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Bonavita, Anthony
Yakushko, Oksana
Consoli, Melissa L Morgan
et al.

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Receiving Spiritual Care

Experiences of Dying and Grieving Individuals

Anthony Bonavita , Oksana Yakushko , Melissa L. Morgan
Consoli , ...

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Abstract

The study examines the perceptions of interfaith spiritual care, received through a volunteer hospice organization, by 10 individuals facing death and dying. Qualitative methodology based on the Interpretive Phenomenological Analysis was used to collect and analyze the data. Four superordinate themes reflected meanings ascribed to spirituality and spiritual care in facing end of life: Vital Role of Spirituality in the End-of-Life Care, Definitions and Parameters of Spirituality and Interfaith Spiritual Care, Distinct Aspects of Interfaith Spiritual Care, and Unmet Spiritual Needs. The results expand an understanding of the role of spirituality and spiritual care as part of the hospice and palliative care through attention to individual perceptions and experiences, as well as to ways to expand attention to spirituality within the hospice care.

Author Biographies

Anthony Bonavita, M.Div received his degree from Naropa University and worked as a hospice and hospital chaplain for over ten years in both Denver, CO and Santa Barbara, CA. Currently he is completing doctorate in clinical psychology at Pacifica Graduate Institute and working in private practice as a psychological assistant. His research interests include the intersection of Buddhist practice and depth psychological

perspectives.

Oksana Yakushko, is a professor and Chair of clinical psychology department at Pacifica Graduate Institute, Carpinteria, CA. Her scholarly work has included focus on diversity, spirituality, and depth psychological perspectives (Jungian, psychoanalytic, feminist, post-colonial). Her approach to scholarly inquiry emphasizes human sciences and qualitative perspectives that focus on human meaning, social contexts, relational dynamics, implicit values, and existential concerns.

Melissa L. Morgan Consoli, is an associate professor in the Counseling, Clinical and School Psychology Department at the University of California, Santa Barbara. Her research interests lie in the areas of wellness and healing, spirituality, social justice and immigration, with an emphasis on Latino/a populations. She studies these issues cross-culturally, including international, national and immigrant populations. Dr. Morgan Consoli has published as well as given multiple presentations and trainings . She teaches academic courses on multicultural issues, theories, gender issues, ethnic and racial issues in counseling, and prevention.

Steve Jacobsen, M Div, Ed. D, was a pastor for 27 years during which he published a book and 11 articles on the relationship of spirituality to a variety of topics, including secular work, leadership, and digital technology. In 2000 he was a Visiting Scholar the Department of Religious Studies at UCSB. He served as Executive Director of Hospice of Santa Barbara from 2008–2013, then become Director at La Casa de Maria Retreat and Conference Center which serves 200 nonprofit and spiritual groups annually.

Rev. Laura L. Mancuso, MS, CRC is an interfaith minister who serves the Santa Barbara community as an end-of-life chaplain, spiritual advisor, and grief counselor. Rev. Mancuso previously worked as a spiritual care counselor at Hospice of Santa Barbara, and is now the spiritual life program leader at Vista del Monte Retirement Community and an advance care planning facilitator with The Alliance for Living & Dying Well of Santa Barbara and Sansum Clinic. She strives to honors all faith traditions, as well as the spiritual paths and life philosophies of those who do not adhere to any religion.

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