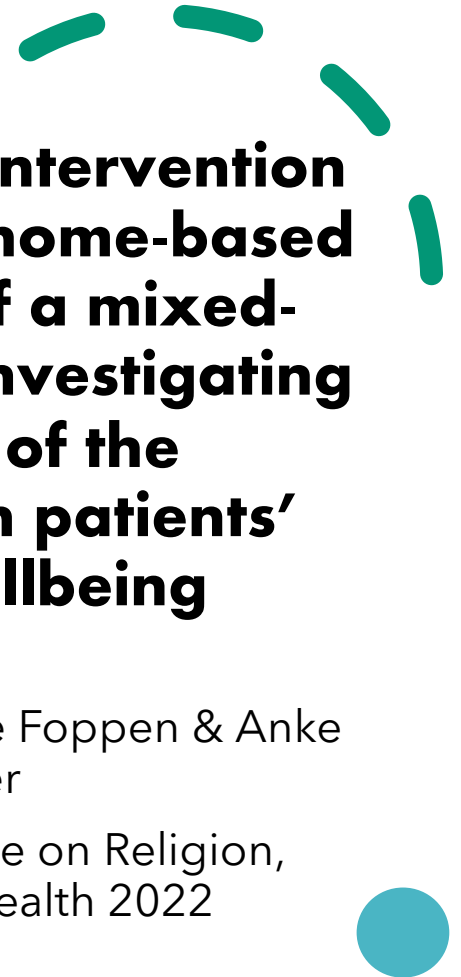




A spiritual care intervention for chaplains in home-based care: Results of a mixed- methods study investigating the impact of the intervention on patients' spiritual wellbeing

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What are we sharing today?

- Why a new spiritual care intervention?
- What are the key characteristics of the intervention?
- How did we conduct our study?
- Preliminary qualitative impressions
- Discussion



A spiritual care intervention for home-based palliative care: why?

- Spirituality and coping with a progressive, life-threatening disease
- Challenges for the chaplaincy profession
- Debate on the chaplain's approach

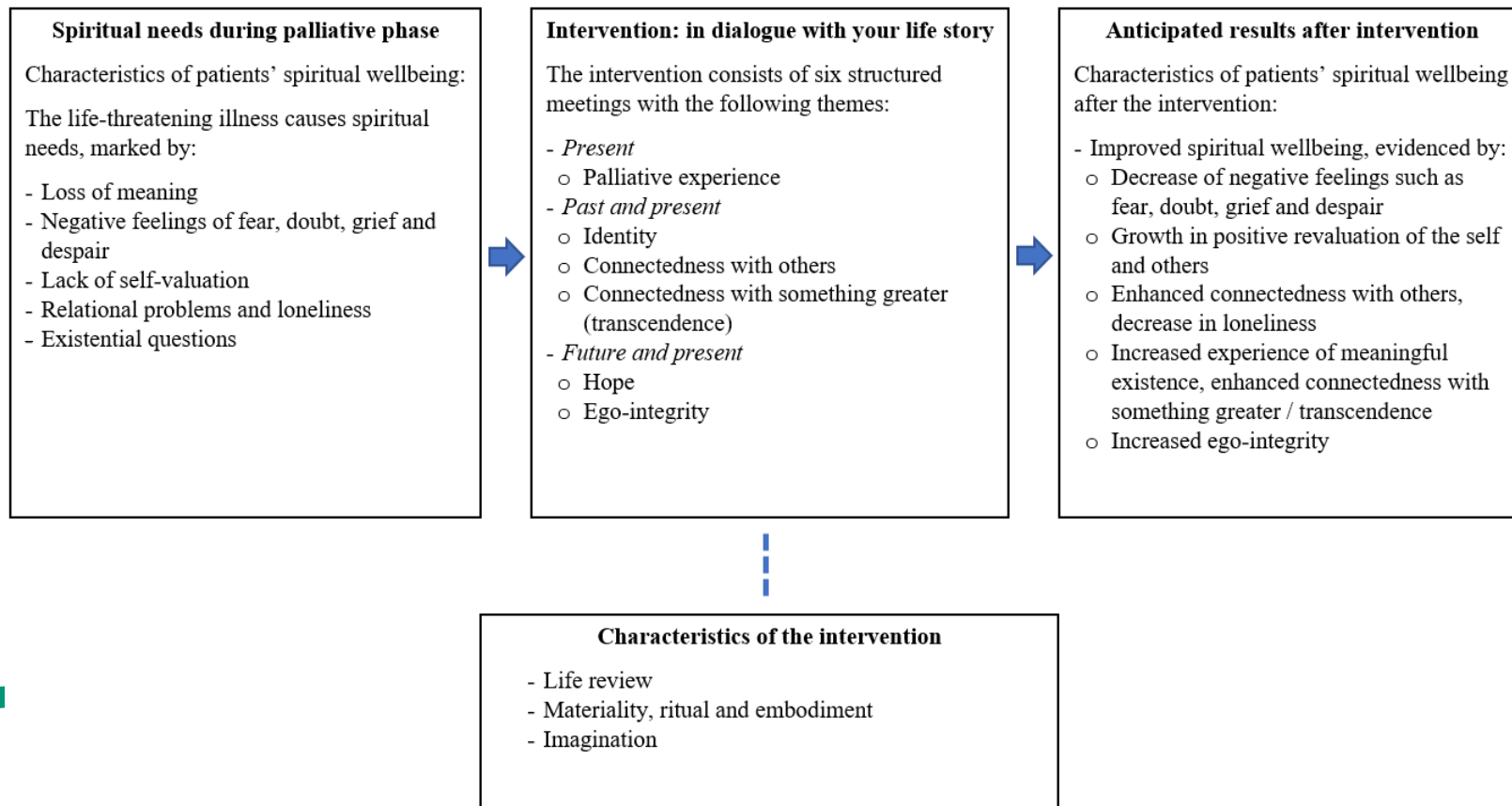


In dialogue with your life story

- Aim: improving spiritual well-being of palliative patients living at home
- Six meetings for individual consultations between a chaplain and a patient at home
- Themes:
 - Identity
 - Relationships with others
 - Connectedness with something greater or higher
 - Values
 - Hope and despair
 - Regret and gratitude towards life



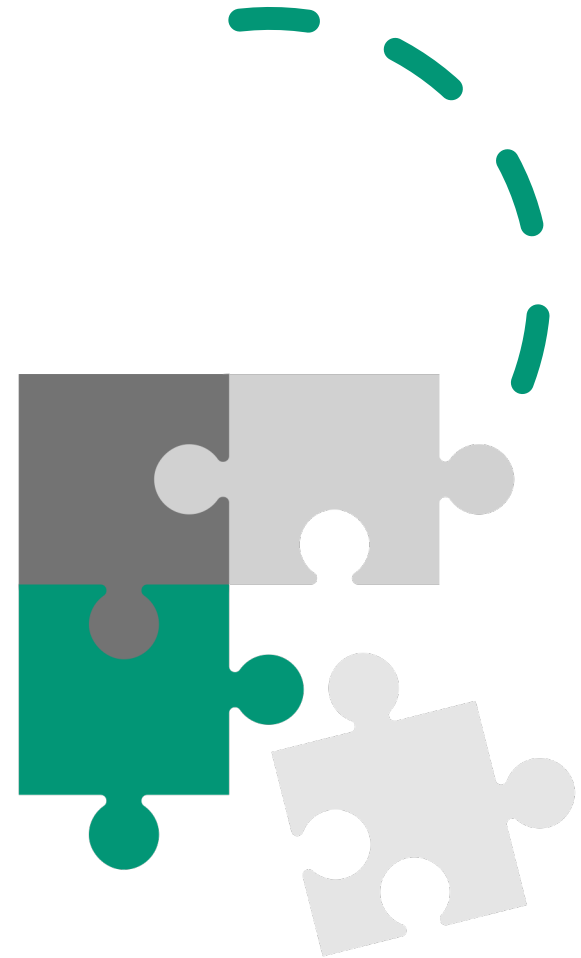
Schematic overview of the intervention (Wierstra et al., 2021)



Characteristic I: Life review

Storytelling may contribute to:

- Renewed understanding of reality and the self
- Discovery of meaning in life



Characteristic II: Materiality, embodiment and ritual

- Focus on embodied, lived experiences of spirituality
- Focus on rituals and artefacts
 - May lead to experiences of connectedness
 - May create space for new reality and insight



Characteristic III: Imagination

- When searching for meaning and spiritual orientation, people are guided by imaginations of different realities
- Imagination:
 - Helps building a bridge between what is and what could be
 - Enables realization of possibilities for change



Methods

Mixed-methods design

- Longitudinal survey data among patients (T0; T1; T2; N = 67)
- Interviews with patients and chaplains (N = 41)
- Reflection notes by patients and chaplains
 - Workbooks (N = 63)
 - Logbooks (N = 32)





Preliminary results

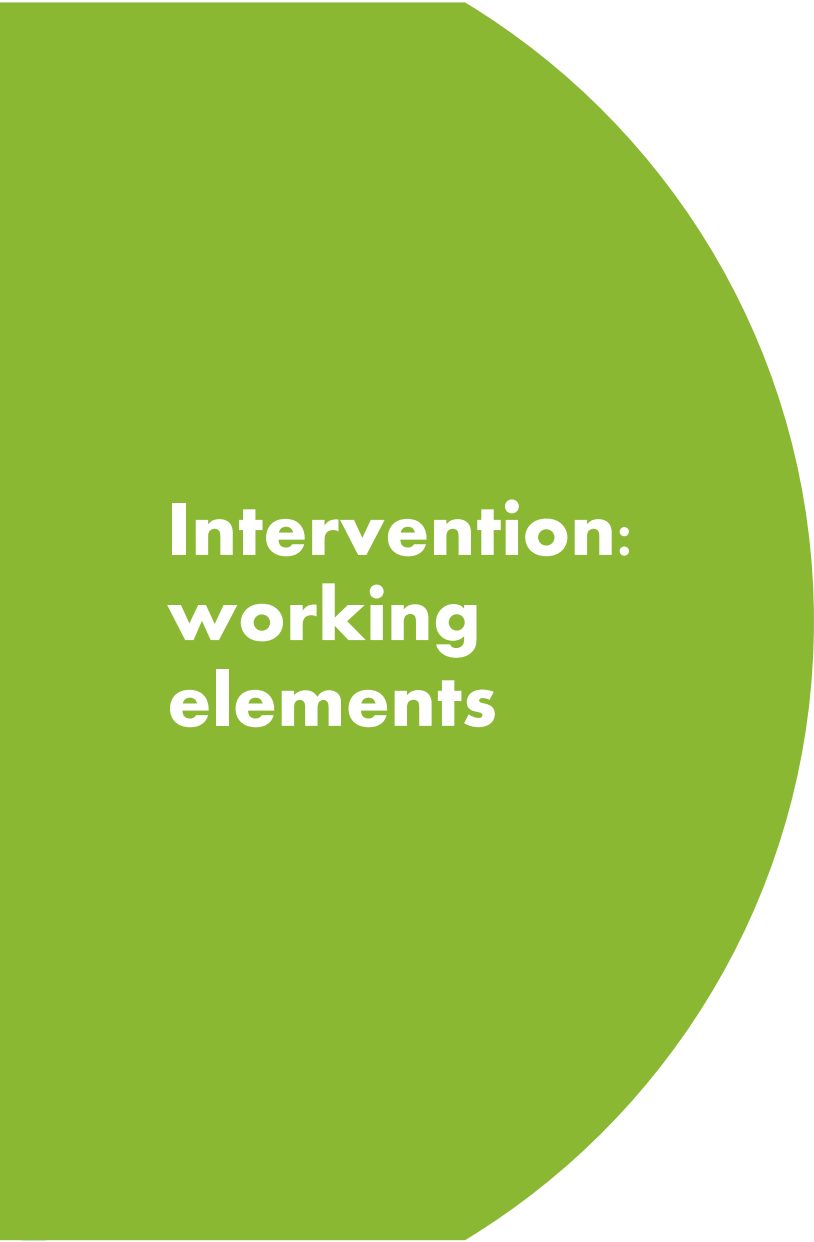
Which elements contributed to the spiritual well-being of patients, and in what way?

A general impression

'The conversations gave me a whole new perspective on my spiritual life.' - patient

- Sessions were enlightening and gave peace.
- Patients and chaplains are not always very specific.





Intervention: working elements

1. Conversation protocol

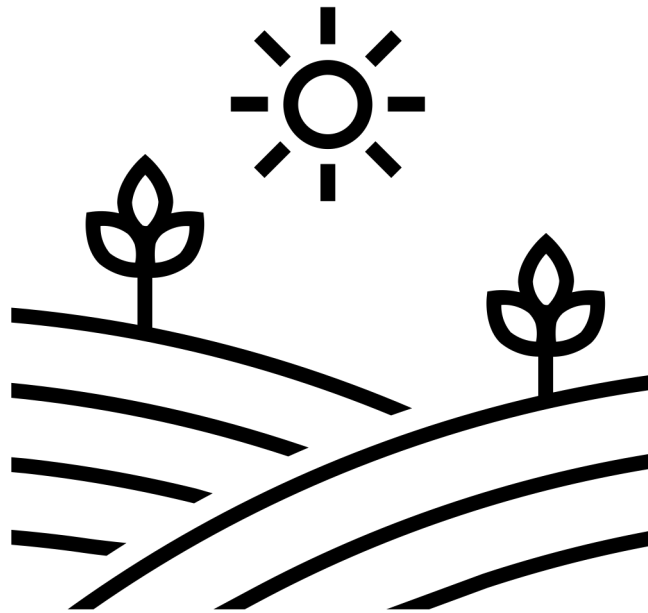
2. Structure

3. Working methods

- Drawing of lifeline
- Meditation
- Ending ritual

4. Activating exercises

- Workbook



Guided meditation

'The meditation exercise brought in a new element. It was less rational. It was a new experience, a different route that led to more deepening and stillness.' - chaplain

+ surprising, gave new insights, and brought participants to a deeper layer, closer to their feelings.

- did not fit all participants.

The role of the chaplain

'[...] helped me discover what motivates, supports and gives me the courage to move forward again.'

Connection and bond with the chaplain were strong.

The intervention stands or falls on the chaplain. The chaplain carries the structured approach.





A structured model for chaplaincy?

A structured, narrative approach to spiritual care can help improve patients' spiritual well-being.

In particular, by offering working methods and assigning preparatory exercises.

Discussion: what are your thoughts?

- Presence-oriented approach vs a more structured methodological approach to spiritual care?
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Thank you for your attention!

Please let us know if you have any questions, remarks or want to collaborate

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Reference:

Wierstra, I. R., Liefbroer, A. I., Post, L., Tromp, T. & Körver, J. (2021). Addressing spiritual needs in palliative care: proposal for a narrative and interfaith spiritual care intervention for chaplaincy. *Journal of Health Care Chaplaincy*.
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