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A Comparison of Worldview Perspectives

My assigned worldview was the worldview of Buddhism and Buddhist beliefs contain some similarities and major differences when compared to Christianity. I believe the main difference between the two is that Buddhism does not praise a God instead they worship the Buddha whose life is an example for them, but he is not seen as a God. Buddhists see the person as somebody who is constantly being reborn until they reach enlightenment. Buddhists view the world through the lens of seeing it all as one. They view it as a cycle. Health in Buddhism is not related to the physical body and science but rather our reaction and connection to external factors around us for example: school or socializing. When providing care, it is important to note that Buddhists use mindfulness to alleviate suffering; to have a successful visit with a Buddhist patient it is important to acknowledge that to create a connection the ideal healthcare provider to them is empathetic and sees them as an equal as they see us. These worldviews differ from Christianity because we have a God in Christianity, and unlike the independence Buddhists have from their higher power; we completely surrender to our God, and we see our worldview through his lens and through the lens of Jesus Christ.

As mentioned before, Buddhists do not have a God, and they view people, the environment, their health, and ideal expectation of a healthcare provider in a unique perspective.

Instead of believing in God, Buddhists admire how the Buddha lived his life; the Buddha is also known as Siddhartha Gautama (National Geographic Society 2023). He was a prince, and he completely abandoned his lavish way of life to understand how others lived who were less fortunate, he traveled and used meditation throughout his journey of discovering and analyzing the different ways people lived (National Geographic Society 2023). It is said that his experiences led him to discover a way to end all suffering so much so that he achieved “enlightenment” or the ending of suffering and ended his cycle of rebirth (National Geographic Society 2023). Buddhists follow the Four Noble Truths which was taught by the Buddha himself; in this we gain a better understanding of how Buddhists view the world. According to the Buddhist religion, people live their lives in suffering and because of this are constantly being reborn, and in each life, they carry the suffering they had in their past life (National Geographic Society 2023). This cycle of rebirth ends once the person learns to end their suffering through following the way of life Buddha lived; once they end their suffering, they reach enlightenment and nirvana. Essentially, they view people as souls that are just constantly recycled into new bodies through rebirth until we reach this stage (Smith n.d.). Buddhists view the world as it is and that everything in the world is interconnected with one another so if you do bad then everything in your world will attract bad and vice versa (PBS n.d.). They see the world as an endless cycle, whether it be inanimate or animate...human or nature... (Smith n.d.). This endless cycle and wheel of life is fueled through our actions and karma, but we can end this cycle as I mentioned earlier through reaching nirvana (Smith n.d.). Another word for this view is Monism (Smith n.d.). Buddhists do not view health and wellbeing as scientific but rather related to external factors such as social life, education, finances and more (Kalra et. al. 2018). Buddhists view nurses as one who should see them as equals, be empathetic towards them, and practice

“the principles of medical ethics: nonmaleficence, benevolence, justice, and autonomy” and believe in the use of mindfulness to cope with stressful situations Kalra et. al. 2018).

While at the end of the day Buddhists and Christians would provide healthcare through the lens of empathy and respect; there are many clear differences between the two beliefs. Unlike Buddhists, Christians believe in God and follow the example of Jesus; the man who lived his life for and through God. Christians are expected to their lives through God and through surrendering to him. Also, Christians see the world as created by God, and that God is the ruler and creator of all; Buddhists see the world as a karmic cycle interconnected to all. There is nothing in Christianity about karma; but the bible states in Matthew 7:12 “Do unto others as you would have them do unto you”. Christians see health and the body as created by God; and therefore, we must not only follow the ways of nursing and healthcare in a scientific perspective; but also treat others how we want to be treated, and to pray when we need healing. Prayer of course does not heal all, but it is an important aspect of health; health is not seen as just physical but also spiritual. This idea is in the bible verse 1 Timothy 4:8 “For while bodily training is of some value, godliness is of value in every way, as it holds promise for the present life and also for the life to come” and this verse to me means exactly as I said; yes, our body needs physical help but also this is nothing without living our life for God.

Understanding, becoming educated on and respecting worldviews of our patients are essential for the optimization of our patient’s health. How much worldview contrast is shown through how differently both Buddhists and Christians see the world in the way of how they see not just the world but people, the environment, health, and healthcare. Buddhists do not have a God and Christians do; and Christians live their life surrendering to God and through God and Jesus whereas Buddhists believe in the karmic cycle and see people as souls that are constantly

reborn until suffering ends through enlightenment and nirvana. Without the desire to learn; our patients will not receive the best care possible. This is because; not everyone thinks the way we do, and because of this we must do our best to understand how others think so that we may be able to help them during stressful times. Otherwise, without this, healthcare and patient care would be a stressful, disastrous experience. Being in the doctor's office or at the hospital in general is already stressful; so, it is imperative patients feel seen, validated, and understood by their healthcare providers. This can truly be life or death for a patient; patient care is not just physical, it is emotional, psychological, and spiritual as well.

Resources

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