of nonpejorative and supportive understandings of spirituality, since it is often key to the recovery and coping of persons with severe mental illness. Sullivan presents results of current scholarly research that support Simons’ basic contention by analyzing the accounts of persons diagnosed with severe mental illness. These insights are very significant because many helping professionals in mental health settings tend to assume that religious and
spiritual concerns of consumers are simply manifestations of pathology, rather than important life issues, resources, and strengths.

Capozzi offers an innovative model of cognitive therapy for stress reduction that draws on the spiritual insights of the nonviolent social activist, Mahatma Gandhi.

The final contribution brings to bear the insights of a religious counselor who has been active in legislative action on controversial issues of great relevance to social workers and other helping professionals—state control of professional licensure. Buhner suggests that we pause to reflect and reconsider possible dangers in the head-long dash of social workers and others to promote state control, especially regarding encroachment upon the domains of spirituality and religion.

The Spirituality and Social Work Journal is a biannual publication (Winter and Summer) sponsored and edited by the Society for Spirituality and Social Work. It is published with the assistance of the School of Social Welfare at the University of Kansas. SSW and its journal promote inquiry and dialogue about the connections between diverse perspectives on spirituality and social work. Editor and SSW Director: Edward R. Canada. Advisors: Donald Chambers, University of Kansas; Monit Cheung, University of Houston; Robert Constable, Loyola University of Chicago; Lowell Jenkins, Colorado State University; M. Vincentia Joseph, Catholic University of America; Donald Krill, University of Denver; Daniel Lee, Loyola University of Chicago; Sadye Logan, University of Kansas; Patrick J. O'Brien, Ft. Meade, Maryland; Max Siporin, SUNY-Albany; Ann Weick, University of Kansas.


The opinions expressed in this journal are those of the contributors and do not necessarily reflect the views of the SSSW or its staff.

SOCIAL WORK AND SPIRITUALITY: CLARIFYING THE CONCEPT FOR PRACTICE
Patrick J. O'Brien

Need for Clarification
The recent attention being given to the theme of spirituality in social work is a clear indicator that many colleagues believe it to be a vital dimension (Siporin, 1990; Dudley & Helfgott, 1990). A similar observation is being made by a large circle of other service providers in the fields of: health (Fahther, 1991); nursing (Clark, Cross, Deane & Lowry, 1991); psychotherapy (Rosen, 1991); addictions (Corrington, 1989; Clemmons, 1991); gerontology (Payne, 1990), and terminal illness (Millson & Dudley, 1990). Spiritually-sensitive care givers appear to want to reclaim the soulfulness of their work (Holland, 1989). The failure to include the dimension of spirituality within the domain of service provision will diminish the area of life experience to which providers are equipped to respond to.

Despite the attention to spirituality within and outside of social work, recent interpretations appear to form a mixture of divergent themes, functions, and expressions. A need exists to unpack, simplify, and integrate levels of analysis. Reaching this goal may help move the concept into the working domain of social work practice. This objective will be accomplished by focusing on how the concept is defined.

Redefining the Definition
Any definition of spirituality is limited by the temporal and relative nature of who is defining it (Jaffe, 1990). The inability of previous efforts to present a unified definition of spirituality that can be applied in social work may stem from an over-emphasis on content. There is not enough attention being given to unpack the basic essence, from the structure and function of spirituality. Such a framework may be thought of in terms of primary, secondary, and tertiary levels of analysis. Without looking closely at what is put into a definition of something, it is easy to confuse the essential nature of something with: (1) What symbolically represents that essence (2) How that representation is expressed and understood (3) What functions such expressions seek to accomplish. Even though such a distinction is somewhat artificial, the author hopes it will help clarify interpretations.

Canada's (1991) definition of spirituality acts as the baseline and springboard for this discussion. Canada notes that:

Spirituality designates the human striving for sense of meaning and fulfillment through morally satisfying relationships between individuals, human communities, the surrounding universe, and the ontological ground of our existence (whether conceived in theistic, nontheistic, or atheistic terms).

Canada's work appears to be what could be called the total lasso perspective. This position attempts to resist reduction. It encircles all the content so as to be inclusive; but such a position complicates operationalization (Canada, 1990, p. 14). It is agreed that spirituality can not be reduced, but certainly it is possible to partialize and unpack the interpretation of what is meant by the term spirituality. Canada's work can be enhanced by distin-
guishing the relationships between spirituality's essence, symbols, and functional enactments.

The alternative definition begins by identifying the basic essence of spirituality; then it highlights the structure and explains the symbolic representations of that basic essence; finally it considers why symbolic themes find enactment to accomplish certain functions. It is important to note that getting to know spirituality on these different levels may require a different awareness at each level. Access to understanding each level may require the worker to switch on different ways of knowing depending on what is trying to be understood. One psychologist calls this concept state specific knowledge (Tart, 1989).

The Essence of Spirituality

What is the essential aspect of spirituality? The bare primary essence of human spirituality is not content but capacity. The essence is potentiality for growth and development on the intrapersonal, interpersonal, and transpersonal levels. Being aware of this capacity makes it a human characteristic. The subjective awareness of its presence is a function of each person's own human developmental experience (Helminiak, 1987). The essence of spirituality is invisible, and can be verified only by its interaction with other elements. Just as the music of a gentle breeze is silent and heard only as it blows through chimes, so spirituality sounds its presence only as it interacts with other elements in a person's life space.

The Structure of Spirituality

Using a model offered by educators at Rush University (Farran, Fitchett, Quiring-Emblen, & Burck, 1989), the permeating structure of spirituality can be viewed as shown in Figure 1.

In its primary state there is only process, there is no form. Yet, like molecular interaction, it carries something like an ionic charge which creates and alters structures, it motivates affirmative action. It challenges perception and cognition; and can lead one to believe beyond what one can see, and to see beyond what one believes (Middleman & Wood, 1991). The ability to create and alter structures is at the heart of what growth, advocacy, and empowerment are all about.

Symbolic Themes & Functional Expressions

Symbolic Themes

The simplification of spirituality into its bare essence of capacity obviously leaves a large remainder of material unaccounted for. The unaccounted material can be recovered through a second and third order of analysis, symbolic representational themes and functional enactments.

Symbolic representations can be thought of as the basic essence of spirituality having coalesced into form. Just as fruit comes from a seed inside a shell, so spirituality needs embodiment if it is to be grounded in a person's life space. The symbolic themes are the bridges that allow the essence to cross into experience. The essence flows into the shape of some form just as water takes the shape of the pitcher that holds it, while retaining its own essence. Certain themes form and collect into images shaped by the influence of person, place, time, and events over the life cycle. This is an ongoing process that helps to create, mold, and contain the images that provide and nourish personal meaning in life to each person. The themes of spirituality are like the colors of the rainbow which blend in overlap with one another. No one theme contains the full essence of spirituality and to limit the expressions of spirituality to only one or two colors (i.e., religion or theistic beliefs) will only diminish the spectrum of possible meaning it may offer. The themes have a transreligious (across and beyond religion) characteristic; for spirituality doesn't preclude or require theological doctrine. The following table lists twenty themes often related to spirituality in some way. They are presented here as symbolic themes of the basic essence (capacity) of spirituality.

Table 1

Symbolic Themes of Spirituality

1. Morality, ethics, justice, and right effort.
2. The nature and meaning of self and the intention and purpose of human existence.
3. Inter-connection, wholeness, alignment, and integration of persons, place, time, and events.
4. Creativity, inspiration, and intuition.
5. Altruistic service for the benefit of others.
6. The mystery and wonder that is woven into nature, the universe, and the unknown.
7. Socio-cultural-historical traditions, rituals, and myths.
8. Virtues (i.e. compassion, universal love, peace, patience, forgiveness, hope, honesty, trust, faith).
9. Mystical, altered states of consciousness of a non-egoic nature.
10. Sexuality.
11. Openness, willingness, surrender, and receptivity.
12. Having the power of choice, freedom, and responsibility.
13. Special wisdom or revealed knowledge.
15. Answers to pain, suffering, and death.
16. Identity and relation to the ontological ground of existence, ultimate reality, and life force.
17. The relation of cause/effect regarding prosperity and poverty.
18. Beliefs or experience related to noncorporeal reality or the unobstructed universe.
19. Path to enlightenment or salvation.

Functional Enactments
Once a theme has been shaped by the influence of time, person, place and event, it is ready to be expressed or enacted to carry out some type of function. The specific and unique expression of a symbolic theme by an individual can take place in many different ways but there are certain functions that all expressions of spirituality can try to accomplish. For example, the expression of a specific theme in a certain way can help to provide identity, security, and establish connection; it can be used as part of a motivational system to energize movement and use goal directed behavior; it can be used as part of an adaptional response like a defensive buffer to negotiate a stressful situation; it can be used in an experiential or educational manner to instruct or teach; it can be used in a communicative fashion to translate ideas, express emotion, and explain behavior.

The spiritually-sensitive social worker may do well by getting beyond the paradox of establishing specific cause and effect relationships in the analysis of spirituality. The working of spirituality in motion is dynamic, nonlinear, and multilevel. The relationship between the representational aspect of the symbolic themes and the functional aspect of its expression is an overlapping one. For example, representation itself is a function. Representation and function both imply some type of capacity. The important issue to consider is not so much content, but how the content is used to carry out certain functions.

Social Work Contexts
Social workers find themselves in a host of different contexts. Are there some contexts where social workers can be expected to run into the issue of spirituality regularly? The author feels that every context offers opportunities for spirituality to manifest itself. Yet, there are some contexts where the frequency of such encounters are more likely to happen. The following areas of practice are examples: addition, recovery, and Twelve Step work; acute hospital care, chronic and terminal illness; work with senior adults; work in certain minority or ethnic cultures where spirituality is an important dimension with special individual or community value; work with persons who struggle with and through psychotic processes, and work in agencies that are closely associated to traditional religious faiths.

Conclusion
We have examined the need to include spirituality within the continuum of human experience and focused attention on how the concept of spirituality may be interpreted. An alternative perspective has been offered to enhance the integration of this dimension in social work. We have identified specific practice areas where spirituality is an important consideration.

The key point for the spirituality-sensitive social worker will be to find the proper balance of becoming more aware of the dimension of spirituality in social work, without neglecting the social work that exists in the dimension of spirituality. In the busy world of social welfare, where time, numbers, and money control the level of intervention, there always is the temptation to displace the important (purpose-meaning-quality orientation) for what is considered the urgent (time-related task-quantity orientation). But people are creatures of significance, and people strive to create and connect to the meaningful in life. Although social workers can not "make" truth and meaning for others, we are challenged to extend our own frames of reference from which we can facilitate a person's ability to look into meaning and recognize truth. One well known creative worker involved with the process of "people making" expressed it this way:

Each of us emerges as a bud on a universal spiritual tree. That tree links all human beings through its roots. The challenge of becoming more fully human is to open to and to contact that power we call by many names...I believe that successful living depends on our making contact and accepting a relationship to our life force (Satir, 1988, p. 334 & 341).

As time unfolds, we learn about misplacing an emphasis on one aspect to the neglect of some other parameter. In learning new ways of looking, new sights are seen. And so the key to discovering the path of becoming a spiritu-
ally-sensitive social worker begins, not so much with the concern of being relatively right (as in right/wrong); but it begins with the decision to make an investment towards right being regardless of who wins the debate.

References


*Patrick J. O'Brien, ACSW, QCSW, is a clinical social worker in Ft. Meade, MD.*

ACKNOWLEDGING SPIRITUALITY IN RECOVERY: A MENTAL HEALTH CONSUMER'S PERSPECTIVE

Bill Simons

"Spirituality is being with people where they are and as they are... Spirituality is being with people in the midst of the distortion of life and meaning."—John E. Keller

In the Winter, 1991 issue of *Spirituality and Social Work Communicator*, Anita M. Titone stated, “Spirituality is a basic ingredient in the human condition.” She goes on to say that, “it (spirituality) pertains to the natural human tendency toward healing and growth... Spirituality deals with ways of responding in a hopeful way to things that cannot be controlled.” (Titone, 1991).

A basic premise of this paper is that spirituality is indeed a basic ingredient in the human condition and that any healing, growth and/or recovery that does not acknowledge and address this aspect of the human make-up will be incomplete. Many of us struggling with long-term mental illness or recovering from one of the many addictive afflictions (i.e., alcohol/drug abuse, eating disorders, co-dependency, etc.), are coming to believe that one of the major failures of the therapeutic community is the avoidance of spirituality.

Perhaps part of this is due to a common confusion between the concepts of spirituality and religion. Many recovering persons are not only recovering from a history of abuse/addiction but are also recovering from a judging, moralistic "religious"/church background. As Keller (1985) puts it, "Many recovering and nonrecovering alcoholics perceive religion, the church, and clergy as symbols of moralism. Therefore, we have to make it clear to alcoholics that when we are talking about spirituality, we are not necessarily talking about religion or being religious, because in their perception religion is synonymous with moralism, and moralism is always experienced as rejection. It offers them no hope for dealing with their pain, brokenness and limitation." (p. 94).

Although scholars may draw a concise academic distinction between religion and spirituality in their journal articles, many "lay" people still see the two terms as either synonymous or closely related. This is important to recognize and acknowledge because when a person connects negative life experiences with religious experiences or symbolism it can radically affect that person's attitude and openness to "spirituality". For example, in my own spiritual search, I found that, within my traditional

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Christian framework, I could not trust a "God, the Father" and that this was deeply rooted in my childhood abuse experiences with my step-father. Unfortunately, many "religious" approaches, including many of the Judeo-Christian based churches, address the person in need/recovery from the moralistic "do's - don'ts" and/or "shoulds - shouldn'ts" continuaums. There is a clear cut "we - they" dichotomy where the "wes" have "the answers". So the person in recovery perceives himself/herself as being in a situation where "I'm this way but need to become like you"; I'm a "they" and need to become a "we" before I'm fully accepted. This can not only invalidate the newcomer's life experiences but diminish the value of where he/she is in the "spiritual growth process". Many times this further "shames" a person who has been shame-based from childhood. No wonder then that there are so many spiritually hungry people in Twelve Step programs who loudly trumpet their atheism/agnosticism or their bitterness toward "organized religion".

For many who begin the walk down the road of recovery an immediate leap to a divinely focused spirituality is too much. This is particularly true for persons with backgrounds of abuse or neglect because the capacity for trust has been deeply wounded and it is clear that trust is a key element necessary before one is willing or even capable of thinking about such Twelve Step concepts as "surrender", "God as I understand Him", turning one's life and will over to a Higher Power", etc.

Keller, drawing on his 30 years experience of working with alcoholics and observing A.A. meetings, addresses the importance of the commonality of the human experience and how this relates to a developing and sustainable spirituality. "They (members of A.A.) learned that spirituality is not and can never be just one-dimensional. They experienced that there is not only the divine involvement in spirituality but also the human. They experienced the human environment of spirituality in their non-moralistic, understanding, accepting, and caring fellowship. There they could admit their pain, brokenness, and human limitation, and also experience human dignity and personal moral responsibility for attitudes, feelings, and behaviors. This fellowship (A.A.) maintains that the beginning of spirituality is letting go of the moralism about our condition and wholeheartedly accepting the reality of our human limitation and our responsibility in relationship to it" (Keller, 1985, pp. 93-95).

Twelve Step programs, by implication and practice, recognize this dual nature in spirituality i.e., divine and human. "The Steps suggest a belief in a Power greater than ourselves - 'God as we understand Him'. This can be a human love, a force for good, the group, nature, the universe, the traditional God (Deity), or any entity a member chooses as a personal Higher Power." (Emotions Anonymous, 1978, p. 3). Thus, a full range of possibilities from a traditional God to the "human" E.A. group itself are offered as possible Higher Power alternatives.

Further recognizing both the crucial "trust issue" and the human dimension of spirituality, the Emotions Anonymous, "Big Book", when discussing a "power greater than ourselves" states, "If we have difficulty finding our Higher Power, we can begin by trusting another human being." (Emotions Anonymous, 1978, p. 47).

In Twelve Step programs the divine dimension of spirituality is not ignored but usually the first "mystical/spiritual" experiences come at the human level where fellow Twelve Step members see not only others but themselves as sharing a "common human condition".

John Keller (1985), says that persons who come to A.A. meetings may feel they know each other immediately. "They knew each other because within the fellowship they had mystically already met and now were meeting personally in the common reality of their essential human limitation. Out of the common pain of their human limitation they had found a common hope and a new life. They didn't know everything about one another. But they mutually had experienced and accepted the powerlessness of the human condition. It happened in a human fellowship as they experienced together the human-to-human dimension of spirituality." (p. 104).

Within this human fellowship, spirituality is experienced as people see their own pain in others and find new ways of responding to old situations as recovering members "share their experience, strength and hope". Through this experience, on the human level, an understanding of the divine dimension of spirituality becomes possible. Even old symbols that were meaningless or that had become symbols of despair or shame can take on new meaning. For example, coming from a traditional Christian background I was able to renew and redefine my faith within the context of the Twelve Steps and, for the first time, my faith became a source of strength rather than a source of fear and condemnation. As Keller's (1985, p. 103) discussion of redefining the symbol of the cross illustrates, "There is not only the divine-human vertical dimension to spirituality; there is this human-to-human horizontal dimension. Within the Christian faith this is symbolized by the cross."

What does all of this mean, on a practical level, to the practicing social worker and other members of the therapeutic professions? As a consumer, not trained in the mental health professions, I cannot articulate a list of "dos" or "don'ts" or "how to's" in your professional jargon. But, let me share a few thoughts for your consideration.

First, I would suggest that you evaluate your own thoughts and feelings about spirituality and come to terms with any confusion that you may have about your own understanding about the difference between religion
and spirituality. Check your own biases.

I would further suggest that one of our society's biggest strengths is also one of its biggest weaknesses—that of overemphasis on issues of individuality ("rugged individualism"), freedom of choice and independence. An end result of this many times, in counseling, is to isolate the client.

Self-empowerment is a worthy goal that we in the mental health consumers advocacy group, Project Acceptance, encourage. However, we have come to recognize that self-empowerment seems to be a natural outgrowth of a broader "corporate-empowerment". This "corporateness" is the recognition that we are sharing a common human condition or, as John Keller might put it, we are able to admit, acknowledge and share our common "pain, brokenness and human limitation".

That this process is both empowering and spiritual has major implications for your profession. More group work stressing this type of sharing and corporate-empowerment is one possibility. And, although there are risks involved, professionals need to examine ways to ease the boundaries of the counselor/client relationship so that the counselor and the client can share the human-to-human horizontal dimension of spirituality.

Regardless of the specifics of any practical application, let me just reiterate that it is past time for social workers and other members of the therapeutic community to acknowledge a spiritual dimension to human existence.

The issues that bring clients to you will ultimately be dealt with on a spiritual level, or the client will lose hope and the issues will go unresolved.

References

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SPIRITUALITY AS SOCIAL SUPPORT FOR INDIVIDUALS WITH SEVERE MENTAL ILLNESS

William Patrick Sullivan

The advent of psychosocial interventions and programming for severely and persistently mentally ill clients has contributed to a sustained interest in the measurement and function of social support networks (Falcon & Liberman, 1983; Lipton, Cohen, Fischer, & Katz, 1981; Kennedy, 1989; Sullivan & Poertner, 1989; Tracy & Whittaker, 1990). Not only has there been interest in studying the social support networks of the severely mentally ill, but increasing available social supports have been held out as an important goal of intervention (Sullivan, 1991; Sullivan & Rapp, 1991). The perceived relationship between available social support and client outcomes has contributed to the development and refinement of specialized assessment tools and methods. In turn, empirical research in the area of social support has encouraged further clarification of basic concepts and has revealed important conceptual issues that stimulate current study (Barroca, 1986; Starker, 1986; Sullivan & Poertner, 1989; Tracy, Catalano, Whitaker, & Fine, 1990).

Spiritual beliefs and practices are central to the lives of many people, including the severely and persistently mentally ill. Furthermore, empirical research has indicated that spiritual beliefs and practices are associated with an increased sense of personal well-being and can be effectively employed as a coping strategy in times of stress (Ellison, 1991; Hathaway & Pargament, 1990; Maton, 1989; Michello, 1988; Pargament et al., 1990; Pargament et al., 1988; Peterseen & Row, 1985; Ross, 1990). Accordingly, understanding and assessment of spiritual beliefs, practices, and participation should be a regular feature of any attempt to decipher the social support network of mentally challenged consumers.

This paper will discuss the role of spiritual beliefs and practices in the daily lives of the severely and persistently mentally ill. The importance of spiritual beliefs and practices has been identified in an ongoing qualitative study that is attempting to discern factors associated with the successful community adjustment of current and former consumers of mental health services. The results of this study suggest that spiritual beliefs and practices are central aspects of social support and should be explored when social network analysis is conducted.

Methodology

In the past decade, there has been a renewed interest in designing interventions, and conceptualizing services, from a strengths or, competence framework (Goldstein, 1990; Maluccio, 1981; Fray, 1991; Saleeby, 1991; Weick, Rapp, Sullivan, & Kisthardt, 1989). When a new framework or paradigm is considered, the nature of
inquiry, including the specific questions that are addressed, changes commensurate with the emerging perspective.

Indeed, while there has been much research into the factors associated with the relapse and rehospitalization of severely and persistently mentally ill individuals, there has been less research framed in a positive manner. From a strengths-based perspective, there is also interest in those current and former clients who have been successful. Thus, an exploratory study was undertaken to discern those factors that are associated with successful community functioning.

Informants in this study have met, at some point in their lives, standard criteria used to define the severely and persistently mentally ill. These standards include diagnosis (schizophrenia, bipolar affective disorder, major depression), disability (difficulties in major life activities including vocational activity and the ability to live independently), and duration (in general, condition is present for over 1 year and requires some form of intense care).

In addition, to be included in the study, participants have been judged to be successfully surmounting their mental challenge. Simple measures of success were used. Informants in this study have remained free of psychiatric hospitalization for at least 2 years, are residing in at least a semi-independent residence, and are engaged in some form of vocational activity, to include volunteer work, school, or serving as a primary homemaker. This does not suggest that these informants are free from symptoms, or that their difficulties with mental illness have ceased.

All informants were paid to participate in an interview that lasted approximately 1 hour. The interviews were open-ended; however, three general areas were consistently explored: the informants' past and previous involvement in the mental health system, perceptions of the reason for their successful adjustment, and their assessment of the quality of the mental health care they have received thus far. There were no preconceived notions as to what factors would emerge, and the discovery of unforeseen and idiosyncratic factors was desired. The interviews were transcribed verbatim and were analyzed using elements of Spradley's (1979) ethnographic research method.

Informants were recruited from a chapter of the Alliance for the Mentally Ill and from two urban community mental health centers. Information about the study was shared with representatives of the various organizations who, directly or through staff members, notified potential candidates. Interested respondents were encouraged to contact the researcher directly, or arrange an appointment with the assistance of a staff member. Interviews were conducted at a time and place agreeable to the respondent.

This report is based on interviews with 40 informants who met the criteria for inclusion in the study. Table 1 summarizes basic data about the respondents. Note that the majority of respondents have been diagnosed with schizophrenia and, as a group, they have averaged over five psychiatric hospitalizations.

### TABLE 1

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Results

A variety of factors are regularly mentioned by participants as important to their success. Medication, the support of family and friends, and vocational activity have emerged as the most commonly mentioned success factors. Unquestionably, these are important areas of focus, and traditional community mental health programming reflects an attempt to address these concerns.

This work examines one of the unforeseen findings of the study. Among the 40 respondents interviewed, 19
(43%) specifically mentioned spiritual beliefs or practices as central to their success. The frequency of this response ranks spirituality as one of the more commonly mentioned factors identified by respondents. The importance of this finding is amplified when one recognizes that the spiritual concerns and needs of clients are rarely reflected in the range of services offered in community mental health, or in the interpersonal helping technologies customarily employed in these settings.

The term spirituality is purposely chosen over the more narrow term, religion, to account for differences in the manner in which respondents described their faith, experience, and practice. For in the words of one informant, spirituality is "a personal matter which I pursue on my own." Titone (1991) suggests that:

Spirituality may or may not include belief in God. It is one's personalized experience and identity pertaining to a sense of worth, meaning, vitality, and connectedness to others and the universe. It is incorporated faith — one's pattern of response to the uncertainty inherent in life where the limits of material and human effectiveness are exceeded. It pertains to one's relationship with ultimate sources of inspiration, energy, and motivation; it pertains to an object of worship and reverence; and it pertains to the natural human tendency toward healing and growth (p. 8).

Titone's (1991) definition helps illuminate the potential role of spirituality in the lives of the severely and persistently mentally ill. Clearly, the limits of human effectiveness are dramatically revealed to those facing severe mental challenges. Furthermore, one's sense of worth and role, as well as life purpose, is intensely questioned at such vulnerable moments. Estroff (1989) has suggested that schizophrenia, for example, "is an illness, one that is joined with social identity and perhaps with inner self, in language and terms of reference" (p. 189).

Yet, in spite of empirical evidence and client self-reports, it is difficult for many social workers to consider spirituality as potentially helpful to those classified as severely and persistently mentally ill. In mental health practice it is not uncommon to encounter clients who have become excessively preoccupied with religious and spiritual concerns. In more destructive instances, this preoccupation can result in delusional thoughts and harmful behavior. Observation of these experiences can render many social workers suspicious of the role of spirituality in helping. Such suspicion can hinder their ability to assess healthy versus pathological spiritual expressions.

This is unfortunate because personal spirituality can be of prime importance and genuine help to many mentally challenged adults. Empirical research has indicated that spirituality serves as an effective coping device (Ellison, 1991; Hathaway & Pargament, 1990; Michello, 1988; Hathaway & Pargament, 1990; Maton, 1989; Pargament et al., 1990; Pargament et al., 1988; Petersen & Roy, 1985; Pollner, 1989), an essential aspect of the social support network for many (Ellison, 1991; Hathaway & Pargament, 1990; Maton, 1989; Pargament et al., 1990; Pollner, 1989), and helps sustain a sense of meaning and cohesiveness in life (Alport, 1983; Petersen & Roy, 1985; Titone, 1991). The following section will discuss the role of spiritual beliefs and practices as an important source of social support and as an important aspect of an individual's social support network.

Spirituality and Spiritual Involvement as Social Support
Hammer, Makiesky-Barrow, and Gutwirth (1973) have described a social network in the following manner: An individual's social network consists of his or her direct social contacts, the relationship among them, and their relationship with others who are not directly connected with the focal individual. (p. 523)

Using this general framework, there have been efforts to explore differences between the social networks of those defined as mentally ill and those categorized as normal controls. The most general finding is that those defined as severely mentally ill tend to have smaller social support networks in comparison to normal controls (Hammer et al., 1978; Pattison, DeFrancisco, Wood, Frazier, & Crowder, 1975; Sokolovsky, Cohen, Berger, & Geiger, 1978). It also seems that overall network size shrinks after the onset of illness, particularly after the first psychiatric hospitalization (Lipton, Cohen, Fischer, & Katz, 1981; Westermeyer & Pattison, 1981).

There also appear to be structural differences within the social support network. Specifically, it has been reported that there is more "kin" contact within the networks of individuals with mental illness, and more dependent and nonreciprocal ties (Hammer et al., 1978; Lipton et al., 1981; Pattison et al., 1975; Sokolovsky et al., 1978; Tollesfeld, 1976; Westermeyer & Pattison, 1981). The latter finding suggests that it is more common for mentally ill individuals to be the recipient of support than it is for them to be the provider of support.

Two dimensions, or points of analysis, of social support are identified above. One area of focus is the overall size and structure of a social support network. To measure the size of an individual's social support network requires that we inventory those people, objects, and activities which provide important sustenance and support in daily life.

Another point of inquiry in the analysis of social support networks is to assess the nature and quality of interactions within the network. To assess how a social support network functions requires that we examine the relationship between network members and the target.
individual, as well as the general reciprocity of support activities. We may also be interested to learn when support is requested, how it is requested, and when it is given.

It is argued here that to measure accurately the size and function of a social support network, an assessment of an individual's participation in formal religious rituals, ceremonies, and activities should be conducted. For not only does religious participation result in increased contacts with others, it may also result in a symbolic connection with a larger entity: the congregation (Allport, 1965; Oates, 1955; Pargament et al., 1990; Petersen & Roy, 1985; Shifrin, Cohen, & Kraft, 1990; Taylor & Chatters, 1988). Taylor and Chatters (1988) have noted that the church is often a primary social agency, an organization that provides everything from a surrogate family to direct aid. Oates (1955), in a similar vein, states that “the religious group, apart from the coherence of its teachings, provides a sense of community for individuals who have hitherto been isolated and alone in the world” (p. 76).

Several of the informants in this study identified their religious participation, and congregation, as important sources of support:

Sunday school just renurture — it feeds us spiritually with things that we need, you know, in the spirit of God and prayer. ... They [the congregation] support you and always ask for prayer requests and things like that, and they know about my mental illness. And I believe in faith in God, and so I believe these prayers are answered by God.

Others noted the diverse functions their congregation provided:

It's not always spiritual. That's the part where you worship together, but when you get involved afterwards ... they have donuts or something and that's important. I know quite a few people there and they help me out quite a bit. Just be my friends.

Yet, while attending to the spiritual participation and activities of individuals will refine our efforts to carefully evaluate the strength of social support networks, the total supportive function of spirituality can still be lost in traditional analysis. The potential supportive power of spirituality extends beyond the act of participation in rituals or social functions. Indeed, just as personal spirituality may not include a belief in God, participation in a formal setting is also not required. While spirituality, thus conceived, may be enormously important to a person's sense of well-being, it can be difficult to measure and assess as a social support variable. Specifically, the sense of having a relationship with, or benefiting from, the guidance of a higher power, may not be captured in standard social support assessment tools. Here we are not dealing with an entity that can be included in a simple count but are instead dealing with an immaterial force.

Consequently, Pollner (1989) is in agreement that social networks consist not only of actual acquaintances but also mythical and divine others. Pollner (1989) notes that “individuals come to feel that with the support and consent of ‘a divine other they can manage or control life events” (p. 91). This contention is certainly supported by the respondents in this study. Several of the informants of this study clearly look to God, or a higher power, to help them manage the stress of life in general and, specifically, the stress that accrues from dealing with severe mental illness. To these informants, God provides answers that mere mortals cannot: “I really don't look to people, I look to God — because people are notable — they're able to help a certain amount, but the Lord has been my true strength ... God has seen me through everything.” Another informant remarked that “you have someone to depend on. Even when no one else is there, you've got God on your side, or Jesus Christ. You don't have to do it on your own.”

Informant reports underscore the tremendous pressure and tension they endure in daily life, and how their illnesses can create a sense of aloneness. In many instances, spiritual beliefs and practice serve as a buffer and as a coping device in the face of this struggle:

It puts the worries off on someone else. I feel that there is someone else out there that has the power to help ... this world can be a bit frightening when you just think about the reality of it. You just feel like an ant at a picnic ... it [spirituality] just makes you feel more secure.

Informants also reflected on the role of spirituality in coping with their fears, worries, and difficulties. In the words of one informant: “You can't do it on your own, but if you give it to Him, he can take the burden off your shoulders and make it light.” Sometimes help was sought for specific areas of difficulty, for example: “I can pray and ask the Lord to get rid of the voices and help me relax.”

Finally, several informants talked of the importance of their spirituality and spiritual practices at those times when they were the most troubled by their psychiatric condition. Much like the reports of the terminally ill, or those who face catastrophic situations, spirituality is reported as central to their ability to survive.

I knew there was a way out and that God was always watching or taking care of me and that in the end result he had it in control — and so I didn't have to do anything stupid or desperate. ... I might get through heek but he wasn't going to let me go to the bottom.

The reports of informants in this study underscore the potential supportive aspects of spirituality and spiritual practice. To fully delineate the power of social
support requires that we understand those sources from which support is drawn. Support may be drawn from family and friends, from a faith community, from God or a higher power. Sullivan and Poertner (1989) noted that people have varying needs for affiliation. Some individuals prefer solitude, while others need constant companionship. Drawing inferences from simple counts of activities and personal involvement ignores this basic reality. In addition, such counts may overlook important and powerful sources of support, such as the sense of having a relationship with a higher power. This relationship with a divine power may be particularly important to the severely mentally ill, given the possibility that they feel shunned by others or that they have relied too heavily on friends and family. Therefore, whether the focus is on assessment, intervention, or research, not only should all potential sources of social support be explored but the individual's satisfaction with those available supports must be assessed.

Discussion and Implications

Exploratory studies, by definition, suffer many limitations. Retrospective analyses, particularly when dealing with feelings, emotions, and reconstructed events, are inherently suspect. There are also many technical problems that arise in longitudinal analyses. For example, diagnostic standards have changed over time, and it is certainly possible that some informants in this study were classified with schizophrenia at a time when broader parameters were used.

This study, like much qualitative research, features a small sample because of the amount of time involved in data collection and analysis. This study sample is also limited by the preponderance of informants who were involved in some fashion with traditional treatment facilities. Efforts continue to attract informants from a wide variety of sources, including consumer-based support networks and consumer-directed programs. Simply put, it is difficult to draw firm inferences from this small sample.

Yet, because of the exploratory nature of the study, the emergence of spirituality as a commonly identified factor for success demands more, not less, attention. There were no hypotheses to test, or set variables to explore in this study. The prominence of spirituality in the lives of informants was not anticipated. Indeed, this project was specifically designed to identify such unforeseen factors.

Certainly, a subsequent review of existing empirical research, and basic reflection on human behavior, suggest that this finding might have been anticipated. Personal crises or challenges often force us to recognize the marginality of our existence. To suffer from severe mental illness is to face an invisible enemy that, at times, wields tremendous power and influence and that forces one to question the very meaning of life and individual existence. Oates (1955), some years ago, noted that religion is of great importance to the mentally challenged and is central to their struggle for identity and meaning in life. Significantly, in the words of one informant, "It is a big deal for me. It helps me to be a whole person."

The findings of this study have implications for conceptual and practical aspects of social network research. Specifically, it is important to assess the spiritual beliefs and activities of individuals given the varied and, at times, central role of spirituality in people's lives. In addition, considering the sense of support and comfort people receive from their relationship with divine and mythical others, efforts must be made to account for these less visible affiliations and associated activities.

The findings also have implications for social work practice. Given the primacy of spirituality in many people's lives, social workers should be cognizant of the spiritual needs of clients and become familiar with available spiritual resources in their communities. For example, organizations such as Pathways to Promise (see Shifrin et al., 1990) are forming to develop helpful liaisons between faith communities, clergy and professionals. Much of this work involves the dissemination of current knowledge about severe mental illness and the spiritual needs of consumers of mental health services. The practicing social worker could benefit clients by calling on the services of such agencies and taking an active part in the development of similar projects.

Spiritual issues and concerns should not be neglected in individual practice, for as Conway (1989) has noted, if we "are to truly understand, study, and help people change, we must address issues that influence people's lives" (p. 624). Obviously, clients retain the right to keep such personal information private. Yet, where appropriate, the spiritual beliefs and activities should be a regular feature of social histories and assessment procedures. Several assessment instruments have been developed to aid in this review (Dombreck & Karl, 1987; Titone, 1991; Tracy & Whittaker, 1990). Changes in spiritual belief and practices can also be assessed and monitored. Clients who once valued regular attendance at church services may feel a void should they discontinue such involvement at the onset of illness. Rapid shifts in belief structure should also bear attention. In addition, there have been efforts to develop conceptual criteria and instruments to assess the relative health of individual spirituality.

Social workers will naturally vary in the degree to which they feel comfortable dealing with spiritual matters (Sheridan & Bullis, 1991). In general, when spiritual needs and concerns are identified as important issues by clients, three choices for a social worker emerge: ignore them, deal with them, or make a referral. Given the
importance of spirituality to the lives of many clients, ignoring their spiritual concerns reflects poor professional practice. An inappropriate referral, in contrast, is proper professional practice when we feel uncomfortable or unqualified to address a client concern. Such situations suggest that liaisons should be established with pastoral counselors, faith communities, and helpful clergy.

In summary, spiritual beliefs and activities have emerged as an important factor in the successful community adjustment of former and current consumers of mental health services. Furthermore, this study suggests that spiritual beliefs and practices are a critical source of social support. Actual support can come from prayer, a congregation, or a relationship with a higher power. Accordingly, these varied sources of spiritual support should be included in any assessment of an individual’s social support network.

References


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**NONVIOLENT SOCIAL WORK AND STRESS REDUCTION: A GANDHIAN COGNITIVE RESTRUCTURING MODEL**

Leonard Capozzi

Social work is a challenging profession; not only are caseworkers and therapists involved with people who are confronting significant personal and family problems, but also they are asked to work within bureaucracies, human systems that present them with a variety of challenges in addition to the demands of client contact (Watson, 1978). One result of these challenges is quite often a high level of stress and sometimes "burnout," a state in which the strain of one's professional responsibilities becomes so great that work performance, personal life and health are gravely affected.

Most social workers can attest to the stressful nature of their jobs and are familiar with some of the debilitating effects of extreme stress: depression, anxiety, frustration, physical exhaustion and unhealthy coping behaviors such as overeating, smoking and substance abuse (Caplan, 1980). Despite this awareness, however, not much is widely known about how stress is caused and how it can be effectively reduced (Ratliff, 1988).

Fortunately, stress does not have to be a mysterious force that moves into and out of our lives, entirely beyond our control. We can learn to reduce stress and its effects on us by candidly and creatively approaching the problem. For that purpose this article will examine the relevant literature on stress and explore a cognitive approach to understanding its etiology. It will then present a model of nonviolent social work, based on Gandhi's practical philosophy of ahimsa (nonviolence), to serve as a constructive program for implementing cognitive and behavioral changes aimed at reducing stress and increasing effectiveness in social work practice.

The causes of and solutions for work-related stress in the human services, social work included, are notoriously categorized. Ratliff (1988) blames this on the difficulty of evaluating studies that often employ varying "definitions of stress and burnout, weak controls, . . . failure to use a control group, measurements that are primarily subjective in nature, and numerous environmental and personal variables" (p. 153). Due to the limitations and inconclusive nature of past research further inquiry into stress and its effects on social workers is imperative.

Unfortunately, social workers do not have the luxury of waiting for the results of definitive study on stress to begin addressing this issue. The problem is too pressing. It is the responsibility of individual practitioners to experiment with ways to reduce stress in their professional (and personal) lives, thereby enhancing their ability to be of service and to enjoy their work.

Despite the limitations of past research, some interesting facts have come to light about stress and its effects on social workers. Pines and Kafry (1978) identified social workers as a group especially susceptible to stress given their generally high level of sensitivity to clients' problems. Walsh (1987, p. 281) makes the point that burnout, the end product of extreme stress (Taylor-Brown, Johnson, Hunter & Rockowitz, 1982), is seldom limited to...
individuals; it usually affects groups of individuals, "the work environment, and the life situation in general. The effects of milder forms of stress are also not limited to individuals; even relatively low levels of stress can hamper a social worker's ability to function effectively and compassionately with clients and colleagues. In addition, stress exacts a substantial economic toll, with industry losing as much as $75 billion a year due to stress-induced illnesses (Arndt and Chapman, 1984). No similar statistic is available for social work in particular, but the dollar losses are likely to be high. The remainder of this discussion will focus on the subject of stress, considering the topic of burnout to be superfluous if one adequately deals with stress and its causes. It is more useful and beneficial to attack a problem at its root rather than to focus on its late-stage symptoms (i.e., burnout as a result of stress).

The following definition of stress is quite helpful, as well as quite hopeful. Stress is a "condition in which perceived demands exceed previous adaptation" (Keefe, 1986, p. 476). Perceived "is the key term in this definition; it recalls the brilliant aphorism of Epictetus (circa 50-130 A.D.) in The Enchiridion: "Men are distressed not by things, but by the views which they take of them" (quoted in Childress and Burns, 1981, p. 1017). Donovan (1987) supports this view when she identifies negative perceptions of work and the work environment as the prime factors contributing to stress-induced mental and physical health problems. She mistakenly concludes, however, that focusing on a person's perceptions places an "unrealistic and unfair burden on individual workers" (p. 264) and argues that efforts to reduce stress must be directed at changing one's objective working conditions.

There is no doubt that a chaotic work environment contributes greatly to the stress level of social workers and that changes can and should be made in this area. But if we are to get to the root of the problem we have to give perceptions, attitudes and cognitions primary over environmental conditions. Lazarus and Folkman (1984) agree when they write that stressful "situations be considered in terms of their significance to the individual" and his or her appraisal of the situation (p. 25). Freeman and Simon (1989) believe that anxiety results when a person perceives that a particular situation is dangerous or threatening. Only by accepting responsibility for the ways in which we perceive ourselves, others and our environment can we hope to alter the effects of stress in our lives, thereby enhancing our effectiveness as social workers. Dass and Gorman (1987) put this beautifully when they write:

Reperception itself, we've found, has the power to transform situations. Things change as they are seen differently, not necessarily because we are altering circumstance. From these shifts in perspective, in turn, we ourselves change. As we reach a deeper sense of who we are, we discover how much more we have to give (p. 187).

A Gandhian Model

How does one go about changing his or her perceptions of the world in order to reduce stress? This can be accomplished through a process of cognitive restructuring that is informed by Mahatma Gandhi's teachings on nonviolence. These provide a constructive model for practitioners interested in making the cognitive and behavioral changes needed to reduce stress in social work practice.

At the heart of Gandhi's practical philosophy is his concept of ahimsa. Literally, this word translates as "nonviolence," but in its deepest meaning it encompasses what Gandhi phrases "a positive state of love, of doing good even to the evil-doer" (A. Hingoran & G. Hingoram, 1985, p. 6). By "evil-doer" Gandhi is not only speaking about heinous criminals; this term can be understood to include those people we come in contact with everyday that somehow violate our self-will, our competitive ego that demands "My way or the highway!" As Flinders (1978) points out, the work environment can play host to numerous battles of conflicting self-interest if people are stubbornly giving their own opinions, projects and plans top priority. Already Gandhi is challenging us to change our perceptions of "the other," to go against our minds conditioned response to consider the "evil-doer" as someone to be feared, an emotional response that invariably leads to stress and strain.

Ahimsa is a potent tool for personal change. It is not about the negation of self, but about the lifting up of the other in a way that makes it impossible for us to consider doing harm, whether physical or emotional, to any individual or group. Ahimsa is about working for the good of all, guided by a unified purpose, without being attached to the results. When service is performed in this spirit, the conflicts we experience each day that lead to stress and that drain so much of our vitality cannot help but diminish (Eaewaran, 1984).

This approach is not entirely new to social work. The profession is built on the "religious/humanist conviction that man[kind] has value and that each [person] has some responsibility for the well-being of fellowmen[andwomen]" (Watson, 1978, p. 6). Gandhi stated that "ahimsa must express itself through acts of selfless service" (A. Hingoram et al., 1985, p. 6). Thus, social work lends itself exceedingly well as approving ground for ahimsa.

Ahimsa refers to a quality of unconditional respect and compassion that we can have for people, whether they are clients or colleagues, when we let go of our own preconceived agendas, attitudes and prejudices. Ideally, unconditional respect and compassion are integral parts
of social work practice (Perlman, 1979). In practical terms, this means seeing people at all times as human beings, not as clients to be "dealt with" or "processed" through the social service system. Karger (1981) highlights this problem in his discussion of the objectification of clients. Objectification takes place as a result of agencies emphasizing fiscal accountability and the speedy turnover of cases instead of humanistic service — e.g., tending to the needs of the board of directors instead of the clients and staff. This is not to say that financial responsibilities and bureaucratic necessities are unimportant in social work. This simply points out that for social work to truly be of service, people must always come first (Watson, 1978). When they do not, Karger (1981) argues, frustration and stress arise, especially in those workers who prefer to invest their energies with clients, but instead are forced to play the bureaucratic games of the modern social service agency.

Striving to put the needs of people before the needs of the "system" can often be quite frustrating, if not downright dangerous to one's job security. A term to become acquainted with in this regard is satya. Satya means truth, and a satyagrahi is one who holds firm to truth (Erikson, 1969). For Gandhi, being a satyagrahi means having the courage to stand up for one's selfless ideals, regardless of the personal consequences. In relation to this concept and its practical applications Gandhi wrote: "A man cannot practise [sic] Ahimsa and be a coward at the same time. The practice of Ahimsa calls forth the greatest courage" (A. Hingorani et al., 1985, p. 7). At first glance this may appear quite anxiety-provoking. But in its fullest sense, standing firm in truth means having the selfless desire to serve people through all of our thoughts and actions, confidently knowing that this is the highest truth that we can aspire to.

Even for Gandhi achieving this state of mind did not come easily. He was a shy and doubt-ridden young man until he went through a rigorous process of value clarification that resulted in a reorientation of his life on the practice of ahimsa, a transformation that enabled him to cast off the fears and anxieties that plagued him as a youth (Easwaran, 1978).

Social workers can learn much from Gandhi's example in this area, whether one chooses to experiment with ahimsa or not. For the caseworker or therapist the frank reappraisal and delineation of what his or her values are can help initiate activity that is in line with those values and therefore less inclined to be tainted by the attitudinal and cognitive ambiguities that can lead to stress and that lower one's ability to be an effective practitioner. Every social worker needs to ask him or herself: "Why did I choose to be a social worker and what values and beliefs are informing my practice?" Ratliff (1988) puts it succinctly when she says that "clarifying one's beliefs and values and operating from a clear and consistent value base can significantly reduce stress" (p. 153). Value reappraisal is not enough, however. Assuming that a social worker decides that his or her cognitions are stress-provoking, and assuming that the worker decides to begin applying Gandhi's concepts, the value reappraisal process simply provides a baseline from which the worker can begin to experiment with Gandhi's prescriptions. This word "experiment" is significant—the practice of nonviolence is a dynamic process that taxes all the intellectual, emotional and spiritual resources at the worker's disposal. Only if an individual is willing to open the mind to the concepts presented thus far and exert the effort required to implement the cognitive and behavioral tools that will be presented shortly can ahimsa bring about personal and social transformation.

A large part of this personal transformation is learning to identify potentially stressful situations as challenges instead of threats. Gandhi would have agreed, and modern cognitive theory helps us understand the process. When an individual confronts a potentially stressful situation and analyzes its personal significance (what Lazarus and Folkman (1984, p. 32) call the "primary appraisal process") there are three possible outcomes. The individual can decide the stressor is: 1) irrelevant, 2) benign-positive or 3) stressful. If it is either of the first two we are home free. If it is perceived as stressful, the best way to cope, from a Gandhian perspective, is to accept the situation as a life-enhancing challenge instead of a life-draining obstacle. This change in attitude requires the awareness that we have choices as to how we perceive ourselves, others and the world. With practice one can learn the skill of "decentering" (Safran & Segal,1990), i.e. experiencing one's role in constructing perceptions of reality. Indeed, if one is faithfully practicing nonviolence it becomes quite natural to treat the vicissitudes of life with an even temperament and to perceive every situation as an opportunity for learning and mastery.

The term that Gandhi used to describe this state of mind was detachment. The Gandhian ideal of detachment, however, entails much more than just perceiving potential threats as challenges. He wrote: "By detachment I mean that one must not worry whether the desired result follows from your action or not, so long as your motive is pure, your means correct" (A. Hingorani et al., 1985, p. 78). Maintaining detachment has very practical consequences. According to Gandhi, when a person is detached, one is more likely to choose right means. By choosing right means, Gandhi would explain, one can rest assured, without anxiety, that justice will be served. It is a simple ethic that states that all one can do is his or her best in any given moment to be of service in the world, the rest is up to God, or Spirit, or Destiny. Gandhi put it best.
when he wrote: "If you work with detachment, you will refuse to be rushed and you will refuse to let anything get on your nerves" (A. Hingorani et al., 1985, p. 77).

Gandhi knew that detachment was not easy, but he saw it as being a vital prerequisite for anyone interested in practicing nonviolent social service and promoting peace, both inside oneself and in the world. "Detachment... is the hardest thing to achieve, and yet it is... absolutely necessary for perfect peace and for the vision of both the little self and the greatest Self" (A. Hingorani et al., 1985, p. 78). In order to experience this "perfect peace" and in order to initiate nonviolent action one must be able to live in the here and now, detached from concerns about the past and fears about the future. Only in this way can we clearly perceive what needs to be done in the present. Brandon (1979) puts it well when he writes: "I can be guilty about the past, apprehensive about the future, but only in the present can I act" (p. 64).

The most important area of Gandhi's thought, the area that enables one to bring ahimsa into practice, is the search for Self-awareness and peace of mind through prayer and meditation. The positive returns of prayer and meditation in helping to enrich one's spiritual life are chronicled in all of the world's great religions. Their efficacy in helping to combat stress is being recognized by many researchers. Benson (1975), Woolfolk, Lehrer, McCann and Rooney (1982) and Keefe (1986) all advocate various types of meditation that work to calm the mental processes in order to deal with stress where it originates — in the mind. By stilling the mind through these practices one is able to mollify the cumulative effects of stress and safeguard the mind against incursions of the dysfunctional thinking that engender stress in the first place.

Research into cognitive functioning tells us that meditation operates as a potent tool to bring the agitated mind under control and to help us shape and choose our cognitions according to our most cherished ideals. Woolfolk et al. (1982) found that subjects in their experiment comparing the relative effectiveness of meditation and progressive relaxation techniques "evidenced significant decreases in cognitive arousal" (p. 464) when they were involved in the systematic practice of meditation. Thomas Keefe (1986), a social worker, writes that when one is systematically practicing meditation that "eventually, thoughts that constitute new tasks and new opportunities for mastery... can be sustained intentionally and used as guides for action..." (p. 167). The power of cognitive restructuring is further highlighted in the famous words of the compassionate Buddha: "All that we are is the result of what we have thought: we are formed and molded by our thoughts" (The Dhammapada, v. 1-2; quoted in Eswaran, 1982, p. 32).

Meditation was the cornerstone of Gandhi's personal transformation and his success as a social activist (Eswaran, 1978). "Heartfelt prayer [meditation] steadies one's nerves, humbles one and clearly shows one the next step" (A. Hingorani et al., 1985, p. 225). It enabled him to integrate the concepts of ahimsa and satya into his consciousness where they were allowed to take root and flower over the course of his adult life. What better evidence do we have for the effectiveness of this method than Gandhi's very own life, a life dedicated to social work on the grandest scale, a life dedicated to improving the spiritual, political, economic and social conditions of an entire nation, if not the whole world.

Gandhi was not asking us to become agents for social change on the same scale that he was, but he did have faith that each of us possesses the internal resources needed to realize the same personal transformation. Gandhi shows this faith when he writes: "I have not the shadow of a doubt that any man or woman can achieve what I have, if he or she would make the same effort and cultivate the same hope and faith" (Eswaran, 1978, p. 144). Brandon (1976), also a social worker, gives similar encouragement while writing about his own meditation practice: "The periods of meditation helped to quieten my mind and enabled a clearer perception of clients. It seemed that I could travel closer to my own essence as well as theirs" (p. 2). Brandon shows us that it is not necessary to be Gandhi in order to experience the benefits of meditation, benefits that are wide-ranging and very applicable to social work.

Another contribution of Gandhi's thought is the idea of maintaining significant and meaningful contact with people. The pressures of work often times impinge on one's ability to be with other people. Whether we are isolating ourselves due to work demands or personal preference or whether we are just not "present" with people when we are with them the effects can be the same: eroding personal relationships and exacerbating the anxiety they bring with them. "Man is not born to live in isolation, but he is essentially a social animal, independent and interdependent" (A. Hingorani et al., 1985, p. 181). This sentiment is shared by Nessel (1979) and Donovan (1987) who believe that social support and the feeling of belonging to a community of people with shared values can significantly reduce stress. This might lead one to actively seek out community with like-minded people, whether it be around interests related to work, play or spiritual life. Without a doubt it is important to take time out to be with people.

Conclusion

In summary, stress is clearly a problem for many social workers. Not only does it have emotional and physical manifestations in the worker, but it also affects the quality of the worker-client relationship and the relationships between colleagues. This discussion asserts that the primary source of stress is within the mind of the
individual and his or her perceptions of the environment. This insight is related to the cognitive therapy model, showing that by changing the way we perceive and think about ourselves, our clients, our colleagues and our work we can significantly reduce the stress in our lives.

To facilitate making the necessary changes in perception that help to reduce stress, a nonviolent approach to social work based on Mahatma Gandhi’s concept of ahimsa is recommended. His message of nonviolence blends beautifully with the ideals of the social work profession and provides a constructive model with which individuals can restructure their cognitive approaches to their work and lives, thereby bringing about a peace of mind that greatly reduces stress and its debilitating effects. The key component in bringing the theory of ahimsa into practical use is the systematic practice of meditation.

Importantly, this nonviolent approach to social work not only enables a practitioner to effectively manage stress, but also provides a standard against which to judge the wisdom and compassion of all our actions as social workers, whether they relate to clinical practice or administrative and social policy decisions. Finally, Gandhi’s message of nonviolence can be applied to every area of life, regardless of a person’s position or status. Our challenge is to assume the responsibility of finding nonviolent solutions to the many problems we face, always drawing on the highest ideals of what it means to be human to help us in our task.

References


CONTROVERSIES IN THE REGULATION OF SPIRITUALLY ORIENTED HELPING
By Stephen Buhner

There is a growing movement to regulate strongly the mental health professions in the United States. Historically each profession in the mental health system struggles for recognition of its specific type of work. In this struggle, they fight established groups which already possess organizational and licensure recognition. For example, in Colorado, the social workers struggled with the licensed psychologists for over 10 years before finally achieving licensure. In this recognition process, groups seeking status go through similar procedures, make similar claims, and define competence along parallel lines. Yet, there is considerable question as to whether the procedures being followed and the areas being explored bear any relation to competence or ability to help (Friedman, 1982; Friedman, 1985; Spivak, 1984; Andreas, 1991; Hillman, 1991; Report of the Colorado Department of Regulatory Agencies (DORA) on Mental Health Licensing, 1991; Michel, 1990; Baker, 1991; Haley, 1990). When spiritually oriented helping, whether ministerial or lay, is defined as a part of the mental health system (either through regulatory or licensed professional action) the assumptions about competency, protecting the public, and legitimacy of practice orientation become even more questionable (Canda, 1990). Adding to the difficulty of regulating spiritually oriented helping are the constitutional prohibitions against regulation of religion.

The purpose of this paper is to examine traditional regulatory concerns regarding helping, licensure procedures and claims, and the impact of these on the regulation of spiritually oriented helping. The ongoing regulatory policy debate in the state of Colorado will be used to illustrate the discussion. While regulation may be commendable for its overt intent, the attempt to protect the public by regulating the ministry creates specific and, perhaps, insurmountable problems. There are difficulties in allowing a few individuals on regulatory boards the power to determine the legitimacy of spiritually oriented helping approaches. The mental health field needs to have broad and diverse views of helping. Through this it may eventually be possible to determine what approaches do help those in need. Most certainly, consideration must include approaches from diverse cultures and spiritual traditions, some of which may entail radical departures from conventional Euro-American mental health perspectives. The willingness of professionals and regulators to engage in cross-disciplinary and cross-cultural dialogue could help address the problems of regulating spiritually oriented helping.

This discussion is divided into four sections: Licensure Processes and Claims, which examines licensure procedures and evidence of the efficacy of licensure in protecting the public; Spiritually Oriented Helping, which considers the structure and content of spiritually oriented helping in contrast to secular modalities of mental health practice; Constitutional Limits on Regulating Religious Practice, which reviews the struggles that states have faced in exercising their mandate to protect the public without infringing on constitutional freedom of religion; and Alternatives for Regulation, in which suggestions are offered regarding the interface between state concerns, professional practice concerns, consumer protection, and freedom of religious practice.

Licensure Processes and Claims

Common arguments for licensure are the needs to protect the consumer from shoddy or unsafe practices, to raise the standards of the profession, and to protect titles associated with specific groups. Generally unspoken but acknowledged by nearly all legislators and students of licensure is the desire on the part of the groups seeking licensure to obtain economic control of their practice domain and to receive third party payments (Friedman, 1962; Spivak, 1984). Finally, because of the exclusivity of practice rights granted to certain groups, other competing groups seek licensure to allow them to work within protected realms.

Any group wishing to be granted licensure by a state must show that the consumer is at risk of being harmed and that licensure will correct that harm. The state, through its mandate to protect the public health, safety, and welfare, exercises its police powers to regulate a profession. Hearings are held, laws are drafted and passed and boards established to regulate the profession. The primary regulators are representative members of the associations being regulated (Friedman, 1980; Michel, 1990).

The professional groups, in their desire to show public harm, often accuse each other of providing inferior and inadequate services (Spivak, 1984; Proceedings of the Colorado Sunset Committee on Mental Health Licensing, 1991; Fretz and Mills, 1980 [quoted in Spivak]; Baker, 1991). Yet there is no general agreement from the research in the field that educational training or licensure are related to competency.

*For every report that concludes that experience and credentials are related to competence (measured by successful therapy outcomes), there is a conclusion in another that they are not. Traditional licensing theory assumes
that competent practice is derived from the educational base, the skills development and the supervised experience that licensees must demonstrate prior to licensure. There is not, however, a lot of empirical data that supports this assumption as accurate" (Colorado DORA Report on Mental Health Licensing, 1991, p. 11).

In fact, the national test used for licensure of psychologists (EPPP) emphasizes research and methodology (55% of questions) over treatment interventions (6% of questions) (Spivak, 1984). Additionally, there is evidence suggesting that treatment by paraprofessionals, or just being on a waiting list to see a counselor, result in outcomes equal to or better than treatment by a licensed professional (Gambril, 1990; Andreas, 1991).

"[A]s disputed as the research may be, there is empirical evidence that paraprofessionals have successful treatment experiences with clients. Even though researchers attack those studies, some of the latest data on the subject concludes ‘Overall there still is not overwhelming evidence for a substantial superiority for either paraprofessionals or professionally trained therapists’ (Berman, Norton and Arbisi of the University of Minnesota Medical School cited in Colorado DORA Report on Mental Health Licensing, 1991, p. 12).

There is some speculation among experts that higher degrees of training and education may actually result in poorer outcomes for clients (Spivak, 1984). As Carl Rogers (1962) put it, professionals are too often burdened by professional roles, theories, and techniques to exhibit the genuine warmth that clients need.

There is also debate about what constitutes effective treatment. For example, comparisons between varying (and competing) modalities often show virtually the same outcomes. For instance, a massive National Institute of Mental Health study compared cognitive behavioral therapy, interpersonal psychotherapy, and pharmacotherapy in the treatment of depression. "The study concluded that all three treatments were about equally effective, even though tricyclic medication produced the most rapid improvement" (Simon, 1991, p. 2). In general, there is no overall agreement in the mental health field that any particular type of therapy is superior to another or that education or licensure is relevant to competency to help. The one element which seems to be widely recognized as important in successful psychotherapy is a warm or wise personality, "the love factor" (Weiss, 1990; Spivak, 1984).

Though there is no agreement that licensure ensures competency there is agreement that licensure does not protect the consumer from harmful practices (Friedman, 1962, 1980; Winekur, 1961; Haley, 1900; Andreas, 1991). "Yet experience in other fields has indicated that licensure does not effectively protect the public. For example, licensing in the real estate field has not had a significant impact on preventing land fraud. And in a study done by the PTC regarding regulation of the television repair industry, the report concluded that there was no more fraud in the state when there was no regulation than in the state with a comprehensive licensing scheme. As would be expected, prices were higher in the state with the comprehensive licensing scheme." See Rose, Occupational Licensing: A Framework for Analysis, Ariz. St. L. J. 189 (1979)" (Michel, 1991, p. 3).

The type of harm now commonly cited as primary justification for state action and restrictive licensure is sexual impropriety with clients (Colorado State Grievance Board 2 year report, 1990; Colorado DORA report, 1991; Winokur, 1991). Numerous groups have formed to advocate consumer rights on this issue. Most sources agree that sexual improprieties between counselors (religious and secular) and their clients are a growing national problem. However, licensure has had little impact on reducing it. "Despite years of controversy and public debate over the problem, thousands of troubled, disordered, addicted and deviant practitioners among California’s 74,000 licensed mental health professionals continue to use their positions for sexual advantage, leaving patients emotionally scarred for life." (Winokur, 1991, p. A-2). A survey compiled by the Colorado Department of Regulatory Agencies in 1986 showed that knowledge of sexual improprieties between client and therapist was directly proportional to length of training, i.e. psychiatrists having the most knowledge of sexual misconduct by professionals (53.1%); professional counselors having the least (35.8%); licensed social workers were in the middle with 43.5% (DORA, 1986, quoted in Andreas, 1991). Articles are commonly appearing expressing concern about the clergy’s sexual misconduct (Schoener and Milgrom, 1989, Fortune, 1989). It would seem reasonable, therefore, to promote specific legislation against sexual misconduct rather than to promote state regulation over types of therapy practice. In addition to the ambiguities surrounding licensure in general, there are specific problems that arise when secular standards are applied to regulate spiritually oriented helping.

**Spiritually Oriented Helping**

Spiritually oriented helping is significantly different from secular psychotherapy modalities, even if secular methods are included in the spiritual treatment approach (Colorado Association of Holistic Healing Professionals, 1991; Carlson, 1991). The primary difference lies not in what is done but why (Destefano v. Grabrian, 763 F. 2d 275 (Colo. 1988)). Those working as religious or spiritual counselors hold different assumptions about the cause of distress than do those working as secular psychotherapeutic helpers (Darling, 1960; Eddy, 1875; Eliade, 1964; Horn, 1991). In fact some religious helpers are now beginning to criticize the conventional assump-
tions held in the fields of psychology and social work as inappropriate to solving problems basically spiritual in nature (Zeiger, 1991).

"If you're out of your mind in another culture, or quite disturbed, or impotent, or anorexic, you look at what you've been eating, who's been casting spells on you, when you last missed reverence to the gods or didn't take part in the dance, broke some tribal custom. Whatever it could be thousands of other things - the plants, the water, the curses, the demons, the gods, being out of touch with the great spirit. It would never be what happened to you with your mother and your father forty years ago" (Hillman, 1990, p. 16).

Some issues facing social work and other therapeutic disciplines in relation to spiritually sensitive helping revolve around expanding the assumptions upon which helping is based. Tests of scientific legitimacy are not sufficient when one enters realms where widely varying religious beliefs hold sway. Helpful outcomes are dependant on defining the problem in a culturally specific manner and then applying a remedy. The application of therapeutic remedies to people whose fundamental assumptions about the origin of disease and health are at odds with contemporary psychotherapeutic theories is inappropriate without first understanding their culture and religious specific assumptions. Healing approaches can then be applied in terms designed to enlist the aid of the client's belief systems (Ortiz, 1991; Tieraona, 1991).

Just as clients hold varied cultural or religious belief systems, there is a wide variety of healing professionals who specialize in culturally or religiously specific healing approaches (Canda, 1986). "Religious beliefs may take many forms, ranging from theism (e.g. the Judeo-Christian-Islamic tradition) to non-theistic monism (e.g. Hindu Vedanta or Buddhism), to animism (e.g. shamanism). Religious social organizations range from large formal institutions (such as Roman Catholicism) to private friendship associations of like minded individuals who are not members of any formal religious institution. In the field of social work currently, there is a trend to refer to religion in this most comprehensive meaning as 'spirituality'. Typically, the person who regards him or herself as a religious helper understands and practices helping within the context of explicit moral commitments and cosmological beliefs that have the qualities enumerated here. There is usually a sense of vocation, that is, being called in a sacred way to the path of compassion. Of course what this "sacred" way is varies tremendously" (Canda, 1990, p. 2).

There is serious question as to the appropriateness of secular regulatory bodies determining the legitimacy of religious practitioners' work. It seems impossible for a board to have the necessary expertise in such diverse spiritual perspectives. Further, Maslow (1970) contends that control by organizational hierarchy is itself antithetical to free and spontaneous religious experience. Regulatory boards are typically composed of secular licensed professionals whose assumptions about the nature of healing and disease could often be at odds with the assumptions guiding religiously specific counseling. A Roman Catholic admonition that one's problems derived from sinfulness, a shamanic practitioner's attribution of disease to possession by spirits, or a Christian Scientist's assertion that the disease is an illusion would all be in conflict with contemporary psychotherapeutic assumptions (Ortiz, 1991). The regulatory boards setting guidelines for proper behavior would base their guidelines on accepted secular practices, thus forcing religiously based helpers to emulate systems of healing which may conflict with their fundamental religious beliefs. This can result in prohibitions against such things as the ministry allowing the indigent to volunteer at counseling centers to offset costs of helping (e.g. Colorado State Grievance Board, 1989) despite the fact that this practice is a well established part of Christian helping. Further, in attempting to define what a legitimate religious practitioner is or is not, the State comes perilously close to creating a state religion, something prohibited by federal and state constitutions.

Due to racism, ethnocentrism, and sectarian competition, there is some tendency for Americans to disparage culturally or religiously specific healing practices different from their own (Moore, 1979; Erdoes, 1972; Buhner, 1991; Van Tuyll, 1991). Also, there has been an historical conflict between science and religion. This can lead to mockery (Baker, 1990) or the assertion that all successful therapeutic interventions must be based on science (Martinez, 1991).

Social work is involved with people of diverse cultural and religious backgrounds. Therefore, social work experiences conflicting demands from individuals of diverse cultural or religious backgrounds for helping; from the states regarding separation of church and state; and from its profession regarding standards of practice, ethics, and protection of professional turf. When the social work profession, and other mental health professions, attempt to deal with these conflicts through regulation, services for people seeking spiritually sensitive helping may be unfairly restricted.

As social workers move more and more into political regulatory activity, they may begin to lose sight of their primary mission of supporting client self-determination. Regulation for consumer protection is often entrusted to conventional psychotherapeutic disciplines. Often social workers, psychologists and other licensed professionals actively seek it (Proceedings of the Colorado State Sunset Committee Hearings on Mental Health Licensing, 1991). But regulation of spiritually based helping has direct
limits placed on it by the first amendment.

Constitutional Limits on Regulating Religious Practice

The first amendment both mandates freedom of religion and also prohibits the creation of a "recognized" or state religion. Yet how spiritual and religious issues are recognized and responded to is a matter of continuing concern. Since no specific guidelines were laid down in the constitution, states must deal with the boundaries between legitimate state interest and infringement on protected liberties. When the state and the individual come into conflict and neither will cease their activity, the conflict becomes a matter for the courts. Some of the religious issues in conflict regard tax concerns, military service, and healing.

"Defining 'religion' for legal purposes is an inherently tricky proposition. For one, the very attempt brings the government exceedingly close to involvement with ecclesiastical matters against which the First Amendment carefully guards. Additionally, the tremendous diversity in which human beings may perceive of the universe and their place in it may make the task virtually impossible" (Sherr v. Northpoint Union Free School District, United States District Court, NY, CV 87-3116).

Over time, the courts have determined ways in which they, and the states, can evaluate if religious practice is genuine rather than a ruse designed to circumvent the states' legitimate right to regulate for the general welfare. In this legal context, it is not necessary that the person claiming religious freedoms believe in "God" (Torasco v. Watkins, 367 U.S. 488, 81 S. Ct. 1680 [1961]). "[T]he test of belief in relation to a Supreme Being is whether a given belief that is sincere and meaningful and occupies a place in the life of the possessor parallel to that filled by the orthodox belief in God" (U.S. v. Seeger, 380 U.S. 163, 165-66, 85 S. Ct. 850, 854, [1965]).

Another primary consideration is whether the individual "will categorically disregard elementary self-interest rather than transgress religious tenets" (U.S.v Allen, 760 F. 2d 447, 450, 2nd Cir, [1985]). The final test is whether or not the beliefs espoused by an individual are sincerely held. "Sincerity analysis seeks to determine the subjective good faith of an adherent . . . the goal, of course, is to protect only those beliefs which are held as a matter of conscience. Human nature being what it is, however, it is frequently difficult to separate this inquiry from a forbidden one involving the veracity of the underlying belief" (Barber, 650 F.2d at 441). In attempting to determine sincerely held beliefs, the courts also look at how long the beliefs have been held, whether there is a pattern of behavior based on the beliefs over time, and whether the person holds membership in organizations which advocate those beliefs.

In contrast to courts, state governments generally assume legitimacy of their regulatory boards' evaluations. The court's function is to adjudicate disputes; the state's function is to regulate. Mental health boards usually depend on advice given them by a representative of the State Attorney General's office. How they interpret statutes regarding their power over religiously based helping often depends on the quality of the advice received from that office. Successful adjudication of disputes regarding exemptions from state regulation often depend on the position and financial strength of the parties in question. The Catholic Church will have much less trouble defending its right to exemption than a Native American Medicine Teacher, a small congregation, non-denominational Christian minister, or a representative of a Wiccan Church.

The states, in attempting to solve problems, may support widely varying recognitions of religious freedoms. In a recent tax law, the Colorado legislature stated in part: "The General Assembly hereby finds and declares that religious worship has different meanings to different religious organizations; that the Constitutional guarantees regarding establishment of religion and the free exercise of religion prevent public officials from inquiring as to whether particular activities of religious organizations are in the furtherance of the religious purposes of such organizations; that such religious activities are an integral part of the religious worship of religious organizations; and that activities of religious organizations which are in furtherance of their religious purposes constitute religious worship." (C.R.S 39-3-106, quoted in Hofgard, 1990).

During the same period Colorado also passed more restrictive and narrow regulations, through the advocacy of the Mental Health Board. In these regulations, so-called legitimate spiritual practitioners must be connected to a formal religious institution, have a congregation, and not advertise or charge for services (Daragh, 1988). Although these regulations were eventually rescinded, they led to the investigation of numerous ministers by the state. The state's new rulings, though much clearer, if applied to Jesus, Mary Baker Eddy (the founder of Christian Science), or Black Elk (the Lakota Sioux Medicine Teacher) would not find these practitioners to be religious (Colorado State Grievance Board Rules, 1991). Though such practitioners, if willing to go to court, would presumably win under current court decisions, the cost, time involved, and the chilling effect of such state activity in religious realms is immense. This interference seems contrary to the view of the Supreme Court. In 1890, it affirmed that the first amendment was intended to allow every one under the jurisdiction of the United States to entertain such notions respecting his relations to his Maker and the duties they impose as may be approved by his judgement and conscience, and to exhibit his sentiments in such form of worship as he may think proper, not
injurious to the equal rights of others, and to prohibit legislation for the support of any religious tenets, or the mode of worship of any sect” (Davis v. Beason, 133 U.S., [1890], quoted in Hofgard, 1990).

Alternatives for Regulation

Although the mandate to protect the public is often taken sincerely by those trusted with regulatory enforcement, the unique structure of the United States constitution places severe limits on such enforcement. The drafters of the constitution recognized that encroachments on religious freedoms, even for such factors as protecting the public, were, in the long run, more harmful than allowing an unregulated practice of religion. Though this puts tremendous pressure on regulators and can lead to cries for public reform, it is a limit which should not be exceeded. Further, evaluations of treatments in the mental health field do not lead to clear conclusions as to what constitutes competency or efficacy to practice. Thus doubt is cast on the arguments traditionally used to support controls over religious (or even secular) counseling.

An alternative to regulation and restriction of spiritually oriented helping that supports protection of the public is informed disclosure. Informed disclosure means giving all pertinent information to clients which would allow them to make an informed choice. By allowing the client to make informed choices and providing a method for obtaining redress for grievances, the primary obligations of the state are taken care of in the least restrictive method possible. The controversial issue of defining legitimate practice is circumvented. The person seeking services is supported to determine what he or she wishes to choose in the search for health. The problems of regulating religion are avoided.

In addition, the state may determine what specific behaviors (not therapeutic modalities) are dangerous to clients and pass legislation forbidding them. Thus behaviors such as sexual exploitation of clients, kickbacks for referrals, and violation of confidentiality can be prohibited. Again, the problematic efforts to define legitimate therapy and to regulate religious practice are avoided.

A further crucial step in dealing with controversies in the regulation of spiritually oriented helping is encouraging overt interfaith and interdisciplinary dialogue. Though this exists on a small scale in a number of areas, notably in services for refugees by social work professionals, a large scale endorsement is missing from within the mental health system itself. Such dialogue could address conflict about professional turf and alternative cultural and spiritual systems of healing.

The suggestions offered above may serve as a beginning point for future solutions to regulatory problems. They support minimum government intrusion, constitutional protections, and consumer self-determination. They also support openness to diverse approaches to helping, so that the mental health field can continue to grow through its rich tradition of experimentation and exploration.

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SPIRITUALITY AND SOCIAL WORK JOURNAL

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EDITORIAL FOREWORD
Edward R. Canda

Recent Accomplishments

1992 has been a year of much activity and accomplishment for the Society for Spirituality and Social Work. Membership has increased to approximately 250. Various society members have developed workshops and curriculum innovations throughout the country. For example, Patrick O'Brien, of the Advisory Group, has been active promoting SSSW at national and local meetings of social workers and mental health professionals. His efforts included an information exchange presentation on "Spirituality, Social Work, and Empowerment" at the NASW World Assembly in Washington D.C. last July; 200 people expressed interest. I conducted national presentations and networking at the annual Council on Social Work Education program meeting and the international CSWE/International Association of Schools of Social Welfare meeting in Washington, D.C. The latter meeting opened up more opportunities for international networking, which I believe is one of the most important tasks to be addressed in future SSSW efforts. (See the article on "International Networking" in this issue.) One of our members, Donald Brickell of Massachusetts, has co-founded a student caucus on social work practice and spirituality at Boston University School for Social Work. That group is also reaching out to other area social work schools. Several students from other schools have called me for help in developing theses and dissertations on spirituality and social work. In addition, several faculty have contacted me about developing courses on the subject at their schools. These activities suggest that momentum continues to grow.

Society activities have attracted national publicity in Common Boundary journal (issue May/June 1992), and Religion Watch (July/August 1992).

Advocacy by SSSW, the North American Association of Christians in Social Work, and others resulted in an important accomplishment with national impact. As mentioned in the last issue of this journal, the Council on Social Work Education has been engaged in the process of revising the curriculum standards for accreditation of social work education programs. Since the early 1970s, references to spirituality had been deleted. In the revised draft of new standards, there are three references to religious diversity and spirituality as important topics for education. The Curriculum Policy Statement (Draft 7/19/92) requires that each program must include content about "population groups that are particularly relevant to the program's mission" and "populations-at-risk," including those distinguished by religion (among other types of diversity). It affirms that "practice content also includes approaches and skills for practice with clients from differing social, cultural, racial, religious, spiritual, and class backgrounds and with systems of all sizes" (p.9, emphasis added). The statement does not go as far as we wished, in terms of recognizing spirituality as a basic aspect of human experience and behavior relevant to all curriculum areas. However, this is an important accomplishment because the wording recognizes that religion and spirituality are legitimate and valuable topics for education. Further, the references and their professional value context make it clear that the topics need to be addressed in terms of diversity, rather than imposition of any one spiritual perspective. It will no longer be possible for social work schools or individual faculty to argue that these subjects are unacceptable.

SSSW has also developed a possibility for expansion of its publication activity. Until arrangements are confirmed, I cannot explain the details. However, it would involve establishing content on spirituality as a regular feature in a quarterly scholarly journal published by a well established company. Since this would involve a change of subscription rate and procedure, do not renew your subscription for 1993 at this time. You will receive a renewal form and explanation as soon as negotiations are completed.

These accomplishments and developments make it important for the SSSW membership to reconsider its future direction and structure. Please respond to the letter enclosed with this issue, which explains possible future developments of SSSW and solicits your input. This is extremely important for SSSW to remain viable and creative.

In This Issue

As a special service to subscribers, this issue contains the third topical bibliography on spirituality and social work. This bibliography follows the format of the update in volume 2 number 2 (1992) which supplemented the extensive bibliography distributed to members in 1991. If readers discover other social work writings on the topic that have not been included in any bibliography, please send the information for a future possible update.

The articles in this issue provide a significant contrast of spiritual perspectives and assumptions. Sepelwin describes the basic assumptions and therapeutic approach of "karma therapy," which she has applied in her clinical social work practice. Karma therapy, as she defines it, draws on Euro-American theosophical and esoteric writers, such as Helen
Blavatsky, Alice Bailey, and Benjamin Creme. These writers, in turn, adapted ideas from Vedantic (Hindu) philosophy and religion, as well as other metaphysical sources. In the following article, Singh provides an overview of concepts and treatment approaches from Asian Indian yoga, biofeedback, and auto-genic training, all of which have been influenced by Vedantic philosophy. Although Seplowin and Singh share some Vedantic assumptions, their specific formulations are distinct. For readers who would like to extend their knowledge of Vedantic and karma yoga applications to social work and human service, I highly recommend the following two books: Compassion in Service, by Ram Dass and Mirabai Bush (New York: Bell Tower, 1992), and Vivekananda's Approach to Social Work, by Indira Patel (Mylapore, India: Sri Ramakrishna Math, 1987, available from Vedanta Book Center, 5423 S. Hyde Park Blvd., Chicago, IL, 60615).

Ressler presents a comprehensive review of the seminal contributions of Alan Keith-Lucas concerning the connection between religion and social work. Keith-Lucas has been one of the most continuous and prolonged advocates for linkage between religion and social work in the history of the profession. His particular vantage is that of Christianity. The assumptions and terms differ markedly from the first two articles. Yet, Keith-Lucas has argued consistently for the need to be respectful and supportive of diverse spiritual perspectives. Ressler's article is followed by Keith-Lucas' review of the new book, Church Social Work.

The juxtaposition of Eastern and Western spiritual perspectives in this issue challenges readers to consider how their own spiritual belief commitments relate to these contrasting views and whether it is possible to establish common understanding and cooperation among them. I suggest that the reader approach these articles not just as an intellectual exercise, but also as a self-clarification challenge. Consider what it is about one's own personal strengths, limitations, commitments, and biases that predispose to a particular reaction. It can be an appropriate metaphor to describe this way of reading from Juan Hernandez, a social work professor at California State University-Sacramento. He explained that Aztec scribes instructed their students to read the sacred texts as though they look through a mirror with a hole in the center. Through the hole, it is possible to read the text as though it's meanings are objective, outside of oneself. But since the hole is surrounded by a mirror, reading through it shows that the meanings revealed, and the reactions to them, are also a reflection of oneself.

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The opinions expressed in this journal are those of the contributors and do not necessarily reflect the views of the SSW or its staff.

SOCIAL WORK AND KARMA THERAPY
Virginia Montero Seplowin

As social work professionalized, it became eager to rank as a science and replaced its religious roots with secular values, skills, and dependency on government (Canda, 1988b). This thrust away from religion gave way to clinical theories that fostered ego-centered functioning and relationships. Intervention no longer supported spiritual values for those so inclined as a way of shoring up inner strengths. The present social conditions indicate a need to return to spirituality and religion with a new stress on both self-awareness and social responsibility particularly since a changing population, with an enormous increase in peoples of color, responds to spirituality and religion. (Garcia, 1968; Brandon, 1976; Delgado, 1977).
Fortunately, as part of a larger world pattern, social work is rekindling an interest in a spiritual approach (Siporin, 1985). Spirituality is distinct from religion. Spirituality as essence involves inclusiveness and compassion as non-religious humanitarian values. Religion, as form, involves particularistic rituals and practices which subordinate values of transcendence. Both are an intrinsic aspect of the helping process (Brower, 1984). Recently, efforts to incorporate eastern and western insights useful for social work theory building and practice have multiplied (Keefe, 1975a, 1975b, 1986; Imbrogno and Canda, 1988; Canda, 1989). In fact, efforts to articulate a conceptual framework that encompasses an international social work perspective based on converging eastern and western values are well under way (Patel, 1987).

For instance, Ajaya (1988) has categorized four views derived from a variety of cosmological assumptions that can be related into a unified eastern-western psychological paradigm: reductionism (representing the western mechanistic view); humanism (wherein conscious experience is primary); dualism (with a dichotomy between human and universal consciousness), and monism (unitary consciousness: self as Self). Each view represents succeeding levels of consciousness expansion and universal comprehension, the broader including the narrower. Concepts and methods from the ancient Vedantic-monistic psychology of yoga have augmented western psychology: consciousness (beyond ego, superego, and sub-consciousness), the structure of inner reality, the mind-body unity and its multi-level functions, the value of prana or life force for physical-emotional-mental alignment, and meditation are a few (Keefe, 1975b; Rama, Ballentine, & Ajaya, 1976; Wilber, 1980; Dass & Gorman, 1985).

When practices cross cultures, the original language may be borrowed. (Bright, 1968; Jaynes, 1976). Some foreign words are absorbed; others are eventually replaced by new terms. This article is an attempt to facilitate the cross-over of valuable eastern concepts to the social work community as free of uncommon terminology as possible. Its underlying assumptions fall in the monistic category mentioned above.

The ideas presented herein are derived from the writings of esotericists Helen P. Blavatsky (Theosophical School), Alice A. Bailey (Arcane School), and Benjamin Creme (Share International). They provide a progressive development (from 1877 to the present). Each subsequent writer builds on the previous works yet each offers new insights. For instance, Blavatsky offered a complex cosmological view of impacting energies, forces, and patterns behind the universal order; Bailey reiterated the laws and principles of the energies that underlie human psychology and offered techniques helpful to human growth and development. Creme simplifies the language, encourages intelligent thinking, and motivates listeners to get involved in world sharing and justice at any preferred level. Thus while esoteric teachings deal with the subjective side of human experience they do not exclude practical action. The teachings offer a conceptual framework that includes a “higher psychology” concerned with the expansion of consciousness, as well as “a science of being.” That is to say, the personality and the soul are one unit. The personality without the soul aspect is incomplete, and the person is not truly individuated until this soul aspect is recognized and integrated. The human struggle reveals multitudinous degrees of advancement in this process.

These esoteric theories begin with the premise of wholeness. Wholeness is defined as the basic unity of energy (called life or active intelligence), its physical and non-physical manifestations, cycles, patterns, and frequencies—from dense inertness to luminous-contrast pervasive ness. The apparent illogicalities that exist are paradoxes resulting from our nascently developed minds which do not perceive nor understand deeply enough at this stage. Nevertheless, there is a constant consciousness expansion going on all the time. The concepts belong to a distinct body of knowledge with laws and formulated principles as well as a results-oriented methodology. This psychospiritual view encourages the development of the intuition. Intuition is the capacity for inner vision, the non-intellectual grasp of an underlying truth. At present, empirical studies of hypotheses that would bring esotericism into the mainstream of academic science await to be made—this is a wide open field for the innovative and courageous. On the other hand, the persistence of the esoteric viewpoint lies in the fact that there is widespread, historical and ongoing experiential evidence and personal testimony that attest to its veracity. In short, esoteric science is still outside the pale not because it is invalid but because academic science has not taken it seriously nor yet created instruments of measurement that are sufficiently sensitive.

The concept of karma therapy is offered as an alternative to mainstream social work approaches. If the profession is to re-integrate spiritual and religious values into its theory and practice, it must also include new interpretations of the old wisdoms. What follows is: (a) a definition of karma therapy and descriptions of its methodology; (b) an introduction to
the science of energy from a particular esoteric viewpoint; (c) a discussion of energy movement in group meditation; (d) a perspective on the social worker as a model of these spiritual values; and (e) some implications for social work practice. Obviously, the approach will not appeal to everyone. This method of work appeals to those therapists and clients who have a strong intuitive sense of the whole and who seek to fulfill a yearning that can be interpreted as "the sweet call of the soul."

Karma Therapy: Description and Method

Karma therapy is the distillation of the mentioned esoteric writings whose core is the concept of undivided, cyclic, and intelligent energy moving toward a conscious synthesis of all its manifestations. Furthermore, the concept of energy is understood as charged movement whose dual negative-positive nature functions throughout the cosmos. On the human plane, the constant friction between these polar opposites impels evolutionary change and offers opportunities to exercise awareness, will, and choice.

Karma therapy is soul-oriented because the soul is the directing agent of its counterpart on the physical plane, the personality. The soul has its own agenda which the personality must eventually carry out. Thus, the therapist sees the client as being where s/he needs to be in order to learn the next lesson. That is, the karmic process and point of evolution combine (Bailey, 1953). The karma therapist may work with fragile egos that need grounding. In that case, the therapist defines the problem and the psychodynamic pattern of the client, supports strengths, normalizes negative feelings, and teaches methods of coping. The therapist also introduces the client to here-and-now thinking and responsibility for all personal thoughts and feelings. When acceptable, the therapist encourages the frequent practice of gratitude for life which engenders a sense of joyful abundance; together these are preludes to the habits of love and forgiveness. The therapist teaches the client to connect with the inner aspect of light, understood as a manifestation of soul, through visualization and active imagination. Meditation is encouraged. For example, when appropriate, the therapist uses the focusing technique (Bailey, 1963; Krishnamurti, 1973; Gendlin, 1979) in which disturbing feelings are concentrated on as much as possible without thoughts. In the presence of the therapist, the client is less fearful of the inner violence and pain pressing for recognition and release. When done correctly and repetitively, this direct technique allows feelings to fully register in conscious awareness. Sudden images or insights may emerge. The client is in control here and learns that the doorway to health and wholeness requires going through the dark density of the personality self to reach the pure light and life within. When the soul is recognized as the true Self, the client begins to see the "good" and "bad" in terms of a deeper ongoing process—the soul's need to experience the opposites on the earth plane in order to integrate them. The balancing leads to greater personality detachment, centeredness, and consciousness expansion. Life with soul identification becomes more free and adventurous.

In a sense, the work gets done on the soul plane, impelled by the therapist's healing but non-attached guidance. The client's natural pacing is respected. The important, distinguishing feature of karma therapy is that the therapist's frame of reference consciously includes the unity of the soul and personality, an understanding of the laws and cycles of energy, and the distinctions between soul and personality impulses. The concepts of karma therapy stretch the psychologic field beyond the ego to the whole.

The Science of Energy

The nature, laws, cycles, and appearances of energy comprise part of an ancient body of knowledge known as the Ageless Wisdom (Bailey, 1962a and 1962b). This fusion of eastern and western disciplines is based on the notions that all things in the universe originate from one source, that human separateness is illusory, and that the way to understand outer chaos is to go inward, each individual being a holographic fragment of the whole.

Modern science substantiates that a myriad of energy streams and forces sweep across the cosmos, weaving a web from which all forms, from "thought to thing," emerge (Brunton, 1972). At that level everything is interconnected with everything else. (Toben, 1975). These energy streams have been classified into seven major qualities each with specific characteristics: Ray I, Will or Power; Ray II, Love or Wisdom; Ray III, Active Intelligence; Ray IV, Harmony (through conflict), Beauty or Art; Ray V, Concrete Knowledge or Science; Ray VI, Abstract Idealism; Ray VII, Ceremonial (or Organizational) Magic (Bailey, 1962). These penetrate the human form through seven major energy centers or chakras. Much pioneering remains to be done in charting the kaleidoscopic changes of energy from the cosmic to the physical planes and the effects on human behavior.

The energies manifest in nature as mineral, plant, animal, human and spiritual ranging from dense to pervasive concentration. "Spiritual", here,
is defined as a self-initiated activity that moves an individual from a lower to a higher vibratory plane (Bailey, 1962). The human unit is constituted of the etheric-physical, emotional, mental, and spiritual aspects. In other words, an individual is not one definitive body but is composed of interconnected and interpenetrated layers of atomic bodies (aspects) which direct or influence, complement or counter each other. The criss-crossing action of energy creates many focal points in the physical body. The seven major centers (chakras) control the energy flow from the underlying web into the individual endocrine system producing in the human a host of physical, emotional, and mental conditions (Bailey, 1953).

According to these esoteric sources, the mental plane consists of the higher, intuitive mind and the lower, rational mind. The intuitive mind is the seat of the higher Self or soul and connects the transpersonal energies with the lower mind. The soul is the vital center of each human unit, capable of directing the personality when the latter opens up to it. In other words, as the personality advances in awareness (through alignment which is accidental at first and becomes habitual eventually) the sense of connection with the whole increases and demonstrates as genuine service to the whole. This growing sensitivity has a reciprocal action in that the soul is then able to deepen its hold on the personality. The term “personality” subsumes the lower physical, emotional, and rational aspects. Thus, it is at the mental level—the point where human power can be exerted—that the spiritual and material planes meet. Through alignment of the soul, the mind, and the brain, energy from the higher Self center penetrates the dense, physical body and brings about a harmonious fusion of the disparate forces (Bailey, 1962a). When the refined energies of the soul cannot flow freely through the various bodies of the human being, physical and psychological imbalances occur. All growth and transformations result from that radiation.

The familiar “obligatory scene” (Haddick, 1985) in a novel or drama which presents the inescapable conflict to be faced and resolved and which forever changes the character is what life presents to us as karma. It literally means action or work. In the larger context, karma as the “law of cause and effect” keeps all the energies in balance. Blavatsky described it as, “that unseen and unknown law which adjusts wisely, intelligently and equitably each effect to its cause, tracing the latter back to its producer” (1888). Karma is a force inherent in matter according to Bailey (1962a). No plane of energy, even the highest or most subtle, is outside the karmic wheel.

We produce good and bad karma all the time; it is not necessarily from a previous life (Creme, 1987). There is karma for an individual, group, family, society, nation, and, all of humanity. Individual karma combines to form that of a group. The basis of karma is attachment, that is, strong driving desires.

Karma is linked with reincarnation. It is the permanent atom of the soul—not the impermanent personality—that is expanding its consciousness as part of the cosmic evolution. For this reason the soul requires repeated cycles of return to the physical plane through different bodies or rebirths since the earth’s temporal zone wears out the material bodies quickly (Bailey, 1962a).

The physical plane sojourn allows the mind to construct a tiny reality and to focus on specific, limited events. This circumscription permits experience to take place (Toben, 1975). By expanding through the various planes, from subtle to dense and back again, cosmic energy gains knowledge of itself. The increasing intelligence of a vast consciousness as a result of human experience and its impact on each new generation of humans is explored by morphogeneticist Sheldrake (1981).

The permanent atom of the individual higher Self or soul manifests as part of a group, hence the collective karma of family and other groups. As the personality matures into a conscious and detached individual, free will and choice are exercised to gradually submerge personal desire into the intelligent will of the group. The cyclic laws of energy express as reincarnation in the human domain, much as the cycles of nature are seen in recurring plant life, the seasons, and in the earth’s rotations. From the holistic perspective, the energies constantly strive toward unification on the grosser material planes to reflect the non-separativeness of the subtle planes. When human beings cooperate with that thrust, they benefit; when they resist, life becomes exceedingly difficult. The Romans stated it succinctly, “The fates lead him who will, him who won’t they drag” (Campbell, 1968).

Through the use and development of a refined intuitive faculty, it is also possible to gain illumination—transpersonal knowledge that comes directly, complete, and clear. Flashes of illumination increase from accidental and rare to progressively frequent when the head center is activated. Illumination breaks the barriers of the rational mind, activates the heart, and makes the individual willingly adaptable to the needs of the inner life. With practice, the individual or group invokes the totality and eventually a response is evoked.
Meditation With Groups

Meditation is a discipline that aligns the brain, mind, and higher Self, as well as the seven major physical centers. Practiced regularly by a group, the combined energies of the meditators intensely focused on the mental plane form a powerful integrating force over time. Successfully achieved, an influx of radiation from a higher dimension releases unlimited amounts of energy into the lower plane (Taimni, 1974). The process is similar to what occurs when the sun's energy is directed through a magnifying lens.

When a group functions as a unit on the mental plane, it produces internal activity leading to integration within the personalities. The precipitated higher energies stimulate the physical, emotional, and mental vehicles. This process does not always lead to relaxation. Reactions depend on the quality of energy that the individual is contacting. The "cleaning out" activity may feel unsettling. But an integration process takes place when the individual perseveres. Often the meditator may begin to undergo "tests" and the outer life condition reflects the inner reorganization going on. When this occurs, the meditator often discovers new centeredness and strength in facing challenges that produced fear in the past. The effects will differ for each group, among the individuals, and from time to time.

Service, which is the nature of the soul, must be undertaken sooner or later to prevent a congestion of energies. Service is not simply good deeds; it includes consciously relaxing the ego to reach out and meet the needs of others. It also eventually includes commitment to the soul–mind–brain connections so that the giving is the result of being rather than doing. Thus, meditation and conscious service are powerful therapeutic tools. Psychotherapy purports to heal the splits within the self, but meditation heals "the split from life as a whole" (Welwood, 1983).

The Social Work Therapist as a Model

The self begins life expressing selfishness, while psychologic and spiritual growth increase the expression of selflessness. The very process of freeing the "I" simultaneously expands the boundaries to include the world. Psychological difficulties are universal, not unique. Life, the ultimate teacher, trains those willing to learn to accept what comes up each moment, to endure the inner turmoil with dignity and strength so that effectiveness is not impaired, and to forget oneself in the larger pain of others. Done consciously, this forgetting is not denial. It is mind training for greater impersonality. Crises evoke focus and determination and, when resolved, they also evoke a sense of joy, gain, and freedom, at any stage of development.

In karma therapy, the therapist is an instrument of service with the responsibility of keeping the self centered and exercising love. Love, from the energy point of view, is not an emotion but a principle of magnetism that works against separatism (Bailey, 1962a). Love is the fusion of energies, the result of vibratory coherence. The therapist must also develop the quality of harmlessness via the use of a disciplined mind. Love demonstrates magnetism while action demonstrates radiation. These two qualities are essential; when cultivated by the therapist with a conscious will-to-serve, healing powers develop.

The attitude of the therapist is compassion but the work is mentally disciplined. It is the constant awareness of the therapist in contact with the whole that differentiates karma therapy work with energy from traditional therapy. When right action is accompanied by aspiration, the higher aspects of the physical, emotional, and mental bodies are stimulated. Their magnetic power increases to attract new high grade atoms (Bailey, 1962b). For this reason, the therapist must refrain personal thinking patterns by replacing negative thoughts with here-and-now attention. The habit of conscious choice holds the ego in check. Ultimately, however, it is not will but love—heartfelt, propelling and selfless—that heals both therapist and client. It becomes clear that the therapist cannot serve as a guide unless meditation, study of esoteric principles, and practice of the spiritual will are undertaken.

Clients resonate with karma therapy when it is presented to them in a way that re-enforces their own spiritual belief systems. They leave with a better understanding of inclusive values and direction. The principles of energy lead to a truly holistic approach in therapy. So much so that from this view clients come to us as a result of our karma. They mirror attributes of ourselves that need to be looked at and resolved. Our clients serve us even as we serve them.

Conclusion: Implications For Social Work Practice

Although social workers have a tendency toward compassion and social justice, intellectual training and bureaucratic demands are constraints that work against the highly fragile holistic inclinations, if these are not deliberately vitalized. The personal challenge for social workers is to sense the excitement and authenticity of spiritual and religious paradigms. The inner–outer boundary is crossed when the spiritual dimension in oneself is developed. Meditation allows "bubbles" of self-truths to emerge. Only to the degree that there is clarity about oneself can genuine understanding and effective influence occur. The healing energy does not reside in us but
passes through us.

Concern about ethical values and advocacy skills is urgently called for. For instance, the world is emerging as a planetary culture; that reality must color all present thought and action. Science is beginning to penetrate the mystery of the mind. New behavior techniques and methodologies must be experimented with to avoid anachronistic solutions. Since the democratic process is perpetually in flux, individuals and groups must remain vigilant to constraining impositions. Ultimately, society's failures stem from moral failures. Ethical behavior is borne out of introspection (Mouravieff, 1989). Clear-minded, selfless efforts on behalf of the larger community are important. The present grass roots movements must be heard and assisted because their felt needs signal the new directions. People power must grow to vie equitably with the highly organized vested interests of the world. This provides a wide arena for social workers to be sensitive, informed, and creatively active. Yesterday required muscle power; the present requires mind power. Social work can lead other helping professions in this regard so that together we can undertake the great work of transforming the world that lies before us.

Accordingly, this article draws on esoteric philosophy and psychology to describe the energy constitution of humans. The laws of energy substantiate the spiritual inclination as a response to the reality in nature. Karma therapy includes this basic energy factor and its effect on human behavior. The practice of meditation is encouraged. This perspective suggests that a holistic propensity, familiarity with a metaphysical orientation, studies in comparative religions, and a commitment to the exercise of a spiritual discipline be included in the preparation of future social workers.

References


INTEGRATING CONCEPTS FROM EASTERN PSYCHOLOGY AND SPIRITUALITY: A TREATMENT APPROACH FOR ASIAN-AMERICAN CLIENTS

Ram Naresh Singh

Many social workers, regardless of their personal religious affiliation, look at spirituality or religion as having no relevance to social work practice. Perhaps this is due to concerns about separation between church and state and non-sectarian democratic values. Even though they themselves might follow some religious practices and might seek some reassurance from the religious sources, they often fail to fully appreciate the bearing on their professional career (Wilson, 1982). Lost in their deep concern for unpartiality and non-judgemental attitude, social workers have been described as radical, libertarian, irreligious and even anti-religious (Sipori, 1984, 1985). Recent years, however, have witnessed a change in social workers’ attitude. There has been a greater realization of the need to develop a coherent body of knowledge assessing the impact of religion in determining people’s attitudes towards society and personal philosophy of life (Judah, 1985; Sheridan and Bullis, 1991). Many social workers have played a pioneer role in conceptualizing the link between spirituality and social work. Some prominent names to mention are those of Bystek (1953), Bowers (1969), Cana (1991 and 1998), Cana and Phaobtong (1992), Keith-Lucas (1960, 1972, 1983, 1985, 1989), Leiby (1985), Loewenberg (1988), Netting, Thibault, and Ellor (1990), Ortix (1990), Sipori (1984, 1985) and Spencer (1956). Also, in the general public, many social scientists have noticed a “bureaucratic revival” in the 1980’s (Sipori and Glasser, 1987; Yankelovich, 1981). Within the context of spiritual revival, social workers and psychotherapists have engaged in a search for new models of helping, many of which have been derived from Asian spirituality and psychology as developed in India, China, Japan and other countries in the Far East. Some of the psychotherapy masters and social work professionals who have been inspired by Eastern concepts are Jung, Maslow, Carl Rogers, Paul Watzlawick, Jay Haley, Kubler-Ross, Imbrogno and Cana (1988), Chung (1992), and Patel (1987).

This paper explores some concepts from Eastern psychology and spirituality that have great potential to enhance therapeutic effectiveness. It limits itself to reviewing just a few modes of therapies, namely yoga, biofeedback and Autogenic training, as these have heavily borrowed their basic concepts and treatment modalities from Eastern psychology and spirituality. Social work treatment philosophy is based heavily on Judeo-Christian ethics and Western culture, whereas the above three systems have developed under the influence of the East. Social work treatment process, in spite of its theoretical commitment to prevention, has often been a “band-aid” work through problem focused services; it appears to have lost its commitment to the social change. The above three systems, on the other hand, are more holistic and prevention oriented. The need for a broad-based intervention that focuses not only on treatment but also on creating an attitude conducive to preventing numerous social problems can hardly be over-emphasized. It calls for providing a holistic perspective.
towards life and re-framing the clients' attitude towards problems. This article explores these three therapeutic systems to help develop such a perspective. It also explores their applicability to promoting changes in the Asian-American clients' world-view and soliciting their motivation for engagement in treatment. In particular, it examines how these three systems address issues of stress, confusion, isolation, fragmentation, bondage to desires and poor self-image.

YOGA

Yoga, according to Patanjali, the father of the yoga system in ancient India, is a process of concentrating on one's own self and uniting oneself with the inner true self. We are usually so pre-occupied with mending the ways of others that we have no time to look into our own. Yoga emphasizes and teaches the techniques of inner integration and withdrawing oneself from pre-occupation with others. Based on a strong determination to achieve self-control, it teaches the techniques of conquering the inferior "I" - the lower self identified with the body and worldly problems, and unifying with the supreme "I" charged with divinity. Yoga believes in the potential divinity in each human being and aims at its unfolding to its fullest potential (Delmonte, 1987).

Yoga represents the culmination of Indian philosophical thought into the first comprehensive psychological system (Murphy and Murphy, 1968). Patanjali minutely studied the mental processes and grouped the mind into four distinct types: intellectual, emotional, active and meditative. He prescribed numerous physical, emotional and spiritual practices to control the mind. The purification of mind through rigorous physical and mental discipline was considered essential for the development of ethical qualities leading to spiritual uplift. Yoga, according to Patanjali, is a combination of various methods aimed at purifying one's mind and reaching a state of self-realization. This state is achieved through the fusion of the mental and physical energies reaching a level of existence known in yoga as the "pranic sheath" or the "energy body" (Rama, Ballentine and Swami Ajaya, 1976). This state is analogous to what Christian mystics haved called the "purgative state" (Akhilananda, 1965). Patanjali defined yoga as the complete control of the mind-stuff. His yoga focused primarily on modifications of the thinking principle, i.e., confused thought processes, obstacles, and the methods of overcoming the obstacles (Coster, 1968). Swami Vivekananda, the great enlightened yogi of India who emphasized universal spirituality and oneness of all human beings, describes the following four kinds of yoga:

1) Karma yoga - the realization of the divinity through complete selfless dedication to work and duty;
2) Bhakti yoga - complete dedication of oneself to the devotion and service of a personal God;
3) Raja yoga - working on unfolding the inner divinity through mental and physical exercises;
4) Jnana yoga - the realization of one's own divinity through knowledge.

The disciplines of yoga are much broader than meditation that focuses attention upon a single thing while physically relaxed. Meditation enhances an individual's capacity to focus attention on a single thing or task, to discriminate among internal stimuli and achieve an altered mode of perception (Keefe, 1986), whereas yoga, as propounded by Patanjali, has a much broader connotation with a wide range of application to stress management, mental clarification from confusions, self-unification, emancipation from bondage of suffering and enhancement of self-image.

For example, yoga handles stress by controlling the agitation of the mind. It is a psychological method by means of which it becomes possible for one to plunge from the finite (worldly problems) to the infinite (unlimited inner potentials) and coordinate feeling, willing and thinking (Smith, 1986).

Shankaracharya, (Dasgupta, 1988) the great Indian philosopher, proposes four methods to get out of the confusion of life: 1) Vivek — discrimination between real and unreal, 2) Vairagya or renunciation — realizing the temporary nature of the problems and worldly pleasures, 3) Possession of the "Six Treasures": a) Sama — calmness, b) Dana — self-control, c) Uparati — a state when the mind does not react to external objects, d) Titiksha — or forbearance - a state when a mind can maintain a calm and peaceful attitude under all circumstances, e) Sradha — firm faith in oneself based on right judgement, f) Samadhan — self-settledness — the concentration of the mind that comes by constantly affirming one's divine existence, g) Mumukshutwaam — an intense yearning for freedom.

The yoga perspective is well illustrated by the following story. A man was captured by some cannibals. The man exclaimed that they had not captured his real self; he took out his false teeth, false hair, false beard and false eye lids. The cannibals were shocked as they could not understand what he had that was his and real. They saw him only as part of and not a human being and, therefore, let him go. Yoga aims at getting rid of false attachment to external identifications and at reuniting different parts of the body, mind and soul for achieving a desired object. It
teaches a process of concentration and reunification.

Yoga proposes two approaches to daily life to get rid of the suffering created by bondage to desires: 1) Dispassion — it is a discipline created by knowing the right value of things and 2) Discrimination — it brings us in touch with reality — true self. By controlling the modifications of mind and not others, the individual is able to attain freedom (Gnaneswaranand, 1975). According to yoga, the root cause of problem and suffering is our lack of understanding of self and not-self, of conscious noumenon, "Purusha", and unconscious noumenon, "prakriti". The true self is not the body, mind, ego, or intellect. These are only the instruments of self true. "Self" is the pure consciousness, changeless, and ever-present, behind all these states. All the problems of daily life are resolved by themselves when an individual realizes his/her true self (Satyananda, 1981).

Yoga employs various forms of meditation to help achieve self-realization. In empirical studies, meditation has been found useful in treating hypertension (Frumkin, et al., 1978; Seer, 1979; Hafner, 1982), type A coronary-prone behavior (Muskatel et al., 1984), stuttering (McIntyre et al., 1974), and sleep-onset insomnia (Woolfolk et al., 1976; Miskimau, 1977). It has been found quite effective in treating addiction and alcoholism (Shapiro and Zifferblatt, 1976; Brautigam, 1977; Marlett et al., 1984). Such studies demonstrate how innovative ideas can be incorporated into the current therapeutic processes for an enriching and effective experience (Smith, 1986).

Bio-feedback

Bio-feedback, as it developed in the West, focuses on the person's psycho-physical reaction to external or internal stresses. It is a therapeutic method of studying and monitoring body processes and forming an information loop that allows the client, the therapist, or both to observe and modify internal psycho-physical events while they are in process (Forgione and Holmberg, 1981). Adler and Adler have reviewed the application of bio-feedback in current psychotherapy (Adler and Adler, 1983). There is an abundance of literature reviewing the application of bio-feedback to cardiovascular disorders, rehabilitation, spasticity control and psychosomatic disorders (Basmajian, 1979).

Bio-feedback gauges the impact of stress on the person's cardiovascular system and focuses on training general relaxation. The person is taught to counteract the eroding effect of stress through many avenues which lead to a healthy life style such as appropriate perceptions, proper diet, exercise and a balance of work and play. The basic tenets of this integrative approach are derived from the yogic philosophy. The tension reduction process usually goes through the following steps:

Step 1. Developing awareness of muscle tension.
Step 2. Forearm EMG (electromyographic) Training in which the patient is helped to experiment with the feedback, "What makes it go up? What makes it go down?"
Step 3. Frontal EMG Training which encourages awareness of internal cues.
Step 4. This phase of training is intended to produce control of peripheral vasodilatation.
Step 5. Systematic desensitization of anxiety (Stoyva, 1983).

One of the significant bio-feedback methods of calming the patient's confused state of mind is focusing on the "here and now". Rumination into the past or future, the main source of confusion, is discarded by inducing a profound state of relaxation. Usually profound relaxation does not occur unless there is a shift in conceptual processes. The latter involves a change from reality-oriented thinking, e.g. problem-solving, processing information, making decisions and so forth, to mental activity which may be described as non-voluntary, free flowing, and drifting. The objective of the entire process is to lift the patient from a stage of other-directed confusion and ruminations to self-awareness.

Bio-feedback helps a person to reflect upon his/her physiological reactions and monitors the discrepancies between reactions and thinking or feeling (Adler and Adler, 1983). The entire process focuses on facilitating self-integration by gently removing the fragmentation between physical reactions, emotional processes and cognitive activity. However, biofeedback's propensity to evoke a state of mild disassociation, which is beneficial for most clients, makes it potentially dangerous with clients who have had pathological dissociative reactions in the past, such as fugue states of depersonalization (Adler and Adler, 1983).

Bio-feedback teaches clients to control physiological processes. It re-establishes the power of mind over body. It reiterates the ancient Eastern philosophical view of individual energy being a part of the universal energy that we must get in touch with to realize our inner potentials. It engages the person in deep introspection and self-scrutiny previously available to yogis only through years of introspective meditation. The therapeutic process has a great potential for releasing the inner energy to its maximum potential.

Biofeedback aims at integrating the psycho-physical aspects - the self-regulatory processes -
under the client's control. It opens up new intervention tactics to work on improving self-image through conscious control of physiological systems.

Auto-Genic Training

Auto-genic training shares many concepts with biofeedback, meditation, psycho-imagery and stress management. It emphasizes focusing on selective positive memories and visualizing alternative behavior and feelings with an objective to create a new set of expectations and self-control.

Auto-genic training proposes a formula for triggering a peace response by controlling reactions to outside disturbances. By means of a process of auto suggestion, mind-control, and visualization, it facilitates emotional and behavioral pattern changes leading to a reduction in physical and emotional stress.

Confusion results from an overload of the autonomic nervous system due to conscious and unconscious forces. The trainee, by learning the techniques of accessing various experiences from the unconscious, can organize his/her thinking in creative directions. It acknowledges the flow of thoughts in awareness all the time, but the trainee learns not to pay active attention to them for the moment. By doing so he/she reorganizes the thinking process in a creative direction. As the training progresses, the individual is encouraged to foster a greater feeling of well-being, safety and security. The trainee moves towards leading a fuller and richer life and visualizing himself/herself as an integrated whole, synthesizing body, emotion, and spirituality into one being.

Through a schedule of rhythmic body exercise and visualizing gradual expansion of a white light (auras) to surround the body to heal the trainee, the therapeutic process leads to unleashing great physical, emotional and spiritual potential inherent in the individual. The self is visualized as a powerful, problem-free state of being temporarily beset by the external limitations simply because the individual has not learned how to keep his/her inner identity separate from the outer identity disturbed by a specific problem.

IMPLICATIONS FOR SOCIAL WORK PRACTICE
WITH ASIAN-AMERICAN CLIENTS

Since the Asian-American population has been emerging as the fastest growing minority, it is important that social workers respond by enhancing knowledge of their specific needs and cultural tensions. In order to integrate concepts from Eastern psychology and spirituality to which clients from this population are more likely to respond, social workers need to develop new models of treatment. Such a model must respond to the following common tension polarities experienced by minority groups in general: 1) oppression vs. liberation, 2) powerlessness vs. empowerment, 3) exploitation vs. parity, 4) acculturation vs. culture-maintenance and 5) stereotyping vs. unique person (Lum, 1982). One of the crucial therapeutic tasks consists in helping clients to transcend the process of definingsituations in dichotomous terms of right or wrong or good or bad. Then perspective-taking becomes flexible so situations can be seen both as right or wrong, good or bad, depending on who defines the reality and where and when (Singh, 1990A). The same problem, for example, in a family situation, may be perceived differently by each family member and each one may be right, considering his/her perspective. Problems, perception of problems and solutions, are culture-specific; social work education must respond to the current need for teaching cross-cultural practice by infusing such content into curricula (Chau, 1990) and by clearing out the social work students' epistemological blindspots (Saba, Karrer and Hardy, ed., 1989).

Some salient cultural values of Asians such as filial piety, patterns of parent-child relationships, respect for authority and roles, self-control, social consciousness and communal responsibility, fatalism, high regard for the elderly and close familialities, that influence their perception of the problem and the problem-solving process must be interwoven into social work practice (Ho, 1978; Dhooper and Tran, 1986). The concept of self in the Asian culture is inclusive and holistic — more of a "group self" rather than an "individual self", or a separate identity, as conceptualized in the West (Sheriff and Meemeduma, 1986; Hirayama and Hirayama, 1984). In Asian psychology, the aim of the individual is self-realization without negating (but actually complementing) the society's good. Social service and spirituality are viewed as both necessary for self-realization (Patel, 1987).

This paper has used yoga, biofeedback and auto-genic training as examples of how Eastern ways of conceptualizing life holistically can be used in treatment. Similar models to train and sensitize social workers to cue into their frame of mind and value orientation need to be developed (Singh, 1990B). Moreover, concepts from Eastern spirituality e.g. the inherent value and dignity of an individual as part of society within the cosmic reality, and potential divinity embedded in each individual, need to be integrated with the individual worth and dignity emphasized by social work. Patel (1987) observes that Vedantic "oneness" (wherein dichotomies disappear), self-realization, and inner transformation, provide
stable motivation and dynamic base for social work.

A model for developing a culture-specific treatment for Asian-Americans must address their state of stress, confusion, sense of fragmentation and bond-age involved in being caught between the two sets of rules and expectations from life — all of these with serious bearings on their self-image, spirituality, and the adjustment to society in general. The therapeutic process must focus on re Integrating the individual's personality, i.e., uniting oneself with oneself (which is also the objective of yoga). The objective is to help the individual transcend the so-called dichotomies of the world exemplified in the opposite pairs of values, i.e., the good and the bad; the end and the means; the actual and the potential; the subjective and objective; and the pure and mixed (Bahm, 1980). The social worker must be a participant in this process—not only exploring the client’s differential perception of reality and value dilemmas but also observing and exploring his/her own value system and perception. A continuous practice of this may lead the social worker to reach a point of departure in his/her own life when he/she starts seeing unity in diversity and how the problems and their solutions are interwoven like a tapestry. It is the idiosyncrasy and individuality of each thread that constitutes the uniqueness of the tapestry and separates it from common pieces of cloth (Singh, 1989). The treatment for each client thus needs to be designed and carefully worked out keeping in view the unique individuality of the client as it has emerged within its own socio-cultural and spiritual context.

References


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THEOLOGICALLY ENRICHED SOCIAL WORK: ALAN KEITH-LUCAS' APPROACH TO SOCIAL WORK AND RELIGION
Lawrence E. Ressler

It is common for persons interested in spirituality, religion and social work to bemoan the dearth of literature on the subject (e.g. Joseph, 1988; Loewenberg, 1983; Judah, 1991). While such criticism is clearly warranted, there have been those in the profession who have been thinking and writing about the subject even during these lean years.

One such person is Alan Keith-Lucas, Alumni Distinguished Professor Emeritus in Social Work, University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill. Keith's first published remarks on religion and social work can be found in the discussion section of Social Casework (1958b) in response to two articles in Social Casework and Social Work (Spencer, 1956; Spencer, 1957). During the 34 years since then, Keith, as he prefers to be called, has written extensively on the subject, albeit primarily in obscure journals and by small publishers. Nevertheless, he has developed an
important body of literature on the subject which interested persons should be familiar with. The purpose of this article is threefold: to provide some background information about Alan Keith-Lucas; to summarize some key features of his approach to social work and religion; and to provide a beginning reading list.

**Background**

Alan Keith-Lucas' long and varied life can be divided roughly into four periods (Ressler, 1990). The first period, from birth in 1910 to 1937, was spent in England where he was born, raised, received a masters degree in English literature at Cambridge University, and worked for a time as a principal of a private school for elementary children. After graduating from Western Reserve University in 1939, Keith worked full-time in social work practice for 11 years in a number of different social work jobs in child welfare. In 1950 he joined the faculty at the School of Social Work at the University of North Carolina where he worked for 25 years as professor, acting dean, founder and director of the Group Child Care Project, and consultant to children's homes. Keith retired from the University in 1976. The 17 years since retirement have been among his most productive years with respect to writing, speaking, and consulting.

Three issues have been predominant in Alan Keith-Lucas' life: children, social work, and the integration of religion and social work. Keith-Lucas' interest in the latter issue came relatively late in his development. Until the age of 43, he was not a particularly religious person nor concerned about such things. His mother was a Quaker and he was exposed to Anglicanism growing up in England, but like his father, Keith was an agnostic during the early years.

According to Keith (Ressler, 1990), three factors in mid-life influenced his turn to religion. First, he was impacted by working with denominational children's homes as a consultant. Second, he was stimulated intellectually by a Ph.D. course in political theory at Duke University which was taught from a theological basis. The third influence came from the theological instruction he received while preparing to become an elder in a church which was recovering from a pastoral dismissal.

While the positive impact of these influences took place over several years, Keith points to a specific time in 1959 when he was awestruck by the connection between Christian theology and the helping process. He was particularly impressed by the parallel between the roles of God the Father, God the Son, and God the Holy Spirit and his own tri-part model of helping: reality, empathy, and support. He had found a satisfying framework with regard to some troubling questions he had about human behavior and helping. Christianity suddenly made sense to him. The challenge which resulted is clearly visible in the first public comments he makes on the topic of religion and social work:

> It is clear that unless we are to hold that traditional religious belief...is in error, the possibility of a synthesis must and does exist. Moreover, this synthesis would be much more than an accommodation between two systems of thought and would result in enrichment of both social work and theology...The task of beginning to make such a synthesis will not, however, be an easy one. It will require an exploration, for those willing to undertake it, of what theology really teaches and not what most people take for granted nor remember from Sunday School. It may also involve some re-examination of the implicit values that lie behind our helping efforts and a consideration of whether we have not sometimes accepted as an absolute an apparent scientific truth that is in fact conditioned by the kind of question to which it purports to be the answer. It must be intellectually rigorous, conducted by people who are amateurs neither in theology nor social work. It will have to deal with the hard paradoxes rather than the "easy correspondences." (1958b, p. 287-8)


Keith's primary emphasis and contribution with respect to religion and social work has been in examining the specific relationship between Christianity and social work. This narrow focus is not due to religiocentricity but, he suggests, it is due to the fact that this is the only religion he knows well enough to comment on. Indeed, he calls for others to examine their own religions in a similar fashion (1979a, 1983, 1989a).

One of the difficulties in Keith's writings is that most of his writings pre-date the current efforts to clearly define and distinguish such terms as religion,
spirituality, spiritual, theology, and beliefs. This article will use the terms as he used them even though there may be some ambiguity or inconsistency in their use.

**Epistemology**

At the core of Keith's shift is a changed personal epistemology. Until 1953, Keith accepted what he calls "humanist, positivist utopianism" (1983). This "pattern" of beliefs, he suggests, was (and remains) the prevailing belief pattern inherent in social work. As the term connotes, this pattern of thinking includes a humanist and utopian understanding of human beings undergirded by a positivistic approach to epistemology.

Beginning in 1953, Keith rejected HPU as the only foundation for social work theory and practice. First, he rejected positivism as the only way to know (See points 11 & 12 in Table 1). While he remained supportive of the role of science, he rejected the positivistic notion that only that which can be counted is important. In contrast to positivism, which minimizes or denies the importance of religious beliefs, Keith began to incorporate religious beliefs feeling that they can make a positive contribution to understanding human behavior. In other words, Keith continued to accept the use of empirical evidence and logic as tools for knowing while also placing value on religious tools for knowing including the Bible, prayer, and theological thinking.

Furthermore, Keith became convinced that social work theories and practice, like all theories and practice, involve belief systems which posit explanations about the nature of human beings, society, the universe, why problems exist, what can and what should be done about them, and so on. Humanism and utopianism, he concluded, are the belief systems incorporated in most present-day social work theories. Through the influences described above, Keith found that Christian beliefs provided satisfying answers to some nagging questions he had which HPU had not been able to answer up to that point. It is just as appropriate, he became convinced, to begin with Christian beliefs as non-religious beliefs (1983, 1985b).

Just as Keith argues that positivism has its limits, so he argues that religious beliefs, while useful, are limited. The enrichment model he promotes holds that both disciplines have something to offer the other. He states, "[This] does not assert for one moment that one can find in religion all the answers. That has been the error of many religious groups. The pragmatics of social work and the insights of religion need to illumine each other" (1960a, p. 90).

**A Typology of Belief Systems**

Keith has developed a limited but useful typology of belief systems which is critical to understanding his enrichment model. This typology is presented most fully in a brief monograph entitled The Client's Religion and Your Own Beliefs in the Helping Processes (1983). In addition to HPU and one other general religious system which he labels cultic religiousists, a catch-all category characterized by non-Christian religious belief systems, Keith identifies four Christian belief patterns: Christianity of Ethics, Christianity of Law, Christianity of Morality, and Christianity of Grace. According to Keith, the central characteristic of Ethical Christianity is its emphasis on the exemplary ethical behavior of Jesus, whereas legalism dominates the Christianity of Law, punitive judgmentalism typifies Christianity of Morality, and love is at the center of Christianity of Grace.

The distinction between Christian belief systems is fundamental to understanding Keith's integration of Christianity and social work. Christian theology, he argues, is not a uniform phenomenon. Some Christian belief systems are more conducive to social work than others; Christianity of Morality is the least compatible. Moralistic Christianity, which he suggests is responsible for stimulating the social work criticism leveled against Christianity, is criticized quite appropriately. The pessimistic, judgmental, punitive approach to people and society it espouses, he agrees, is not helpful. It is, he believes, bad Christian theology which leads to bad helping.

The pattern of belief which undergirds his synthesis of Christianity and social work is the Christianity of Grace position. According to Keith, Christianity of Grace holds that all things were created by a Creator who created a perfect creation. Creation is now in turmoil, however, due to humans getting out of touch with the intent of the Creator (which is Keith's definition for sin). God's response to the turmoil has been one of grace. He states, "Man (sic), in the midst of the sin, was loved, forgiven, redeemed by the Intender, who is even said to have suffered human death of a particularly unpleasant sort — execution as a criminal — on his account. Out of gratitude for this, man tries to keep the Law, calling on the Intender for help when this proves difficult" (1983, p. 12).

A summary of Keith's personal philosophy as it relates to social work is summarized in Table 1. While he uses very little theological language in the list, the influence of the Christianity of Grace pattern of beliefs is clearly evident.

**The Helping Process**

A key part of Keith's transformation to theologically enriched social work was the link he saw be-
tween how humans help one another (as he understands it) and how God helps humans in turmoil (as Christianity of Grace theology understands it). To help another human, Keith suggests, one must assist the person to face reality, be empathetic about the client’s situation, and be supportive as he or she works to bring about changes (1972, 1983, 1983a, 1985c, 1985b, 1985d, 1989a). These conditions are similar to the Christian triune understanding of the persons of God the Father, God the Son (Jesus), and God the Holy Spirit. God the Father, viewed as the creator of all things, corresponds with helping those in need face the reality of their situation. The incarnation of Jesus and his willingness to live, suffer, and die to help a troubled creation is a divine illustration of empathy at work, a fundamental part of the helping process in Keith’s model. Finally, the continuing presence of the Holy Spirit in the life of the Christian is comparable to the role of being supportive when helping people in need.

Furthermore, Keith suggests, the process of receiving human help is similar to receiving divine help. To be helped, a person in need must recognize there is a problem, be willing to admit it to another, allow others (including social workers) to be involved, and risk changing which involves the unknown. This process, Keith believes, is similar to what the church calls repentance, confession, submission and faith (1960, 1965c, 1983, 1989a).

Helping Attributes and Attitudes

Christianity of Grace theology, Keith believes, encourages a number of attributes and attitudes which enhance helping (1965a, 1965c, 1983, 1985b, 1985c, 1989a). Christianity of Grace first engenders a humble helping attitude. The belief that all are fallen should result in a personal humility so that clients needing help are approached with a sense of comradeship rather than superiority. In addition, since Christians of Grace have experienced unconditional love, they should remain committed to their clients regardless of the condition the person is in or the behavior they exhibit.

A Christianity of Grace view of the human condition provides a balanced foundation for helping. The concepts of a perfect creation, sin, and grace enable social workers to neither deny the reality of problems nor lead to despair when they are confronted. They provide a framework for hopefulness while avoiding becoming utopian. Such a belief system encourages social workers to be neither surprised that problems exist nor discouraged by client or social failure. Furthermore, no matter how noble the cause or right the idea, Christians of Grace understand that distortions tend to follow and corrections will be necessary. Finally, Christianity of Grace theology provides a firm foundation for client self-determination believing that choosing is a divinely ordained human right and responsibility.

The Church and Social Welfare

Keith has also written frequently about the relationship of the church and social welfare (1958a, 1960d, 1962a, 1962b, 1962c, 1963a, 1964, 1965b, 1985d, 1974, 1979a, 1979c). Just as Christian beliefs enlighten the helping process, he believes it has implications for social policies and programs. These ideas are laid out most clearly in a book entitled The Church and Social Welfare (1962d). As he holds that different Christian belief patterns impact the helping process differently, so they impact social issues and social welfare differently.

Keith identifies what he calls three great heresies in Christian theology (1962d, 1973). The first heresy, the medieval heresy, encouraged charity for personal salvation. The second heresy, the moralistic heresy, identified poverty with moral failure, and wealth with being among the elect, resulting in restrictive, punitive services. The third heresy, the modernist heresy, holds that people are naturally good, needing only guidance and advice from the educated and successful. Material need, in this way of thinking, is viewed as less important than counseling and good examples.

The relationship between the church and welfare which Keith endorses revolves around the Christianity of Grace pattern of beliefs. It values both the spiritual dimensions of life and the material. The challenge of the church, Keith holds, is “to show that the amazing gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ has relevance to the problem of social need” (p.16, 1992d). Among the guidelines he suggests in The Church and Social Welfare are the following: the use of law for judgement; supporting freedom of choice within the law; the need to assert belief in the possibility of positive change even for the most unlikely; the importance of divorcing welfare from morality; the necessity of championing adequate provision for those in need; rightness of emphasizing stewardship rather than pity; and importance of advocating professional training and knowledge.

Keith also speaks frequently to the issue of church sponsored social services (1958a, 1960d, 1962a, 1963a, 1979a). While he holds that the church ought to be providing services, he suggests the services should be limited to meeting needs other services aren’t meeting. Speaking directly to the issue in an article entitled “Is Welfare the Church’s Business” (1964), Keith states his position in this way:

Good and strong reasons for the continu-
ance and evolution of a social service under church auspices are seen when the
church finds for itself or adapts its service either to fulfilling a special need that the
state or community has not touched, or where, although in a way “duplicating”
other services, it does so in such a manner as to provide leadership in the field or
witness to a particular and important truth. (p 35)

Recommended Reading List

Many of Alan Keith-Lucas’s publications are in small, difficult to find journals or were published by
publishers with limited circulation. Following are some of the more available and important publications
which contain many of his insights:

Essays from more than Fifty Years in Social Work (1980a). This book is a collection of 14 previously unpublished essays dealing with family and child welfare issues, the integration of faith and social work practice, and social work and social workers. Published by his friends in honor of 50 years in social work, this anthology gives great insight into the thought of Keith-Lucas including, he suggests in the preface, his more unconventional thoughts. A limited number of copies of this book are still available.

Giving and Taking Help (1972). This book, considered by some to be a classic, describes Keith’s insights into the helping process. He concludes with a chapter entitled “Helping and Religious Belief” which summarizes the Christian religious beliefs which he holds contribute to healthy helping.

The Church and Social Welfare (1982d). This book describes Keith-Lucas’ vision for the role of the church in the provision of social services. It is out of print, but it is available at many libraries.

The Client’s Religion and Your Own Beliefs in the Helping Process (1983). This brief monograph, addressed originally to social workers at the Veteran’s Administration Medical Center, lays out Keith-Lucas’ thoughts on the practical significance of belief systems. Particularly helpful is a chart in which he compares HPU, cultic religionists, and the four Christian belief systems. A limited number of these monographs are still available.

So You Want to be a Social Worker: A Primer for the Christian Student (1985b). This brief monograph is addressed to young aspiring Christian social work students. It presents many of his convictions about the integration of Christianity and social work in a clear concise fashion. He briefly addresses some of the difficult integration issues including the matter of witnessing and working in a secular agency.

Biblical Insights Into the Helping Process (1991). This 35 minute video presents an Alan Keith-Lucas lecture on the insights from the Bible which enlighten helping. The lecture is a distillation of many of the ideas he has on the positive relationship between Christianity and helping.

Conclusion

Alan Keith-Lucas presents a distinctive view of religion and social work. In contrast to social work theory as it has developed in the 20th century which minimizes or dismisses the relevance of religious beliefs, Keith asserts that religious beliefs may contribute as much or more to understanding human behavior and to helping as non-religious beliefs. Religious beliefs, he agrees, can misunderstand human behavior and hinder the helping process, but they also contribute to it. Furthermore, Keith suggests, theological metaphors and religious experience may help religious social workers in their helping.

Keith presents a balanced approach to the integration of religion and empirically-based social work. Empirical evidence is valued but so are religious beliefs. Religion and empirically-based social work are treated as distinct entities, but entities which can illuminate each other.

Theologically enriched social work may be controversial because it raises the issue of monolithic versus pluralistic approaches to social work theory and practice. If Christian beliefs are permitted to influence social work theory and practice, then all other religions should be permitted to do the same. Some may object to the ideological pluralism which results from such openness.

This is an issue which needs to be discussed and studied. The clients that social workers work with clearly hold varying beliefs. Should the profession of social work strive for one theory of social work and force abandonment of competing belief systems, or should it encourage the development of different theories of social work, each with a shared commitment to empirical outcome studies? In what ways would clients benefit or be harmed if there were numerous clearly expressed competing religious approaches to helping? In what ways would Zen enhanced social work differ from agnostic enhanced social work, or New Age enhanced social work? Are there times when a practicing Jewish social worker, a Hindu social worker, a Marxist social worker would be more helpful to a client who is a practicing Jew, Hindu, or Marxist. When are religious beliefs unimportant or harmful? Should some aspects of our service delivery system be organized around religious belief systems?
For years the profession has focused on the dangers of social workers who take their religious beliefs seriously. Keith has strived for 34 years to find the positive connections between Christianity and social work. Maybe it is time the profession change its perspective on religion and encourage religious social workers to carry on the work that Keith has begun.

TABLE 1
ALAN KEITH-LUCAS' PHILOSOPHICAL FRAME

1. Human beings are of infinite worth, irrespective of gender, race, age or behavior.
2. At the same time human beings, including myself, are fallible, limited creatures. They are not capable, and never will be, of solving all their problems or of creating the perfect society. Nevertheless they are sometimes capable, with appropriate help, of transcending their nature in acts of courage and compassion.
3. As a fallible being myself I have no right to pass moral judgements on others, to assume authority over them except as mandated by law, or to imagine that I know everything about them.
4. Human beings have been endowed with the faculty of choice, which must not be denied them except by due process of law, or where their actions or threatened actions are demonstrably gravely harmful to others or self-destructive, or where they voluntarily surrender this right for a prescribed purpose.
5. They are, however, responsible for the consequences of their choices, and may need help in perceiving what these are likely to be.
6. No person is beyond help, although at this time we may not have the knowledge or skill to help.
7. All programs and policies that deprecate people, treat them as objects rather than subjects, seek to impose on them behavior not mandated by law, manipulate them without their knowledge and consent or deny them choices permitted others in our society, are to be avoided or resisted.
8. Our society is far from perfect, and it is not my business to act as its representative, but rather to help people determine their relationship to it.
9. Love, understanding and compassion are the sources of well-being and acceptable behavior, rather than the reward for them.
10. While force is sometimes the quickest way of obtaining an immediate result, in the long run it is self-defeating. Compassion, understanding and concern are the eventual victors.
11. The social sciences provide much useful knowledge for practice, but cannot explain all phenomena and their pronouncement need constantly to be evaluated in terms of the values they subsume.
12. There are outcomes to human beings that cannot be measured statistically as well as those which can.
13. All human institutions, ideals and commitments are liable to subtle perversion of their values, unless these are constantly examined. The new is not necessarily the best, nor does new knowledge always invalidate the old.
14. Professional education and training in self-discipline are indispensable to good social work.
15. As a Christian committed to the dissemination of what I believe to be the truth, my task as a social worker is not so much to convince others of this truth, as to provide them with the experience of being loved, forgiven and cared for so that the Good News I believe in may be a credible option for them. (1985b, pp. 34-35.)

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CHURCH SOCIAL WORK:
A BOOK REVIEW
Alan Keith-Lucas

This is the second full-length book to be published by the North American Association of Christians in Social Work. The book has a strong Baptist background — all but one of the essayists work for a Baptist church or agency. It is none the worse for that, but it would have been valuable to represent more variety in church structures, including Catholic social work which does have a distinct identity of its own. The historical material also did not address the insights of the Church Fathers, from Chrysostom to Aquinas, or of the great papal encyclicals such as Rerum Novarum and Quadragesimo Anno, which had so much to say about the mission of the church. But if we consider the church to be a local and probably a fairly autonomous group, the book has much to offer.

Church social work, as Dr. Garland defines it, is not a field such as child welfare, work with aging, or medical social work; it is social work of any description in the context of an organized church. As such it is comparable, say, to social work in a school system or on a military base. The host organization has other goals than social work, although social work may in fact make it more possible for it to achieve its mission. This is not therefore a book on Christian social work, which Dr. Garland doubts exists. I would disagree with her here. I do think that social work predicated on a Christian view of the universe and humanity’s place in it is different from that based on secular presuppositions, just as in earlier days of social work’s ideological war, when Rankian and Freudian social work were different. And I cannot imagine a social worker in a church setting not sharing, or at least respecting, the church’s primary mission. Despite Dr. Garland’s doubt, it seems these essayists might agree with me. In fact, Dr. Garland herself insists that a church children’s agency does not simply respond to need but also acts on its redemptive and reconciliatory mission. Church social work is not a stop-gap, making up for the deficiencies of an imperfect secular system. It is, or should be, what enables a church to implement the second half of the Great Commandment — to love one’s neighbor as one’s self.

As is perhaps natural in a collection of essays, it is not entirely clear, to this reviewer at least, to whom this book is addressed. Certainly it addresses the professional social worker. The essays are in scholarly form and the references abundant. Also, perhaps it addresses the social worker who is to some extent theologically literate. One or two of the essays are rather hard to read at first, although they usually manage to end in valuable insights. But anyone, and in particular volunteers, with whom church social work is largely concerned, would profit by Jane Ferguson’s account of her work at the First Baptist Church of Montgomery, Alabama. This is an absolute gem of an essay; it alone makes the book worth publishing. It is down to earth, and deals with the real problems of social work in a church setting - for example, lack of knowledge of what a social worker does, suspicion from secular colleagues of the church’s intentions, the use and non-use of religious language, attitudes in the congregation towards those whose life-styles are seen as sinful. Yet it is a triumphant story and contains, incidentally, the best theological base, or perhaps I should say Biblical imperative, for a church’s social ministry that I have seen. It stresses the importance of planning and preparation. Ms. Ferguson sees herself as both social worker and minister and yet there is no confusion of roles. She sees her own function quite clearly. And there’s both a warmth and a humility about this essay, despite its academic respectability, which is most endearing.

This is not to down-grade the other six contributions. All of them do have something to say. I recommend the book as a whole to teachers in social work programs and to serious students who see church social work as something they would like to do. Its bibliographies, too, are valuable and pin-point resources that might otherwise be ignored.

*Alan Keith-Lucas is Alumni Distinguished Professor Emeritus, University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill.

INTERNATIONAL NETWORKING

Edward R. Canda

International Conferencing

The Council on Social Work Education and the International Association of Schools of Social Work sponsored the 26th International Congress of Schools of Social Work in Washington D.C., from July 16-19, 1992. I was invited by the conference program chair to co-present a one-day institute on “Spirituality and Social Work: Issues for Teaching and Curriculum Development.” Professor Gokarn, from India, originally was scheduled to present, but was unable to attend. This was an excellent opportunity to brainstorm and soul-search with colleagues from many countries. The institute led to further group discussion dealing with the internationalization of the Society for Spirituality and Social Work. Many attendees at my presentation on “Contemporary
Asian Spiritual Perspectives on Human Service," also expressed an interest in networking. These activities involved about 50 people. Those who expressed interest in linking with SSSW came from Austria, Canada, India, Korea, Philippines, Saudi Arabia, South Africa, Taiwan, and the USA. In order to facilitate continuation of dialogue between these people, SSSW will send complimentary copies of this issue along with an invitation to contribute notifications of related activities beyond the USA.

The workshop format included four detailed presentations, brief summaries of current work by other participants, and much open discussion. Summaries of the four detailed presentations follow. (Thanks to Patrick O'Brien of the SSSW Advisory Group for contributing his notes.)

Curriculum Issues

I began the workshop with an historical overview of connections, controversies, and current efforts of SSSW within the United States. I then presented a comparative methodology for teaching about religious and spiritual content in social work courses, including modules for content dispersed throughout the curriculum and a specialized practice course. As examples, I presented an HBSE learning module on assessment of visionary experiences and reviewed a syllabus for "Spiritual Dimensions of Social Work Practice," an MSW practice elective at the University of Kansas. This teaching approach links personal self-reflection, experiential exercises, cognitive content on diverse spiritual perspectives, and in-class dialogue.

Professor Lionel Louw, University of Cape Town, South Africa, presented a stimulating overview of religious conflict and social action in a paper, "Spirituality as a Base for Social Justice and Change in South Africa." This serves as an excellent example of linking spirituality, cultural variation, and politics in educational content. He explained that 90% of the South African population claims a religious affiliation, the vast majority being Christian. A grave dilemma results from the contradictory positions of pro-apartheid and anti-apartheid Christians. On the one hand, the white Dutch Reform Church established support for apartheid as a theological position in 1857. The South African Council of Churches is anti-apartheid. Even the world-wide Reform Church has excluded the white Dutch Reform church from membership due to its apartheid stance. Therefore, Christians of different denominations and political orientations come into conflict. Prof. Louw emphasized that the anti-apartheid Christian groups in South Africa have been able to use their spiritually-based social justice concern to establish inter-religious dialogue and cooperation for social action.

Professor Ibrahim Ragab, of Imam M.I.S. Islamic University in Riyadh, Saudi Arabia, challenged the positivist and secularistic orientation of social work education, research, and practice in a paper, "Urgently Needed: Scientific Revolution in Social Work." Professor Ragab started by pointing out the philosophical flaws of positivistic science (e.g. linear causality, reductionism, mechanistic determinism) that influence social work research, theory, and research-based practice. He advocates for a link between spiritually-based approaches to inquiry and conventional scientific approaches. Using the Judeo-Christian-Islamic theological stream as an underpinning, Prof. Ragab suggests that a holistic methodology of inquiry should include triangulation between the revealed truths of scripture (the Koran), empirical observation and testing, and rational analysis. Since he views Koranic scripture to be inerrant, the priority for truth-testing is placed on Koranic evidence, subject to religious scholarship and dialogue.

Next, Professor William Hutchison of Saint Louis University gave an overview of his course syllabus, "Religious and Value Dimensions of Social Welfare and Social Work Practice." He emphasizes issues of social policy, especially the application of democratic principles to spiritually-sensitive social work in particular and American social life in general. His course illustrates a connection of a Catholic perspective on ecumenism and social justice with professional and national commitments to democracy and religious pluralism.

Need for International Networking

General discussion emphasized the need for networking among social workers who struggle with the connection between spirituality and social work in different national contexts. Some participants felt relieved to discover that precedence for such linkage is being established in the USA. None of the participants were aware of similar non-sectarian professional efforts in other countries. However, sectarian organizations as well as independent individuals and groups are dealing with similar issues. We can learn from each others’ experiences and support a process of global spiritual clarification among social workers.

Several themes to be considered in this effort emerged: self determination versus religious proselytization; separation between church and state; divorce between scientific and spiritual/religious ways of knowing; difficulty finding appropriate language for professional discussion of spirituality; spiritual diversity as source of conflict and resource for creativity; developing a theory of suffering; inclusive versus exclusive spiritual perspectives; transpersonal
theory applied to social work; neglect of Native American spiritual perspectives; feminist concerns.

A Global Initiative

Dr. Vera Mehta, Secretary-General of the International Association of Schools of Social Work (Vienna), asked us to hold a special networking session to discuss UNESCO’s request for input to a United Nations draft policy document that would advocate for integration of spiritual and religious values into education at an inter-government level. This presents the challenge of accommodating spiritual diversity on a global scale. In the subsequent networking session dedicated to this task, the group seemed to reach a consensus about several themes that should be addressed in such a global statement on spirituality in education. (Thanks to Charles deWatteville for sharing his notes.) These themes suggest a direction for resolving the difficulties identified in the previous discussion. Following is my paraphrase of this discussion.

A global perspective on spirituality should be:

1) holistic — each individual needs to be understood as a whole, including bio-psycho-social-spiritual aspects; the person needs to be understood in relationship with all things, human and nonhuman; the distinctiveness of each individual is important, and so is the basic unity and interrelatedness of all; this holistic spiritual understanding implies an ethic of mutual responsibility among all people and the natural ecology; it also implies an ethic of granting respect and dignity to every individual.

2) supportive of spiritual diversity — diverse religious and nonreligious spiritual perspectives need to be recognized and their right to exist must be supported; respectful interreligious dialogue is needed urgently in order to foster mutual understanding, establish common spiritual ground, and mediate conflict; principles of democracy need to be applied in regard to spirituality; diverse understandings of ultimate reality, theistic or otherwise, need to be understood, including as they change for individuals throughout the life span; people’s distinctive faith experiences and positions deserve respect.

3) social justice oriented — spiritually-based compassion needs to extend to all people, especially those afflicted by war, oppression, poverty, and discrimination; the founders of various religious traditions should be studied for their examples as “the first social workers,” those who worked for the material, social, and spiritual uplift of humanity; spirituality needs to link personal growth with action for social change.

If you have further ideas you would like to offer to Dr. Mehta, you can write to her at: Dr. Vera Mehta, Secretary General, International Association of Schools of Social Work, Secretariat, Palais Palffy, Josefstalz 6, A-1010 Vienna, Austria.

International Contrast

One of the most fascinating international contrasts concerning spirituality and social work emerged from discussions with social work scholars from Saudi Arabia, Prof. Ibrahim Ragab and Ms. Asaf Dabagh, a doctoral student, both of Imam University in Riyadh. The USA and Saudi Arabia appear to share a common challenge of building a new perspective on spiritually-sensitive social work. Despite the historical links of our philanthropic systems to various religious roots (i.e. Judaism, Christianity, and Islam), both countries’ professional social work and social welfare systems have been developing along secular lines in recent time.

A contrast emerges from the different religious contexts. Since the United States is highly pluralistic religiously and spiritually, the Society for Spirituality and Social Work has been promoting a nonsectarian approach to spirituality that is inclusive of spiritual diversity as a basis for spiritually-sensitive social work. However, since Saudi Arabia is primarily Islamic, a different approach is advocated by Ragab and Dabagh. In accord with Islamic principles, separation between “church and state” is not desirable. In their view, all of life ought to be infused with Islamic spirituality, both personal and political dimensions. Thus, their challenge is to establish a thoroughly Islamicized social work. They recommend a book that helps to explain this position: The Islamization of Knowledge, written and published by The International Institute of Islamic Thought, 1989, in Herndon, Virginia.

This contrast suggests an analogy between the challenge facing social work in the United States and the challenge facing social work on a global level. Within the United States, it is necessary to develop an inclusive approach to spirituality that recognizes both nonreligious and religion-specific variations. On a global level, it is necessary to develop an approach that recognizes national contexts which are monoreligious or theocratic as well as those which are spiritually pluralistic and nonsectarian in government. Of course, there are few countries that truly are monoreligious; even where one religion is pervasive, there are likely to be various spiritual perspectives within it. As with the USA situation, this involves dealing with potential controversy between conflicting spiritual positions and situations in which certain groups attempt to dominate others.

Resolution is only possible if all these disparate positions can be brought together in dialogue. One of the most enjoyable aspects of the international dia-
logue at this conference was the willingness of everyone to relate to each other in a congenial, respectful manner, demonstrating sincere interest in learning from each other. If social workers throughout the world could engage in such spiritual sharing, we might make an important contribution to world peace.

Next Steps

In order to move ahead with international dialogue, the SSSW will send ten free copies to each of the IASSW/CSWE spirituality networking participants. Each participant is asked to distribute extra copies (and to make more if possible) to colleagues in other countries. Participants also agreed to notify me of new developments on spiritually-sensitive social work in their countries. Hopefully, this will encourage ongoing interchange and conferencing. I am also sending this report, along with other reference materials from the SSSW, to Dr. Vera Mehta in order to assist her efforts with UNESCO. I will make a formal request of the various international social work organizations to continue to encourage networking on spirituality through their conferences and journals (e.g., *International Social Work and Social Development Issues*). Finally, I will send a call for articles to colleagues around the world in order to encourage manuscript submission for publication. It would be helpful if current members of SSSW would send copies of this journal to social workers in other countries, in order to expand the network.

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**SPIRITUALITY AND SOCIAL WORK: 1992 BIBLIOGRAPHIC UPDATE**

**Edward R. Canda**

**Introduction**

This bibliography is intended as a resource for social workers and other helping professionals who are conducting research on the connections between spirituality, religion, social work, and social welfare. It serves as an expansion of the Topical Bibliography on Religion and Social Work provided in volume 1, issue 1 of *The Spirituality and Social Work Communicator* (1990) and the 1991 update. The bibliography is arranged according to topical categories in order to assist comparative study. Topical category names have been revised to reflect current themes in social work scholarship. Entries have been assigned to categories according to the spiritual perspective predominant in each text. Whenever possible, the bibliographer has read the full article or book; however, in some cases decisions were based on reading of an abstract or title. Topical categories are: Asian and East/West Synthetic Perspectives; Christian Perspectives; Existentialist Perspectives; Jewish Perspectives; Shamanic, Spiritist and Native American Perspectives; Nonsectarian or General Perspectives; Other. Thanks to Cathleen Lewandowski, LMSW, ACSW, for assistance compiling this bibliography.

**A. Asian and East/West Synthetic Perspectives**


**B. Christian Perspectives**


C. Existentialist Perspectives

None.

D. Jewish Perspectives


E. Shamanic, Spiritist, and Native American Perspectives


F. Nonsectarian or General Perspectives


G. Other Perspectives


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