

“The Impact of Spirituality & Religion on Behavioral Health & Clinical Practice”

May 31, 2024

12:00pm – 1:30pm

Format: Zoom Workshop (Virtual)

Course Director:

Rameshwari V. Tumuluru, MD
Professor of Psychiatry
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Planning Committee:

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Lead Presenter:

Brock Bahler, PhD
Teaching Professor and Director of Undergraduate Studies, Department of Religious Studies, University of Pittsburgh

Co-Presenter:

Rameshwari V. Tumuluru, MD
Professor of Psychiatry
University of Pittsburgh School of Medicine

Audience:

Psychologists, Western Psychiatric Hospital Staff and Faculty, and other Mental Health Professionals

Credit/s: One (1.5) Continuing Medical Education (CME) Credit

Workshop Schedule

12:00pm	Introduction/Goals for Workshop: Rameshwari V. Tumuluru, MD
12:05pm	Overview of <i>The Impact of Spirituality & Religion on Behavioral Health & Clinical Practice</i> : 1) basic definitions & data on 'religion' and 'spirituality' in America; 2) religious perceptions of mental health and barriers to treatment: (a) mental health stigma in religious spaces, (b) religious opposition to mental health treatment, (c) historical bias of mental health providers, (d) compounding effects within historically marginalized and immigrant communities; 3) positive and negative impact of religion/spirituality on mental health outcomes.
12:30pm	<p>Exercise – Small Break-Out Group Discussion:</p> <p>Dr. Brock Bahler will provide three (3) vignettes for review and then participants will be placed in smaller Zoom break-out groups for discussion. These vignettes are designed for the audience to think about the ways that spirituality and religion may have both a positive and negative impact on mental health outcomes; to recognize and to better understand how religion shapes perceptions of mental health and those treatment seeking; and to gain skills in discussing religion with and administering culturally sensitive measures and care to research participants and patients, respectively.</p> <p>The three (3) vignettes are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Vignette 1: Young man who identifies as gay (or SSA) and says he's committed to trying to change his gay identity through conversion therapy due to his religious convictions that homosexuality is wrong. • Vignette 2: Married woman from a historically minoritized community is in a physically and abusive relationship but unwilling to leave her husband based on her religious convictions that only adultery is grounds for divorce. • Vignette 3: A person who experienced religious trauma as a child and now identifies as "none/spiritual but not religious" but has conflicting feelings about their religious past—still wants the social and ritual aspects of religious life but religious spaces are triggering to them. <p>Participants will engage in small group discussions regarding the vignette/s of their [group] choice [noted above]. Discussion questions will be provided to the participants by the presenter, Dr. Brock Bahler, to prompt discussion (please see below):</p> <p><u>Discussion questions for small groups to consider:</u></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. [Consider the one that most effects your role as a clinician, therapist, researcher, post-doc, or staff member.] What unique aspects to religious conviction/religious identity bring to providing care/treatment, interviewing the patient, including them in a research study, etc.? What questions would you ask to discern this? 2. How would you handle these situations in your particular role? How might your own religious beliefs, biases, and presumptions affect how you address these situations?

	3. How would you respond if the client said that religious practices (meditation, prayer, etc.) were important to them and wanted them to be incorporated into the therapeutic process?
12:55pm	Larger Group Discussion and Question & Answer Session: Brock Bahler, PhD 1. What are some of your takeaways from discussing these vignettes? 2. What practices can you imagine implementing that would better account for religious identity and religious diversity in your particular role? 3. What skills or tools do you still feel like you need to be better prepared for accounting for religion and religious identity in your setting?
1:25pm	Ending Comments: Dr. Rameshwari Tumuluru
1:30pm	Adjourn

Learning Objectives. At the conclusion of this workshop participants will be able to:

1. Describe ways that spirituality and religion may have both a positive and negative impact on mental health outcomes.
2. Recognize and understand how religion shapes perceptions of mental health and treatment seeking.
3. Gain skills in discussing religion with and administering culturally sensitive measures and care to research participants and patients, respectively.

Accreditation and Designation Statement

In support of improving patient care, the University of Pittsburgh is jointly accredited by the Accreditation Council for Continuing Medical Education (ACCME), the Accreditation Council for Pharmacy Education (ACPE), and the American Nurses Credentialing Center (ANCC), to provide continuing education for the health care team.

Physician (CME)

The University of Pittsburgh designates this live activity for a maximum of 1.5 PRA Category 1 Credit™. Physicians should claim only the credit commensurate with the extent of their participation in the activity.

Other health care professionals will receive a certificate of attendance confirming the number of contact hours commensurate with the extent of participation in this activity

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