



MISTIC TOOLKIT

Prompting conversation on spirituality and mental health

Spirituality means different things to different people. Some people express their spirituality through religion and some people express it in less traditional or formal ways. Essentially, spirituality is about what gives us meaning, purpose and connection in life and because of that it can be connected with mental health, wellbeing and recovery.

Both spirituality and mental health are topics which can be difficult to talk about. However many people find that their spirituality can support their wellbeing and mental health. Research also suggests that spirituality can help people to cope with mental health difficulties. However navigating both spirituality and mental health can be challenging, particularly when there is lack of support or guidance.

The 'Spirituality Project' conducted as ESRC-funded research at The University of Nottingham seeks to understand more about people's own experiences about this topic. As part of this study, a framework was developed which describes what participants in published research said was important in relation to their spirituality and mental health. The framework has six main themes, which form the acronym 'MISTIC'.

These themes can be used as reflective tools for wellbeing, mental health and spirituality and some questions have been created to support this process.



MISTIC Toolkit

Use this toolkit to reflect on your spirituality and mental health

To find out more visit: researchintorecovery.com/mistic
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To read about the research project:

Milner K, Crawford P, Edgley A, Hare Duke L, Slade M (2020)

The experiences of spirituality among adults with mental health difficulties: a qualitative systematic review, *Epidemiology and Psychiatric Sciences*, 29, e34.



M MEANING MAKING

Spirituality can help some people to make sense of their lives and mental health and this can support recovery.

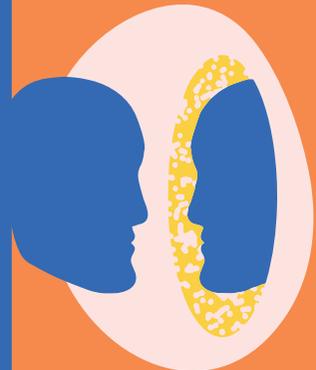
What gives your life meaning?
How do you make sense of life and its challenges?
How does your spirituality provide you with guidance or opportunities for learning?



T TALK ABOUT IT

Some people find it helpful to talk about their mental health and spiritual experiences. As well as offering a listening ear, talking may lead to finding support and services.

If it would be helpful, who could you talk to about your mental health, wellbeing or spirituality?
Could someone help you find someone suitable and trustworthy to talk to?



I IDENTITY

Spirituality is central to some people's identity which can play an important role in mental health and recovery.

What is important to your sense of self and what you value?
How does spirituality support and nurture you and your personal development?



I INTERRUPTION

Mental health and spiritual experiences can be confusing. They can be disruptive or interact with each other in challenging ways so it may be important to seek support.

Is there anything confusing or challenging about your spirituality and mental health?
Do your mental health and spirituality sometimes negatively impact each other?



S SERVICE PROVISION

It can be important to seek help during times of difficulty, such as from mental health services. Chaplaincy services and spiritual communities or teachers may provide support or guidance.

Do you seek outside help when you need it?
What sources of support do you turn to?
Are there any additional types of support which might be helpful?



C COPING

Spirituality can help people to cope and recover from mental health difficulties. It can do this in many ways, such as through connecting with spirituality, practices and communities.

What helps you to cope with difficulties?
How does spirituality or religion help you to cope?
Are there any spiritual practices, rituals, communities or places you find helpful?