Use of Spirituality in Healing & Recovery in Substance Abuse Treatment

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Workshop Objectives

- Develop an understanding of varied spirituality based perspectives used in the recovery process.

- Participants will increase their skills in working with substance population.

- Develop an understanding of the client/worker relationship in the context of using spirituality based approaches to helping.

- Review the FICA spiritual assessment’s application as part of treatment.
Spirituality is.....

- There are varied definitions
  - Blakely (2016) Individual’s belief, faith in and personal relationship with God/higher power that transcends human limitations
  - Twerski (1997) “spiritual life” includes the ability of the person to be responsible, to be trusting, to achieve a deeper level of intimacy and realize his or her personal growth.
Spirituality Promotes

- Purpose of existence
- Ways to better oneself
- Builds self-esteem
- Delay gratification
- Think about long term consequences of actions
The Importance of the “Helper”

- The social worker or counselor role is to foster the clients’ journey to recovery.

- Establishing clear boundaries at the start is important to maintaining the therapeutic relationship.
Importance of “Helper”

- It’s the provider’s responsibility to keep the process realistic for the client and oneself.

- The key is encouraging the client to express their feelings and use their coping skills.
Do’s & Don’t in Helping

- **Do**
  - Encourage expression
  - Explore strengths
  - Be honest
  - Check your own emotions

- **Don’t**
  - Give opinions
  - Be judgmental
  - Don’t make excuses for your client’s
  - Take over your client’s recovery
Client Centered

- Built on establishing a partnership between the provider and client, where decision making and responsibility for care is shared.
- Focuses on building trust and open communication.
- Recognizes the strengths and capabilities of the client.
Client Centered

- Allows space for the provider to guide the client.

- Allows the provider and client to learn continuously reinforcing success throughout the treatment process.
Spirituality in the recovery process

- Spirituality in the recovery process reflects an important aspect of human diversity.

- Spirituality may be a great source of strength for clients.
Recovery Process, cont’d

- Spirituality helps to foster a sense of meaning, purpose and mission in life.

- Providers can use spirituality to help the client focus on forgiveness, building healthy relationships with others and self in order to maintain sobriety.
Recovery Process, cont’d

- The provider must be careful not to impose their own religious or spiritual views upon the client.

- As the provider it’s imperative you understand your own religious and spiritual convictions in order to maintain clear boundaries between your beliefs and those of your client.
Spiritual-based Perspectives

- **Strengths Perspective**
  - Utilize clients’ identified strengths to help them understand their existence and purpose for staying in recovery.

- **Empowerment Perspective**
  - Gives clients a sense of self-determination and ownership for becoming substance free and staying in recovery.
Strengths Perspective

- Focuses on identifying resources, assets and knowledge that the clients brings to the change process.

- Emphasis on working collaboratively with the client.

- Promotes client self-determination.
Strength Perspective

- Spirituality represents an important strength that can foster resilience by helping the clients find meaning in their difficulties.

- Specifically related to substance misuse spirituality has been linked to positive outcomes. (Lietz & Hodge, 2016)
Strength Perspective

- The internal strength is a client learning to lean on their beliefs to support decision making.

- The external strength is built through a client’s membership in a faith community to increase social connections and support.
Strength

**For the Client:**
- Means by which an individual is open to identifying supports and resources that can support the recovery process.

**For the Therapist/Counselor:**
- You encouraging the client to think outside of the box by introducing activities that tap into the inner strength not yet recognized by the client. Spirituality can be introduced as a strength.
Empowerment Perspective

- Emphasizes the process of helping the client to discover and expend the resources and tools within and around them.

- Helping process to assist the client in using their strengths to overcome challenges (i.e. substance use).
Empowerment Perspective

- Emphasis is on positive and optimistic view of challenges in one's life.
- Plays an integral part in healing during the recovery process.
Empowerment

- For the Client:
  - Means by which an individual becomes able to take control of their circumstances, thereby being able to work toward helping themselves.

- For the Therapist/Counselor:
  - You engaging in a set of activities with your client that’s aim to reduce a sense of powerlessness based on being identified within a stigmatized group.
Healing in Recovery

- Healing is the process of restoring balance or wholeness in one's life.

- This includes equilibrium between mind, body, and spirit.
Healing in Recovery

- This requires a supportive environment that includes:
  - Therapist/Counselor
  - Family & Friends
  - Sponsor
  - Church or spiritual family
Social Worker/Counselor Role

- Help your client tackle the problem from the beginning.

- Bolster motivation in your client.
- Work with your client’s feelings constantly.

- Help client to restructure their thoughts by gently sharing information
Social Worker/Counselor Role

- Maintain Progress
  - Update and review with client as necessary.

- Develop Power
  - Assert client privileges in the worker/client relationship. Have client take ownership.

- Recognizing Change
  - Offer feedback, reflect client actions, examine behavior toward staying in recovery.
Assessment Tools

- Useful in considering spirituality as an important component in the recovery process.

- Allows spirituality to be introduced as part of the overall assessment of needs.
FICA

- Assessment used in palliative care and end of life in relations to healthcare outcome.

- Explores components that are transferable to substance abuse treatment

  - F – Faith or beliefs
  - I – Importance and Influence
  - C – Community
  - A – Address
FICA used in Substance Abuse Treatment

- Does faith or belief in a higher power exist?
- Can this existence have influence or be seen as important in recovery?
- Is there a support community or individuals who are perceived as important?
- How can these issues be addressed in the client’s treatment?
Applying FICA in Substance Abuse Recovery

CASE STUDY
THANK YOU

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References