

Spirituality And It's Influence On The Recovery From Alcoholism

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Abstract

Aim: It is important for nurses to understand that there is a difference between religion and spirituality. With this understanding, they are able to provide specific care for individuals in all settings, whether they are spiritual, religious, or a combination of the two. This project is a report of a literature search conducted to examine the difference between religion, and spirituality. It also examines the affiliation between spirituality and the rehabilitation program Alcoholics Anonymous (AA). Measures evaluating spirituality, religion, and relations between spirituality and its affect within the Alcoholics Anonymous rehabilitation program were reviewed. **Results:** Spirituality and religion are commonly used interchangeably, although many nurses and other health care professionals agree that the two are different (Sessanna et al 2011). Despite this, spirituality aides in maintaining sobriety in clients with alcoholism (Zenmore 2007). **Conclusion:** Despite the past research conducted on the differences between spirituality and religion, they are still used interchangeably, which constitutes that more research is needed. Both spirituality and religion play a role in the sobriety in patients with alcoholism.

Background

It is important for nurses to understand that there is a difference between religion and spirituality. With this understanding, they are able to provide specific, and personal care in all settings for individuals whether they are spiritual, religious, or a combination of the two. Alcoholism is a serious mental disease that takes time, determination, faith, and the support from loved ones and others to recover from. Sometimes individuals need another outlet such as spirituality, to help them get through their recovery. As a nursing student, I believe all nursing students, and nurses should have a deeper understanding of these concepts so that they are able to use this information to provide or refer their clients to the correct resources that could provide patient-centered care. Patient-centered care is considering the patient's cultural, personal preferences and values when planning their care. This is important in the alcoholism and the rehabilitation process because it promotes overall satisfaction of the patient, and enhances the effectiveness of nursing care.



Review Methods

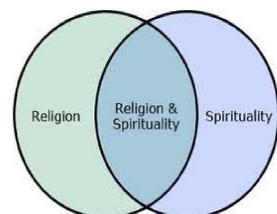
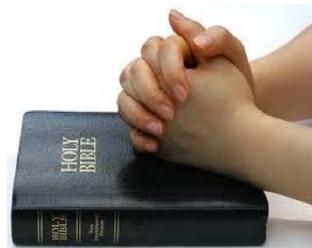
A literature search was performed. Measures evaluating spirituality, religion, and relations between spirituality and its affect within the rehabilitation program Alcoholics Anonymous were reviewed.

Results

Characteristics seen in spiritual individuals are: acceptance, comfort, feeling supported, forgiveness of self, hope, inner peace, life fulfillment, life meaning, life purpose, peace, sense of belonging, inner strength, transcendence, and being valued (Sessanna et al 2011).

Characteristics seen in religious individuals are: belief in the Bible, God, church affiliations, religious community, God's acceptance, God's love, and God's help, prayers, religious customs, religious restrictions, and religious practice (Sessanna et al 2011).

Spirituality and religion are commonly used interchangeably, although many nurses and other health care professionals agree that the two are different. "More research is needed to create and test the validity of scales that measure spirituality independent of religiosity or religious practice" (Sessanna et al 2011).



Results Continued

Spirituality may help address the psychological forces that underlie alcohol use. Alcoholics drink to feel normal, or complete. "Spirituality provides an alternative, transcendent sense of purpose" (Hodge 2011). Spirituality helps eliminate alcoholism by providing a feeling of wholeness or completeness without the use of alcohol. It opposes the desire to use by promoting a sense of meaning and purpose in one's life. Increases levels of spirituality are related to decreased levels or rates of alcohol use. Spirituality is a protective factor that hinders alcohol use and may aide recovery (Hodge 2011).

Religion may hinder alcohol use in many different ways, two of those being: positive peer groups, and moral values. Engaging in religious communities may decrease the probability of surrounding one's self with people who use alcohol. Residents in religious communities tend to be individuals who are less likely to use alcohol or use it very little. Creating friendships with other individuals who tend not to drink can help stop alcohol use. Engagement in religious communities may afflict moral values that forbid alcohol use. Through this exposure individuals may tend to adopt similar patterns in keeping with the values of their community and religion (Hodge 2011)



Conclusions

Despite the past research conducted on the difference in spirituality and religion, they are still used interchangeably, this constitutes that more research is needed on the topic. Both spirituality and religion have positive effects on abstinence from alcohol by promoting a sense of meaning and purpose in one's life, providing a feeling of wholeness or completeness without the use of alcohol, instill positive moral values, and maintaining healthy peer relationships within a community.

Data Resources

Databases searched, limited to the years 2006 and 2011, included CINAHL Plus with Full Text, MEDLINE with Full Text via EBSCO, Nursing Reference Center, and Google Scholar.

Keywords

Holistic care, spirituality, religion, Alcoholism, Alcoholics Anonymous (AA)

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