The Role of Spirituality in Osteopathic Medicine:
“Historical and Evidence-Based Review”

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Session Objectives

• Discuss the Historical Roots of Osteopathic Medicine and Spirituality
• Review the EBM of Spirituality in Medicine
• Review the Evolution and Mandate of Spirituality in Medicine
• Define Spirituality in Osteopathic Medicine
Is the Spiritual Health of a patient important?
A. Yes
B. No

Should doctors address the Spiritual Health of their patients?
A. Yes
B. No

Discuss in Groups:
1. What is a definition of Spirit/Spiritual to you?
   Cautions or Concerns?
Spiritual Roots in Medicine

- Hippocrates
  3rd century BC

  - Oath: “Apollo Physician and Asclepius and Hygieia and Pancea and all the gods and goddesses…..”

Spiritual Roots in Medicine

- Physicians and Nurses often Clergy
- Early Christian Church first entity to grant medical licensure
- Ancient culture Religion and Medicine linked.
- Hospitals

Movement back to the Roots of Medicine:

- Historically, until the last 200-300 years, the relationship between spirituality, religion, healing, and healers was very close (Koenig 2000).

The Desire of our Patients

- 91% America Believes in God or Universal Spirit
- 81% Consider Religion Important
- 77% Believe their Physicians should consider their spiritual needs in healthcare.

Patient Demand- Spirituality

- Hufford describes the current relationship of spirituality, religion and health as in a “process of reconciliation,” led by “popular demand” rather than by either the religious or medical fields.
- “popular demand”

Physicians addressing Spiritual Care

- Only 10-20% of Physicians address the Spiritual
- Gap

Spiritual Roots in Osteopathic Medicine

- In The Beginning, God...
AT Still DO MD Quotes:

- God is the Father of Osteopathy, and I am not ashamed of the child of his mind.
- Has not nature’s God been thoughtful enough to place in man all the element and principles that the word remedy means.
- I quote no authors but God and experience.
- In this work we must depend upon the absolute law of Deity for results. If you object to that, all right; you may take guesswork, if you chose, I will not lose my hold on Deity.

"AT Still"

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Osteopathic Medicine

- 1st Tenet of Osteopathic Medicine: "The Body is a unit. An integrated unit of MIND, BODY, and SPIRIT. Man is Triune." A.T. Still (1902)

- Oath: "pledge to further the application of… and develop the principles of Osteopathic Medicine which were first enunciated by Andrew Taylor Still."
Osteopathic Core Competency

- Train to approach the patient with recognition of the entire clinical context.... Recognize and treat each patient as a whole person, integrating body, mind and spirit."
  - Section 1 A Osteopathic Core Competencies for Medical Students prepared by the American Association of Colleges of Osteopathic Medicine, in conjunction with all US Osteopathic Medical Schools. August 2012

Mandates for Spirituality- Timeline

- 1902 AT Still: Mind, Body, Spirit
- 1998 WHO: Modify preamble to constitution “Health is a dynamic state of complete physical, mental, spiritual, and social well being and not merely the absence of disease or infirmity.”
- 2001 JCAHO: Requires a Spiritual Assessment.

Evolution of Medical Treatment

- Biomedical Model- Newton and Descartes
  - Reductionism- study component parts
  - Pathology and physiology
  - Disease Oriented Patient Care (DOPE)
  - vs Health Oriented Patient Care (HOPE)
Biopsychosocial Model

Evolution of Mind Body Spirit
EBM for Spirituality and Health

- Koenig = 700 Studies at DUKE’s Center for Religion/Spirituality and Health
  → 500 with Positive Benefit
- People who attend church regularly, pray, read bible have lower BP
- Less Depression


EBM for Spirituality and Health

- Better recovery rate from severe illness
- Less CVD and Cancer
- Spirituality compared to be as significant a factor as not smoking in terms of survival and longevity.
- All cause mortality is 35% lower for people who attend religious services at least weekly.

Spirituality

- 1086 Studies in Family Medicine literature Reviewed by Craigie, Larson, Liu show a positive association on health in over 75%.
- “Medicine was religion. Religion was society. Society was medicine.”
  Fadiman (1997:60)

Can we quantify all things?

Spirituality

- “We physicians do not fully understand the relationship between Mind, Body, and that intangible element known as Spirit.
- “But we treat religious people everyday whose spirit and faith prevent their physical sickness from ruling their lives.”
  - Harold Koenig
One pound of Care?

- "Spirituality cannot be explored using scientific methods because it involves deeply personal, subjective experiences, and in this it differs from the over-riding ambition of science: to be objective".
- By definition a supernatural event is beyond the reach of scientific investigation

Published on March 5, 2011 by Larry Culliford in Spiritual Wisdom for Secular Times
Psychology Today

NEUROLOGY: "THIS IS YOUR BRAIN......"

NEURO-THEOLOGY

“This is your brain on God”

- Neuroplasticity
- ‘I Think We’re Wired For The Supernatural’
- You can sculpt your brain just as you’d sculpt your muscles if you went to the gym.
Neurochemistry of Spirituality
- Increased: Serotonin, Dopamine, GABA, melatonin
- Decreased: Noradrenalin and cortisol

Hormonal response
- Unforgiveness = glucocorticoid= stress
- Increased blood viscosity, lower WBC,
- Increased SNS activity
- Forgiveness = increased t-helper cells to T cytotoxic ratio

The Science of Forgiveness
- “Investigating the functional anatomy of Empathy and Forgiveness” Farrow et al 16May2001 Neuro report
  functional MRI:
  - Activate Left Superior Frontal Gyrus, Orbitofrontal Gyrus and precuneus. Posterior Cingulate Gyrus (social cohesion)
  - Similar to empathy but distinct in Post, Cingulate Gyrus
Definitions:

- Religion
- Spirit
- Spirituality
- Spiritual Health

Definition: Religion

Religion is a structured and organized way to define and experience the spiritual.

Definition: Spirit

Spirit—non-physical part of a person which is the seat of emotions and character- Oxford Dictionary

- Not physically seen
- can only be experienced.
- Our true self
- capable of surviving death
- Essence of a person that gives them power and motivates pursuit of the virtues of love, truth and wisdom.

**Definition - Spirituality**

Spirituality is the experience of a belief system that gives meaning to life.

**Signs of Spiritual Distress**

- Loss of direction
- Sense of emptiness/feeling alone in the world
- Hopelessness and helplessness
- Withdrawal from family and friends
- Self-destructive language
- Bitter or jaded outlook on life
- Fearfulness, dissociation
Spirituality RESPECT

- Spirituality is personal and individualist by nature and therefore RESPECT and SENSITIVITY should be extended to all who believe or do not believe.

“If we lose love and self-respect for each other, this is how we finally die.” Maya Angelou

Definitions: Spiritual Health

National Cancer Institute:
Deep feelings that include a person’s sense of peace, purpose, connection to others, and beliefs about the meaning of life.

National Interfaith Coalition on Aging:
Affirmation of life in relationship with God, self, community and environment that nurtures and celebrates wholeness.

Spiritual Health Components

Relationships

- Vertical Component – God or Higher Power
- Horizontal Component - Community
Relationship with God

- In a prospective study of 595 hospitalized patients, those who believed that God was punishing them, had abandoned them, didn't love them, or didn't have the power to help or felt their church had deserted them experienced **19% to 28% higher mortality during a 2-year period following hospital discharge** (relative risk for death ranging from 1.19 [95% CI, 1.05-1.33] to 1.28 [95% CI, 1.07-1.50]).


View of God

- This effect was statistically significant and independent of physical health, mental health, and social support.

Relationship of Community and Health

Social Determinants of Health

- A growing body of knowledge is emerging regarding the effects of various social, environmental, and economic factors on health status.

Definition: Spiritual Health

- Spiritual Health is when “a loving relationship with God (or a higher power) and others (the community) gives meaning to the life of our patients and result in a healthier overall well-being.”

The “L” Model Defining Spiritual Health

- Figure 3: Maharry, DC August 2013

Illustration of the Definition of Spirituality: Vertical and Horizontal Relationships

- Figure 4: Maharry, DC August 2013
Qualities of Spiritual Health

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Spiritual Health</th>
<th>Spiritual Atrophy</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• Love</td>
<td>• Malice</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Joy</td>
<td>• Negativity</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Peace</td>
<td>• Anxiety/Unrest</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Forgiveness</td>
<td>• Unforgiving</td>
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<tr>
<td>• Meaning &amp; Purpose in Life</td>
<td>• No Meaning in Life</td>
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<tr>
<td>• Selflessness/Service</td>
<td>• Self-Absorbed</td>
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<tr>
<td>• Self Control</td>
<td>• Poor Self Control</td>
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<tr>
<td>• Healthy Relationships</td>
<td>• Troubled Relationships</td>
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</tbody>
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Definition: Spiritual Health

- Spiritual Health is when “a loving relationship with God and others gives meaning to the life of our patients and result in a healthier overall well-being.”

How can a physician help facilitate Spiritual Health? (discussion)

- Spiritual Health is when “a loving relationship with God and others gives meaning to the life of our patients and result in a healthier overall well-being.”
Spiritual Health Exercises:

• Prayer
• Meditation
• Scripture Reading/Memorizing/Meditation
• Dreamwork/Visualization
• Selflessness/Service

Questions?

• Thank You!

References: Benefits of Spirituality

References: Benefits of Spirituality


- When a random sample of 338 hospitalized patients were asked an open-ended question about what the most important factor was that enabled them to cope, 42.3% mentioned their religious faith.