Spirituality: A Pathway to Reconditioning, Reintegration, and Resilience

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“The Soldier’s heart, the Soldier’s spirit, the Soldier’s soul are everything. Unless the Soldier’s soul sustains him he cannot be relied upon and will fail himself, and his commander, and his country in the end.”

General George C. Marshall, United States Army Chief of Staff (1939 – 1945)
Human Beings

- Remarkably complex and complicated
- More than the sum of our parts
Presuppositions

- Soul, spirit or life force exists
- Spiritual growth is possible
- There is no one single pathway for spiritual development
Definition of Spirituality

- “the intrinsic human capacity for self-transcendence, in which, the self is embedded in something greater than the self, including the sacred,” and which motivates, “the search for connectedness, meaning, purpose, and contribution.”

- Different than religiosity

More Definitions

- **Meaning** - defining, making sense, or understanding events in life
- **Values** - cherished beliefs and standards
- **Transcendence** - beyond one’s self
- **Connection** - link or perceived link
Spirituality and Health

“...the scientific study of spirituality and health is a very new field. There has been a five-fold increase in research on spirituality and religion, which from 1990-2007 reflects the growing increase in this topic within healthcare and psychology and spirituality.”

Military Medicine International Journal of AMSUS, Supplement to Vol. 175, Issue 8, August 2010
Evidence

• Koenig Study – “Unlike many other coping resources, religion is available to anyone at any time, regardless of financial, social, physical, or mental circumstances.”

• Smith Study – “Healthy spirituality may be related to increases in both resilience and positive emotions and that resilience and positive emotions may have a reciprocal influence on each other.”

• Center for Spiritual Leadership, FJSC – “A healthy positive spirituality can have numerous benefits on one’s overall health.”
# Center for Spiritual Leadership, FJSC

## Health and Physical Well Being

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Pathways

- Prayer
- Study of Sacred Writing
- Meditation
- Story Telling or Journaling
- Service
- Alms
- Spiritual Direction
- Fasting
- Yoga
- Art
Pathways - Prayer

- Basic method of communication - practiced by anyone, at anytime and anywhere
- Variety
- Location – preparation – position – prescription - conclusion
Pathways – The Study of Sacred Writings

- Every tradition has sacred writings
- Location – Methodology - Conclusion
Pathways - Meditation

- Traditionally an eastern practice
- Quiet inner conflict and open mind and soul to the influence from a different power
- Concentrative meditation
- Mindfulness meditation
- Contemplative meditation
- Location – Position - Instruction
Pathways - Storytelling or Journaling

- Long and diverse with multiple purposes
- Serve as a therapeutic tool
- Gestalt psychologists’ - when individuals experience trauma - they disconnect from their core identity
- Location – Methodology - Conclusion
Pathways - Service

• “In the end, the number of prayers we say may contribute to our happiness, but the number of prayers we answer may be of even greater importance.” -- Dieter Friedrich Uchtdorf (German aviator, born 1940)

• Altruistic behavior - famous and not

• Motives: other-oriented emotional reaction - empathy, compassion, sympathy, or pity - without expectation, collectivism and/or principlism

• Empathy-based tactics
Pathways - Alms

- Sharing of resources – mercy
- Voluntarily or as an act of obligation
- Common thread - secretly or privately
- Due diligence
Pathways – Spiritual Direction

- Personal trainers
- Conversations always return to the divine
- Self discovery
- What do you hope to achieve?
- Seek a guide, counselor or friend. Due Diligence!!
- Stay the course
Pathways – Fasting

- Cleanse and rebalance
- Medically supervised
- May be used in combination with other disciplines
Pathways – Yoga

- To yoke, to unite, to join together – a bridge
- Variety of types
- Pain relief, boost in mental performance, stress reduction, calm, concentration, overall strength, and flexibility
- Medical supervision – Due Diligence!! – Friend/Family
Pathways – Art

- Link between creativity and expression
- Variety of methodologies
- Creations which change
Conclusion

- No single platform
- Scientific and anecdotal evidence
- Connecting and healing
- Life changing

Questions?