

What are the Spiritual Care Practices that Softening Illness Suffering?

*6th European Conference on Religion,
Spirituality, & Health*

*5th International Conference of the British Association
for the Study of Spirituality*

*Coventry, England
May 18, 2018*

Lorraine M. Wright, RN, PhD

International Speaker/Author/Clinician
Professor Emeritus of Nursing
University of Calgary

lorrainewright.com

FamilyNursingResources.com

Email: lmwright@ucalgary.ca

Twitter: @drlorwright

Blog: lorrainewright.com/blog





"I asked You, in the nicest possible way, to make me a better person, but apparently You couldn't be bothered."

Spirituality, Health and Illness Research

Meta-analysis of 1200 studies:

spiritual/religious beliefs &
practices make a positive
difference to health & illness
outcomes.



(Koenig, 2012)

Research about Prayer & Health

Prayer remains the most frequently used complementary & alternative medicine modality (62%).

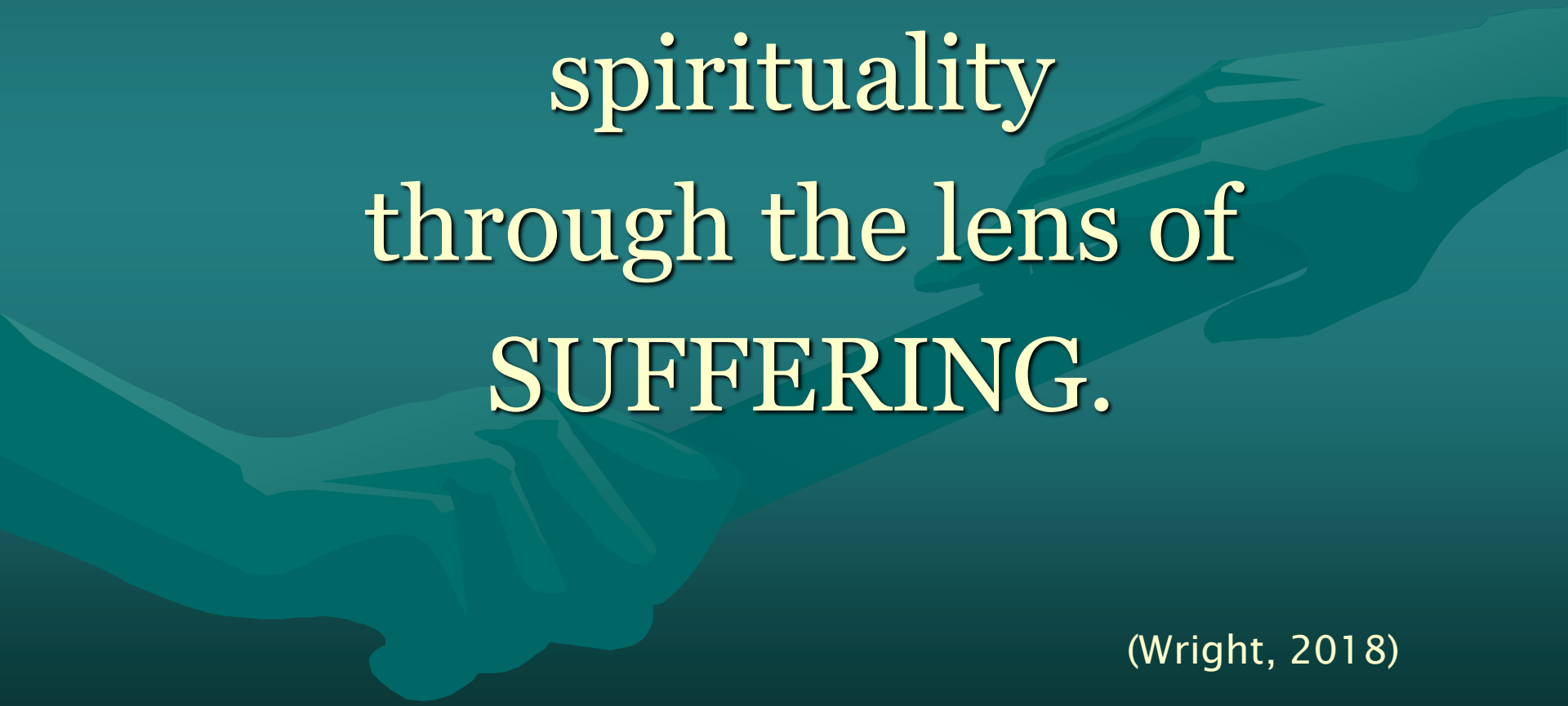
(Barnes, Power-Griner, McFann, Nahin, 2004)

Two Distinct Voices about Spiritual Care Practices

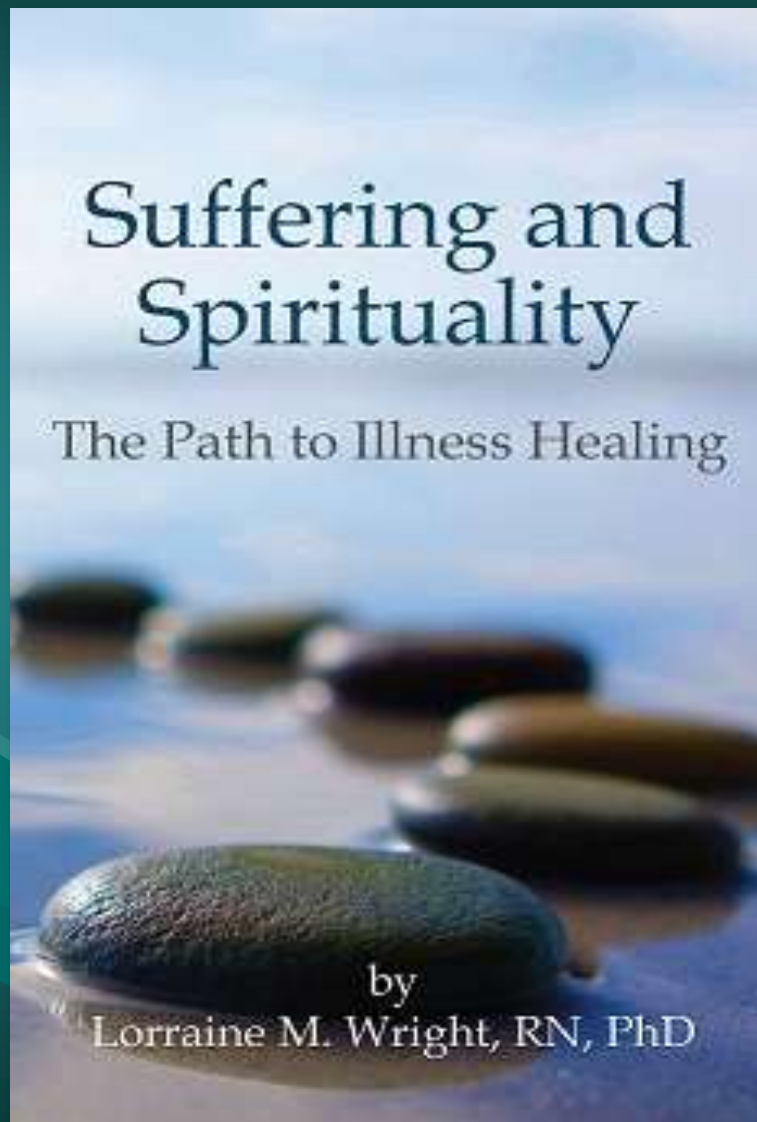
1. Spirituality is an object that can be assessed, measured, quantified, with which a health professional “intervenes”.
2. Spirituality cannot be assessed or intervened but only accessed through the lens of suffering.

(McLeod & Wright, 2008)

Health professionals access
spirituality
through the lens of
SUFFERING.



(Wright, 2018)



Wright, L.M. (2017).
*Suffering & Spirituality:
The Path to Illness Healing.*
4th Floor Press: Calgary, AB.



Deep Love & Deep Suffering!

(Wright, 2017)

Deep Suffering

....when our life and/or
relationships
change *forever*.

(Wright, 2017)



Deep Suffering

..... invites us into the
spiritual domain.

(Wright, 2017)

Spiritual Care Practices & Deep Suffering

- Serious illness
- Loss
- Disability
- Heartache and/or heartbreak

(Wright & Bell, 2009; Wright, 2017)



Suffering Questions Open the Spiritual Domain

“Why did this happen to my husband? He was not a bad person, had no bad Karma in his past”

“Will my son be able to walk again; be normal?”

(Wright, 2017)

Spiritual Issues

Therapeutic conversations
about illness suffering
'opens the door' to the
spiritual domain.



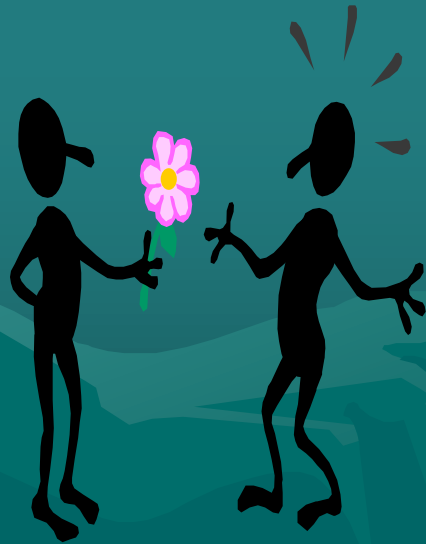
(Wright, 2017)



Spiritual Care Practices that Softens Suffering

(Wright, 2017)

Acknowledging Suffering



(Wright, Bell, & Moules, 2006)

Accepting “What Is”

(Tolle, 2003; Wright, 2017)

AND WHEN I'M LYING IN MY BED, I THINK ABOUT
LIFE AND I THINK ABOUT DEATH, AND NEITHER
ONE PARTICULARLY APPEALS TO ME.



Offering Hope & Healing

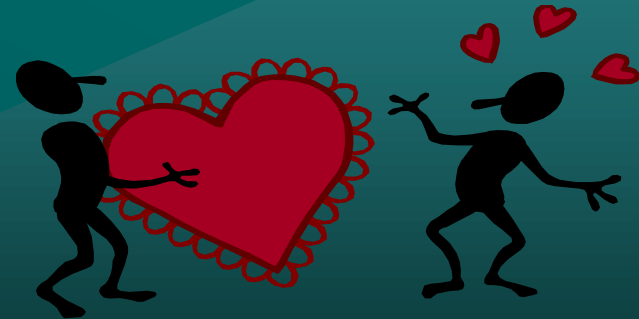
(Wright, 2017)

*Comfort the sufferer by the
promise of healing,
even when you are not confident,
for thus you may assist his
natural powers.*

Israeli, Manhig HaRofeim, ca. 930

Question

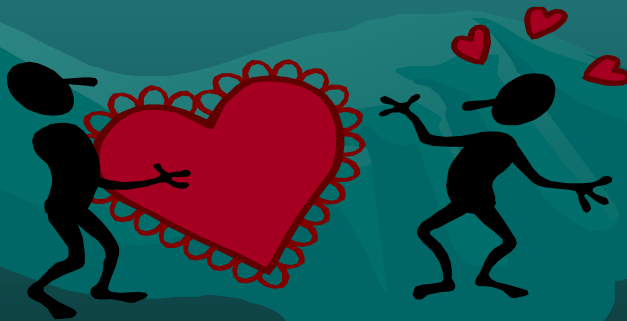
What is the MOST important spiritual care practice that increases loving interactions with patients/families?



Answer

Curious Compassion

- Love, not judgment.



(Wright, 2015; Wright, 2017)

BOOKS

Wright, L.M. (2017). *Suffering & Spirituality: The Path to Illness Healing*. Calgary, AB: 4th Floor Press.

Wright, L.M. (2013). *Don't Get Married...Unless*. Calgary, AB: 4th Floor Press.

Wright, L.M. & Bell, J.M. (2009). *Beliefs and Illness: A Model for Healing*. Calgary, AB: 4th Floor Press.

Wright, L.M. & Leahey, M. (2013). *Nurses and Families: A Guide to Family Assessment and Intervention*. (6th ed.). Philadelphia, PA: F.A. Davis.

DVD's

Wright, L.M. (Producer). (2016). *Therapeutic Conversations with Families: What's love got to do with it?* [DVD].
(Available from: www.lorrainewright.com/lovedvd.htm)

Wright, L.M. (Producer). (2007). *Spirituality, Suffering & Illness: Conversations for healing.* [DVD]/ (Available from: www.lorrainewright.com/sufferingdvd.htm)

