



**St Margaret's**  
Hospice Care

# Spiritual care at end of life

Developing a model in the community



## Spiritual Care - 'What is it'?

“Spiritual Care is that care which recognises and responds to the needs of the human spirit when faced with trauma, ill health or sadness. It can include the need for meaning, self-worth, faith support (perhaps for rites or prayer or sacraments) or simply for a sensitive listener.”

*NHS Education for Scotland*

The word ‘spiritual’ finds its roots in the Latin word ‘spiritus’ which means breath. We can then ask the question ‘what breathes life into you?’ Or to put it another way ‘what gives you a sense of meaning and purpose in life?’

*North London Hospice*

“If you talk to a man in a language he understands that goes to his head.  
If you speak to a man in his language that goes to his heart.”

*Nelson Mandela*

“.....Each one heard them speaking in their own language.”

*Acts 2:6*

“When one is at home in oneself, one is integrated and enjoys a sense of balance and poise. In a sense that is exactly what spirituality is: the art of homecoming.” “Home is where the heart is.”

*John O'Donohue*

“Spirituality is universal, deeply personal and individual; it goes beyond formal notions of ritual or religious practice to encompass the unique capacity of each individual. It is at the core and essence of who we are, that spark which permeates the entire fabric of the person and demands that we are all worthy of dignity and respect. It transcends intellectual capability, elevating the status of all humanity.”

*Professor Wilf McSherry*

“Take off your shoes, for you are on holy ground.  
Become vulnerable, for you are on holy ground.  
Be sensitive, for you are on holy ground.  
Lay down your defences. You are on holy ground.”

*Penelope Wilcock*

## Definitions, words and understandings

- what do we mean by 'spiritual care' and 'end of life'
- other words and phrases

## Taking a look at ourselves

- what gives our own life meaning and purpose?

## Caring for those of all faiths and none, including

- presence
- time
- listening
- silence
- 'soul midwifery'
- empowerment
- spiritual/emotional resilience
- focus and meaning
- acceptance or denial
- effects of medication
- touch
- entering the darkness
- wholeness



## Faith Perspectives

- a look at theology
- the Sacraments of the Church
- Bible passages
- anger at God
- the loneliness of unanswered prayer
- how and what to pray for in the prayer(s)
- allowing God to be in charge

## Supporting 'Self Support'

- spiritual resilience
- meditation; use of imagery; poustinia; labyrinth
- types of prayer

**Loss and Bereavement Following Diagnosis • Advance Care Planning • Caring for the Carer(s) • Caring for those with Complex Needs • Confidentiality • Caring for Ourselves • Reflecting on Our Own Death • Reflection Model – 'The Three Levels of Seeing' • Resources**

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