

Mental Health Chaplaincy in Cambridgeshire

promoting spiritual health, recovery and well being



Making space for spirituality

"It is what is deepest in us - what gives us direction, motivation. It is what enables a person to survive bad times, to be strong, to overcome difficulties, to become themselves."

Spiritual Well-Being: Policy and Practice, Bradford 2001

The Trust's Spirituality Conference in Peterborough on October 23rd, drew together 100 people for a highly successful, enjoyable, event. There were five excellent guest speakers, music, art, and an opportunity to share experiences with one another. The **Mental Health Foundation** sent details of its recent, ground-breaking report work, focusing on the impact of spirituality on mental health, and the value of faith in a recovery-based service, in a recovery-centered life. **Professor Peter Gilbert** [Professor of Social Work and Spirituality at Staffordshire University, NIMHE Project Lead on Spirituality] brought words of encouragement and many ideas about how spirituality, faith and recovery are being increasingly linked in services throughout England, and of how we might ensure that they are a key feature in our own individual practice - something we also focused on during group work.

Instrumental in setting up the Royal College of Psychiatrist's Special Interest Group for Spirituality and Mental Health, **Dr Larry Culliford** stressed how the language of spirituality serves to unite people from different religious backgrounds and none, speaking of spiritual 'awareness', 'practices', 'skills' and 'values'. Clinically relevant spiritual skills and values deserve renewed emphasis. Instead of seeing the whole person in three dimensions [Biological, Psychological and Social] we needed to see four, adding the Spiritual dimension. Service user/trainer **David Norman** gave a valuable, powerful account of the place of spirituality in his journey "It's my experience" he said, "That, because of this mental instability, people with MH problems need suitably informed 'spiritual' guidance (as well of course needing medical, psychological and social care) in order to find meaning and purpose in their lives, and establish a coping path to recovery."

One of the paradoxes of mental health is that recovery rates across the world don't always improve with the resources committed. Often they seem to improve where an individual's essential self, spirituality and humanity, are fully engaged. If we can work with the whole person, in the context of their whole life and what is most important to them, we are likely to promote a real discovery and recovery.

Cornwall Mental Health Chaplain, **Rev. Christopher Newell**, gave a cry from the heart for a 'spirituality of resistance', as he called it; speaking out on behalf of all those who know the darkness and find and draw close to God there. As his supplementary notes emphasised, 'the word *shaman* means "to see in the dark"'. "There is a shamanism of the dark emotions-a way of maintaining awareness in the midst of chaos and turbulence of the darker regions of the psyche-that ultimately alters our perception of who and what we are. Painful emotions challenge us to know the sacred in the broken.....We discover that the darkness has its own light." *Miriam Greenspan. Healing through the dark emotions: the (Boston: Shambhala. Richard Harlow-Trigg and John Rosser* told us about the reasons for implementing their Spirituality Strategy in Sussex - making the business case and bringing a human face to all that they had done with spirituality as a Trust in the last three years, and encouraging us to consider doing the same.

And finally, I would like to thank St Mary's Church for making their venue available to us; Rachel Hill, Mary Hanna, Sue Oswald and Diana Jakubowska - my colleagues with CPFT - for their help organising the day; the musician Shona, and artist Hilary, for helping create the right atmosphere with their art; and to everyone who came and brought their energy and interest in spirituality to 'the table'. A DVD of the conference is being made and can be seen as soon as it is available. Just call to ask.

John Nicholson, Senior Mental Health Chaplain, CPFT.

Christmas Carols and Coffee



**Thursday December 18th at
3pm in the Chapel Prayer
Space, Resource Centre,
Fulbourn Hospital**

ALL WELCOME
[costume not required]

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Guidelines on spirituality – A booklet and training support for your team

These guidelines have been developed in order to give acute care staff a simple introduction to spirituality issues within acute care, but they can be adapted and used in a different setting.

The guidelines cover six key issues:

- responding to the needs of the whole person
- assessing peoples' needs and risks
- different approaches in mapping spirituality and identity
- work with faith and spiritual communities
- blocks to responding to the spiritual dimension, *and*
- support for staff.

If you work within a mental healthcare setting and would like some input, advice and guidance from chaplaincy in implementing a spirituality-aware approach, get in touch [details below].

Recognising a person's spiritual dimension is one of the most vital aspects of care and recovery in mental health.

Contact John Nicholson on 01223 218598 to find out more. Chaplaincy can offer support and training in mental health and spirituality to your own healthcare setting, to your team.

Download the Guidelines and similar documents on the Spirituality page at workingtogetherforrecovery.co.uk

The Chaplaincy Team

Here for you

We offer the human touch and a personal presence. We take a non-clinical, confidential, non-judgemental approach, and are here for you, whether you have a religious faith or not.

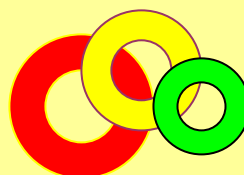
Who we are

John Nicholson ■ Alan Goddard ■ Andrew Neate
■ Evelyne Hanley ■ June Hughes

☎ 01223 218598

john.nicholson@cpft.nhs.uk

A resource provided by our mental health trust, bringing high quality pastoral care - training for mental health professionals, and groups in the voluntary sector - volunteer opportunities - worship - and emotional and spiritual support for staff and service users.



The Spiritual Healthcare Network

A professional focus on spirituality in healthcare

Open to all NHS employees in the East of England

"The place of spirituality in my practice"

Next Meeting on Feb 4th, 2009

1pm [to 3.30] at Victorian House
Capital Park [*next to Fulbourn Hospital*]

Contact John: ☎ 01223 218598

Feeling suicidal or desperate?
Remember - Samaritans on 08457 90 90 90 [24 hours] or
jo@samaritans.org
There's also the mental health Lifeline [7-11pm]
on 0808 808 2121 [free call].

You must not lose faith in humanity. Humanity is an ocean; if a few drops of the ocean are dirty, the ocean does not become dirty. *Mahatma Gandhi.*