

World Summit on

# Psychiatry, Mental Health Nursing and Healthcare

International Conference on

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### Spirituality for holistic health and wellness

**Statement of the Problem:** Spirituality is one of four essential aspects of being human: biological, psychological, social and spiritual. Our wellness depends on the integrity of each of these aspects and their balanced interrelationship. Spirituality, therefore, is not a healing modality per se. Rather, it is an aspect of life that, like the others, may be "diseased" and may therefore require healing. The modalities for spiritual healing are the spiritual disciplines: prayer/meditation, forgiveness, service and religious practice (including such religious healing practices as the "laying on" of hands), among others. Because the four aspects of being are interdependent, weakness or illness in one inevitably strains the others. If the ill organism is to regain its balance and optimal functioning, the vitality of all four aspects must be addressed.

**Methodology, Theoretical Orientation and Findings:** Scientific surveys indicate that spirituality plays an important role in the majority of patients' lives. Ninety-four percent of patients believe doctors should ask the seriously ill about their religious beliefs. Sixty-four percent feel that physicians should pray with patients who request it and forty-five percent state that religion would influence their medical decisions if they were seriously ill. Twenty-five percent of patients report that they use prayer as a healing therapy for themselves.

**Conclusion & Significance:** Spiritual disciplines potentially improve coping skills and social support; foster feelings of optimism and hope; promote healthy behavior, such as avoidance of tobacco and alcohol; and reduce feelings of depression and anxiety. Spiritual practices can induce the relaxation response and allow people to participate in uplifting rituals. Thus, such practices ameliorate stress responses involving neurological, endocrine, immune and cardiovascular function. The effects of spirituality seem to be explained best by Mind-Body Medicine, now frequently referred to as psychoneuroimmunology, which represents bi-directional communication between the central nervous, neuroendocrine and immune systems.

### Biography

Romesh Jayasinghe DhC (USA), FRSPH (UK), FTBCCT (UK), M. Inst. Psy. is the Founder and Psychotherapist at the Institute of Mental Health (IMH) in Colombo-04, Sri Lanka. He is a professional counseling psychologist and a Certified Clinical Hypnotherapist and a Certified Master Life Coach who provided psychological interventions, hypnotherapy and cognitive and eclectic therapies for a variety of client groups with various emotional and psychological disorders including mood disorders, anxiety disorders, PTSD, eating disorders, sleep disorders, sexual dysfunctions and personality disorders. He also lectures at the Institute in the fields of general psychology, counseling psychology and psychotherapy, child and developmental psychology, educational psychology and abnormal psychology.

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