SPIRITUALITY IN PRACTICE: OCCUPATIONAL THERAPY SPIRITUAL ASSESSMENT

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Short Course Objectives

• Identify the role of spiritual assessment in a variety of occupational therapy practice settings.
• Understand and demonstrate how to use the Occupational Therapy Spiritual Assessment.

Spirituality Defined

■ AOTA Practice Framework (2008): Spirituality is “…the personal quest for understanding answers to ultimate questions about life, about meaning and about relationship with the sacred or transcendent, which may (or may not) lead to or arise from the development of religious rituals and the formation of community.” (p. 633)

■ Spirituality is… “a deep experience of meaning brought about by engaging in occupations that involve the enacting of personal ideologies, reflection, and intention within a supportive contextual environment.” (Billock, 2013)

Secular Spirituality (Weil. 2011)

• Religion and spirituality are not synonymous
• Secular spirituality relates to nonphysical aspect of our being independent of supernatural interpretations
• Attending to spirit critical to comprehensive self-care

Relevance: Coping

■ Spirituality integral in facing challenging life experiences
■ Meaningful occupational engagement nurtures hope

Relevance: Practice Integration

■ Integration of spirituality into occupational therapy practice can be challenging
■ The List:
Relevance: Occupation Centrality

- Spiritual experiences interconnect with occupational engagement—Doing, Being, Becoming, Belonging (Wilcock)
- Occupational therapy practitioners use a different lens than other health care providers to look at spirituality and health

Relevance: Spirituality and Health

- Spiritual health: being able to experience meaning in life, fulfillment, and connection with self, others, and a higher power or larger reality (Hawks, Hull, Traiman, & Richmond, 1995)
- Dependent upon experience through occupations in daily life
- Spiritual disorder often related to chronic illness, depression, anxiety, progressive disability, caregiving

Other Spiritual Assessments

- FICA (Puchalski & Romer, 2000; Borneman, Ferrell, & Puchalski, 2010): most widely utilized, familiar to some occupational therapy practitioners (Bouthot, J., Wells, R. & Black, R., 2011)
- CSI-Memo (Keoni, 2002): fast-paced clinical settings, focus on beliefs influencing medical care
- HOPE (Anandarajah & Hight, 2001), FAITH (King, 2002), SPIRIT (Maugans, 1997)

OTSA Research Projects: Loma Linda University

- Phase I: occupational therapy practitioners trained in-person, survey data collected
- Phase II: occupational therapy practitioners trained online, survey data collected
- Phase III: MOT students trained to use tool, survey data collected

Occupational Therapy Spiritual Assessment (OTSA)

- Tool to integrate spirituality into occupational therapy practice
- Unique to the concerns of occupational therapy
- Helps occupational therapy meet the goals set forth for spiritual sensitivity by accrediting bodies such as JCAHO

- Administration takes between five and ten minutes
- Can be given individually or used in a group setting
- Can be used in initial assessment or with ongoing clients
- Guiding qualitative narrative interview questions
- Designed for use with ages 18+
- Developed by Christy Billock, PhD, OTR/L and Michelle Elliot, PhD (cand.), MscOT(c)
- Still in DRAFT form
Occupational Therapy
Spiritual Assessment (OTSA)

- **COPING**: Tell me about how you cope with difficulties in life.
- **COMMUNITY**: Tell me about your participation with a spiritual, religious, or other group.
- **PERSONAL BELIEFS**: What activities do you do to express your personal values or beliefs? How important are these activities to you?
- **HEALTH and HAPPINESS**: Tell me about what influences your health and happiness.
- **REFERRAL**: Would you like to talk with someone about any spiritual or religious concerns?

Coping

- Tell me about how you cope with difficulties in life.

- Other ways to ask this question:
  - What is your passion in life?
  - What do you notice about yourself when you are connected to your passion?
  - What gives you hope for the future?
  - When times are tough, what beliefs get you through the day?
  - How do you recognize when life is difficult?

Community

- Tell me about your participation with a spiritual, religious, or other group.

- Other ways to ask this question:
  - Who do you love most and who loves you?
  - What do you do to connect with other people?
  - Do you have a group that you spend time with regularly? What do you like to do together?
  - If you attend church, synagogue or temple or have in the past, how do you participate?
  - What do you like to do with your religious community?
  - Tell me about your connections with your religious community.
  - Who do you love most and who loves you?
  - How do you experience love?

Personal Values and Beliefs

- What activities do you do to express your personal values or beliefs? How important are these activities to you?

- Other ways to ask this question:
  - What do you most look forward to doing each day or week?
  - What activities are you most passionate about?
  - What activities make you feel most like yourself?

Health and Happiness

- How does practicing your beliefs relate to your health and happiness?

- Other ways to initiate this conversation:
  - How do happiness and health influence one another in your life?
  - How do you feel when you are doing things you love to do?
  - How does your faith relate to your health?
  - How does going to church, synagogue or temple make you feel?
  - Tell me about any beliefs that might influence your medical care and recovery process.
Referral

• Would you like to talk with someone about any religious concerns?

• Other ways to ask this question:
  • Would you like to talk with a chaplain?
  • Would you like to talk with your clergyperson?
  • Who do you speak with about your spiritual or religious concerns?
  • How might your present concerns be shared?

Ranking

• Rank these categories from 1-5 with 1 being most important and 5 being least important in your life right now.
  • Coping
  • Community
  • Personal Beliefs
  • Health and Happiness
  • Referral

OTSA Clinical Application

• Building rapport
• Assessment
• Goal formation
• Documentation
• Intervention planning
• Making referrals
• Discharge planning
• Therapeutic use of self

Occupational Therapy Spiritual Assessment Summary

• A narrative qualitative assessment tool to initiate conversation about spiritual matters
• Flexible administration based on client levels and needs
• Still in development
• Contact: christybillock@gmail.com

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References