

Spiritual Care Community of Practice

Supporting Existential Reflection and Meaning-Making Part 1



Facilitator:
Diana Vincze, Pallium Canada

Presenters:
Sheila Atkinson, RP, MDiv
Christine Enfield, M.Div.

Date: September 19, 2023

Territorial Honouring

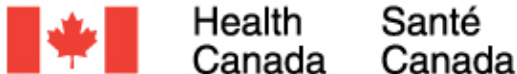


The Palliative Care ECHO Project

The Palliative Care ECHO Project is a 5-year national initiative to cultivate communities of practice and establish continuous professional development among health care providers across Canada who care for patients with life-limiting illness.

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The Palliative Care ECHO Project is supported by a financial contribution from Health Canada. The views expressed herein do not necessarily represent the views of Health Canada.



LEAP Core

- Interprofessional course that focuses on the essential competencies to provide a palliative care approach.
- Taught by local experts who are experienced palliative care clinicians and educators.
- Delivered online or in-person.
- Ideal for any health care professional (e.g., physician, nurse, pharmacist, social worker, etc.) who provides care for patients with life-threatening and progressive life-limiting illnesses.
- Accredited by the CFPC and Royal College.



Learn more about the course and topics covered by visiting

www.pallium.ca/course/leap-core

Overview of Sessions

Session #	Session Title	Date/ Time
Session 1	Introduction	June 28, 2023 from 1-2pm ET
Session 2	Supporting Existential Reflection and Meaning-Making Part 1	September 19, 2023 from 1-2pm ET
Session 3	Supporting Existential Reflection and Meaning-Making Part 2	October 25, 2023 from 1-2pm ET
Session 4	Spirituality of Grief and Bereavement	November 22, 2023 from 1-2pm ET
Session 5	Reinventing Ritual, Narrative Presence, and the Spiritual Nature of the Grief Journey	December 13, 2023 from 1-2pm ET

Welcome and Reminders

- Please introduce yourself in the chat!
- Your microphones are muted. There will be time at the end of the session when you can unmute yourself for questions and discussion.
- You are welcome to use the chat function to ask questions and add comments.
- Remember not to disclose any Personal Health Information (PHI) during the session.
- This session is being recorded and will be emailed to registrants within the next week.

Disclosure

Relationship with Financial Sponsors:

Pallium Canada

- Not-for-profit
- Funded by Health Canada

Disclosure

This program has received financial support from:

- Health Canada in the form of a contribution program
- Generates funds to support operations and R&D from Pallium Pocketbook sales and course registration Fees

Facilitator/ Presenters/ Panelists:

Diana Vincze: Nothing to disclose.

Sheila Atkinson: Nothing to disclose.

Oceanna Hall: Nothing to disclose.

Christine Enfield: Nothing to disclose.

Peter Barnes: Nothing to disclose.

Disclosure

Mitigating Potential Biases:

- The scientific planning committee had complete independent control over the development of course content.

Introductions

Facilitator

Diana Vincze

Palliative Care ECHO Project Manager, Pallium Canada

Presenters/ Panelists

Sheila Atkinson, RP, MDiv

Certified Spiritual Care Practitioner (CASC), Registered Psychotherapist (CRPO), Grief Support Coordinator, Pathways Grief Support Program, Paediatric Advanced Care Team (PACT), SickKids, Toronto, ON

Oceanna Hall, M.Ed, M.Div, RCH

Spiritual Health Practitioner
M.Div., M.Ed., RCH, Certified CASC Clinical Specialist
End of Life, Palliative, MAiD and Bereavement
Spiritual Health Practitioner, Island Health Authority,
Saanich Peninsula Hospital Vancouver Island, BC

Christine Enfield, M.Div.

Spiritual Health Practitioner, Tertiary Palliative Care Unit,
Covenant Health, Edmonton, Certified Spiritual Care
Practitioner (CASC/ACSS)

Peter Barnes, D.Min, CCC, SEP

Psychospiritual Therapist
Spiritual Pathways, Private Practice. CASC/ACSS (certified)
CCPA (certified)

Support Team

Aliya Mamdeen

Program Delivery Officer, Pallium Canada

Session Learning Objectives

Upon completing the session, participants will be able to:

- Use Conversational tools to assess Spiritual Health needs in Palliative and Bereavement care.
- Support Existential Reflection and Meaning-Making.

Tools used to assess Spiritual Health



Our Spirituality: The Root of our Existential Reflection

- Geneva definition of **Spirituality** (2013)

"Spirituality is the aspect of humanity that refers to the way individuals seek and express meaning and purpose and the way they experience their connectedness to the moment, to self, to others, to nature, and to the significant or sacred."

- We are all spiritual beings:
 - We think about passion and purpose, what matters most to us.
 - We wonder about meaning and try to make sense of things - hard and beautiful things.
 - We are drawn to connection and relationship.

Total Pain

I realized that we needed not only better pain control but better overall care. People needed the space to be themselves. I coined the term “total pain”, from my understanding that dying people have physical, spiritual, psychological, and social pain that must be treated. I have been working on that ever since.

Dame Cicely Saunders, Founder of Hospice Movement

“Illness is a spiritual event; thus, caring for the ill and suffering becomes spiritual practice.”

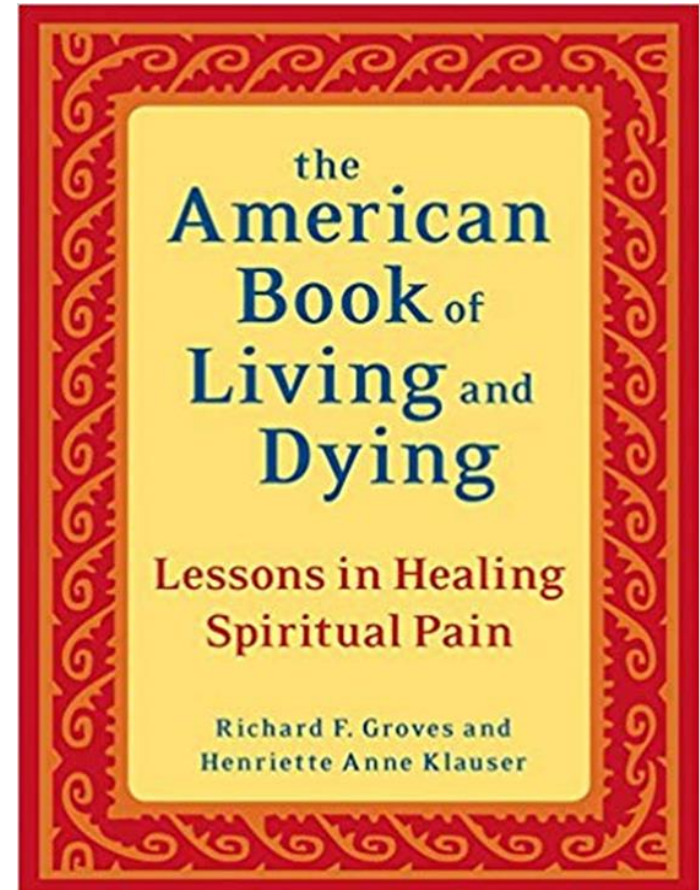
Christina Puchalski



Wisdom from sacred art of dying traditions of antiquity:

1. Diagnosing pain is about holy listening rather than compulsive fixing.
2. Spiritual suffering and physical pain are always interrelated.

Groves and Klauser, *American Book of Living and Dying* (2009)





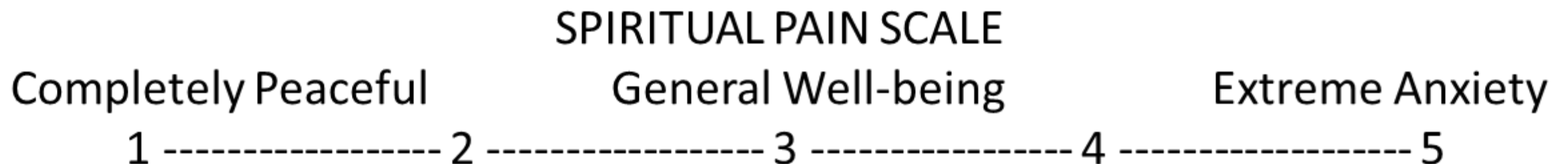
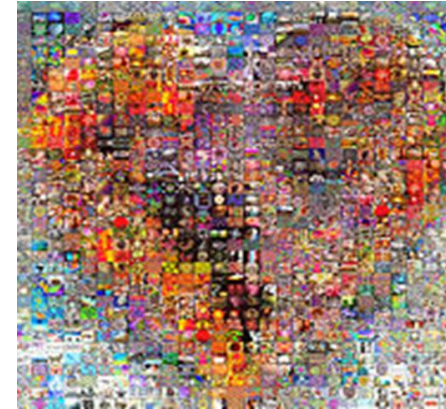
Disease is a language that offers data about our inner as well as our outer world. Suffering does not have to end in hopelessness. *When curing is no longer an option, healing is always possible.*

Groves and Klauser, *American Book of Living and Dying* (2009)

Taking a “Spiritual Pulse”

How are you within?

- Dame Cicely Saunders




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Spiritual Health Assessment: Healing through self-awareness

SPIRITUAL HEALTH ASSESSMENT
Healing through Self Awareness

Based on "Healing the Four Dimensions of Spiritual Pain" in the classical Sacred Art of Living & Dying tradition



NAME/CARE RECEIVER _____ CARE GIVER (optional) _____
DATE _____ TIME _____ LOCATION _____

INSTRUCTIONS

- Quiet yourself and take a moment for reflection.
- Circle the deepest truth that describes "How you are within yourself" today.
- Use the optional questions as a guide for insight.
- Record and compare your answers at regular intervals in order to discover patterns of spiritual health or distress.
- Trust that awareness is the first step towards healing. Instead of trying to fix spiritual pain, it only needs to be listened to and received.

MEANING

1	2	3	4	5
Life is filled with purpose and meaning		I feel generally motivated		Life has become meaningless

What is giving me life and energy right now? _____
Who or what keeps me from being fully alive? _____

FORGIVENESS

1	2	3	4	5
I feel a deep sense of reconciliation towards myself and others		There are no outstanding issues that are calling for forgiveness in my life		I feel a strong sense of un-forgiveness towards myself and/or another

Who or what do I need to forgive? _____
From whom do I need to seek forgiveness? _____

RELATEDNESS

1	2	3	4	5
I feel a strong sense of connection with the persons and things that matter most to me		Most important areas of my life seem balanced		I feel seriously alienated from someone/thing that is important to me

Who or what means the most to me? _____
Who or what do I fear losing? _____

HOPE

1	2	3	4	5
I feel hope-filled and optimistic		I generally trust what the future holds for me		I am experiencing deep depression and hopelessness

What dreams keep me alive? _____
Why might I feel depressed or hopeless? _____

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- **MEANING**
- **FORGIVENESS**
- **RELATEDNESS**
- **HOPE**

Sacred Art of Living Center
(2018) www.sacredartofliving.org

Meaning Pain

Life is filled
with purpose
and meaning

I feel generally
motivated

Life has become
meaningless

1 ----- 2 ----- 3 ----- 4 ----- 5

What is giving me life and energy right now?
Who or what keeps me from being fully alive?

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Forgiveness Pain

I feel a deep sense of reconciliation toward myself and others

There are no outstanding issues that are calling for forgiveness in my life

I feel a strong sense of unforgiveness toward myself and/or another

1 ----- 2 ----- 3 ----- 4 ----- 5

Who or what do i need to forgive?
From whom do I need to seek forgiveness?

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Relatedness Pain

I feel a strong sense of connection with the persons and things that matter most to me

The most important areas of my life seem balanced

I feel seriously alienated from someone/thing that is important to me

1 ----- 2 ----- 3 ----- 4 ----- 5

Who or what means the most to me?
Who or what do I fear losing?

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Hope Pain

I feel hope-filled
and optimistic.

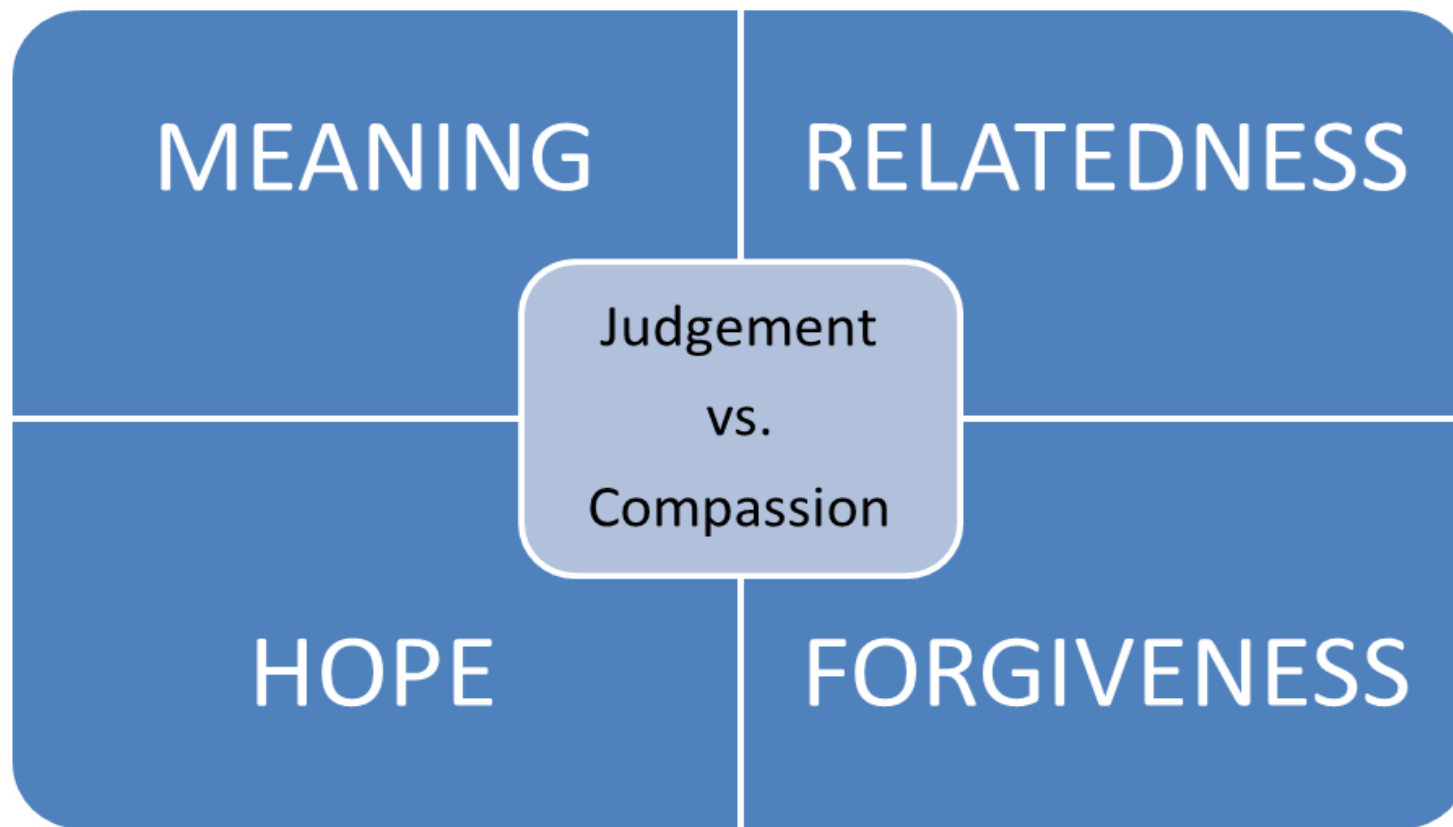
I generally
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for me

I am
experiencing
deep
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hopelessness

1 ----- 2 ----- 3 ----- 4 ----- 5

What dreams keep me alive?
Why might I feel depressed or hopeless?

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After identifying the primary area of spiritual pain...to the degree that there is that suffering and to the degree that there is compassion rather than judgement for that suffering, there is a possibility of healing and transformation.

Care Has No Recipe

Only by recognizing the differences in our experiences can we begin to care for each other.

Terms like pain or loss have no reality until they are filled in with an ill person's own experience. Witnessing the particulars of that experience, and recognizing all its differences, is care.

Arthur Frank, *At the Will of the Body* (2002)

Support Existential Reflection and Meaning-Making



Language for Spirituality

- Language of meaning making (how we try to make sense of things), purpose, struggle
- Language of mystery (the invisible things we can't explain)
- Our way of looking at life, set of beliefs or guidelines, philosophy of life
- Existential themes (“beyond us” themes)

Some Ways People Think about Death

- Humanist view
 - “Life is here and now.”
- After-life view
 - “I am going to a safe and beautiful place.”
- Journey view
 - “The soul goes on a journey”
- Agnostic view
 - “I do not know but I wonder...”

Spiritual themes in broad secular language

- Why is this happening?
- What does this mean?
- What matters most to me?

- What holds everything together for you/your family? (love at the centre of our family, shared beliefs, shared values...)
- Are there some important words that you need to have someone say when your person dies? (words of love, words of gratitude, words of sending, words of committing her into safe keeping, words of sending him on his journey to a next place)

Spiritual Health & Listening for Spiritual Needs

- If we assume we are all spiritual beings, then we all have spiritual needs, and the need for spiritual health to be addressed (though some may not perceive or name those needs)
- How will we understand the spiritual needs of our patients/clients?
 - Listen for language that is about meaning, wondering, making sense of things
 - Listen for language that is about emotional pain, purpose, passion, values, connection
 - Listen for spiritual or religious language
 - Read the room, watch for symbols of a person's spirituality or spiritual identity or spiritual distress. (Remember to look broadly, not just for a religious symbol, but a book on their table, or the images on their wall, or their photos of their people...)

Some Questions to Explore Spirituality

- Is there something important at the centre of your way of looking at life (or at the centre of your spirituality)?
 - For example: love, family, serving others, kindness, compassion, mystery, humour, living by certain guidelines, believing in something outside of yourself...
- Do you have a way of looking at life, that you didn't have before?
 - "I never used to think about... But now all that matters to me is..."
- What gives you light, when life is really difficult (sad, challenging, dark)?

Case-Based Discussion



“Is there really a light?”- How We Listen

- Narrative example...
- Imagine yourself hearing that question.
 - What comes to mind?
 - What does her question mean?
 - What does it tell you about her spirituality?
 - What does it tell you about her preparation for death?

“Is there really a light?”- How We Respond

- How might you respond?
 - Answer the question
 - Acknowledge/validate the question
 - Wonder with her about the question
 - Share what you’ve heard others say
 - Work with her metaphor /imagery...
- How do you keep the response being about her?

Session Wrap Up

- Please fill out our feedback survey, a link has been added into the chat.
- A recording of this session will be emailed to registrants within the next week.
- Thank you for your participation!

Resources

1. Frank, A. *At the Will of the Body: Reflections on Illness*. (Mariner Books, 2002.)
2. Groves, R. and Klauser, H. *The American Book of Living and Dying: Lessons in Healing Spiritual Pain*. (Celestial Arts, 2009).
3. Puchalski, C. "Physician and Compassion Fatigue." (Keynote address, Covenant Health Palliative Care Conference, Edmonton, 2011).
4. Puchalski, C. & Farrell, B. *Making Health Care Whole: Integrating Spirituality into Patient Care*. (Templeton Press, 2010).
5. Sacred Art of Living Center. "Sacred Art of Living and Dying Unit One: Understanding Spiritual Pain", Participant Manual. Sacred Art of Living Center, Bend Oregon, 2017) www.sacredartofliving.org
6. Sacred Art of Living Center. "Sacred Art of Living and Dying Unit One: Diagnosing Spiritual Pain", Participant Manual. Sacred Art of Living Center, Bend Oregon, 2018) www.sacredartofliving.org

Thank You



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