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Course: Social Work and Mental Healthcare System

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In the mental health fields, spirituality typically refers to a person's search for a sense of meaning and connectedness with self and others, including a relationship with aspects of reality viewed as sacred, transcendent, or deeply profound (Canda & Furman, 2010; Fallot, 2007).

Surveys show that people would like to be able to talk about matters of faith in psychological treatment. Psychologists are ethically obliged to be respectful and attentive to the cultural diversity of their clients, and religion and spirituality contribute to our personal and social identities.

Spirituality is not necessarily tied to any particular religious belief or tradition. Although culture and beliefs can play a part in spirituality, every person has their own unique experience of spirituality - it can be a personal experience for anyone, with or without a religious belief.

Recent research reports strongly suggest that to many patients, religion and spirituality are resources that help them to cope with the stresses in life, including those of their illness. Many psychiatrists now believe that religion and spirituality are important in the life of their patients. The importance of spirituality in mental health is now widely accepted.

What stood out for me in the reading is *Spiritual Benefits and Struggles for Those with Serious Mental Illnesses*. It proves how implementing spirituality within mental illness can benefit the

clients as well could be a struggle at the same time. We should respect and support patients' religious beliefs if these help them to cope better or do not adversely affect their mental health.

Providers could support clients as they explore both the helpful and harmful aspects of spiritual communities. Some clients may be at a place where they are looking to join a supportive spiritual community and may benefit from discussing this with their provider because spirituality is deeply personal.

Reading on spirituality and religion has helped me understand that discussion with the patient on spiritual matters and religious experiences will strengthen the therapeutic relationship. It can also lead to the reversal effect of a personal growth of the therapist.

I would apply the information I have analyzed in my practice as follow:

By respecting and supporting patients' religious beliefs if these help them to cope better or do not adversely affect their mental health.

Spending time listening to each client as it is very essential.

I would apply praying. Praying with the patient is a controversial area. However, this would be done only after a strong therapeutic relationship is established and only if the patient asks for it. Praying for the patient can be beneficial