

SPIRITUAL ASSESSMENT TOOL – FICA[®]

Spiritual Assessment Tool

An **acronym** which can be used to remember what to ask in a spiritual history is:

- F: Faith or Beliefs
- I: Importance and Influence
- C: Community
- A: Address

Some specific questions you can use to discuss these issues are:

- F: What is your faith or belief?
Do you consider yourself spiritual or religious?
What things do you believe in that give meaning to your life?
- I: Is it important in your life?
What influence does it have on how you take care of yourself?
How have your beliefs influenced in your behavior during this illness??
What role do your beliefs play in regaining your health?
- C: Are you part of a spiritual or religious community?
Is this of support to you and how?
Is there a person or group of people you really love or who are really important to you?
- A: How would you like me, your healthcare provider to address these issues in your healthcare?

General recommendations when taking a spiritual history:

1. Consider spirituality as a potentially important component of every patient's physical well being and mental health.
2. Address spirituality at each complete physical exam and continue addressing it at follow-up visits if appropriate. In patient care, spirituality is an on-going issue.
3. Respect a patient's privacy regarding spiritual beliefs; don't impose your beliefs on others.
4. Make referrals to chaplains, spiritual directors or community resources as appropriate.
5. Be aware that your own spiritual beliefs will help you personally and will overflow in your encounters with those for whom you care to make the doctor-patient encounter a more humanistic one.

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Further References:

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 2. **Ibid: pg's 661 - 663**
 3. **Christina Puchalski; Spiritual Assessment in Clinical Practice; Psychiatric Annals; March 2006; 36,3 ; Psychology Module pg. 153**
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 6. **Ibid; page 6,7,8**
 7. **Christina Puchalski; Spiritual Assessment in Clinical Practice; Psychiatric Annals; March 2006; 36,3 ; Psychology Module pg. 152 (Ehman)**
 8. **Ibid pg 151**
 9. **Ibid pg 150 (Viktor Frankl)**
 10. **Puchalski, Christina and Romer, Anna; Taking a Spiritual History allows clinicians to understand patients more fully. Journal of Palliative Medicine Vol 3 No. 1, 2000 p.129**
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