*Supplement 1:* SPIR [27]

S: Would you describe yourself – in the broadest sense of the term – as a believing/spiritual/religious person?

P: What is the place of spirituality in your life? How important is it in the context of your illness?

I: Are you integrated in a spiritual community?

R: What role would you like to assign to your doctor, nurse or therapist in the domain of spirituality?

*Supplement 2:* 4 Standardized Patients

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|  | Case 1 | Case 2 | Case 3 | Case 4 |
| Name, age in years | Georg Müller, 78 | Gert Wermut, 70  | Irina Kaufmann, 72 | Erna Stocker, 85 |
| Profession (all retired), marital status, children | Worked in a bank for 40 years, wife passed away six months ago, no children | Chemistry teacher, married, one son (at college) | Housewife, married, two adult children | Accountant, early retirement due to heavy migraine. Therefore, very small pension. Husband died 10 years ago.1 child died at age 10, one daughter living in the US. |
| Diagnosis | Insulin-dependent diabetes type 2, takes all medication regularly, diabetic polyneuropathy, high blood pressure, chronic back problems. | COPD (active smoker) and asthma, high blood pressure, GERD. | High blood pressure, but not taking medication, prefers complementary and subtle medication, such as homeopathy. Sleeplessness. | Activated gonarthrosis, migraine, coronary heart disease, previous heart attack, high blood pressure, renal failure stage 2 |
| Current medical issues | Rise in blood sugar level despite medication | COPD aggravation, which hinders patient from playing saxophone in his band | Rise in blood pressure and restlessness, sleeplessness | Activated gonarthrosis, is unable to kneel and work in her garden |
| DMP (disease management programme) | Diabetes  | COPD | CHD | CHD |
| Mood/ disposition | Sad, lonely, but not depressed. Was emotionally dependent on his wife. Neglects himself and lacks motivation to become active. Withdrawn. | Mood is normal. Slightly irritated, especially when asked about spiritual orientation. | Exalted, “hyper-spiritual”, restless due to high blood pressure. Also, lonely. | Haggard, bitter, brooding, demoralised. But not depressed or suicidal. Responds positively to therapist’s optimistic offers and empathy. |
| S: Would you describe yourself – in the broadest sense of the term – as a believing/spiritual/religious person? | “Why do you ask? While my wife was alive, we used to go to church together and I grew up as a believing Christian. But now I really have no need or desire for this….” | “I have nothing to do with religion and the church. Why do you ask? I do believe in a higher power. But I also believe in facts. I derive much energy from playing in my band. But really, this is none of your business.” | “Yes, definitely, but not in a Christian sense. I believe we are all one, one with nature, that there are energy fields that surround us and that can heal us.” | “I used to be religious. But I have lost my faith. I cannot pray to a God who allows such great misfortune. I do love gardening, though, in my own little garden or taking care of graves. This gives me energy.” |
| P: What is the place of spirituality in your life? How important is it in the context of your illness? | “While my wife was alive, we were part of our church community and went to church every Sunday. But now I really cannot pray anymore, though I do believe in an afterlife.”  | “All I really want to do is play in my band. If I am no longer able to play the saxophone with my band, then I may as well just die!” | “I am not sure you would understand this, but I do believe that the subtle energies that surround us and nature have an immense influence on all of us. This knowledge is very important to me.” | “Faith has no importance to me. I have to deal with my own, unfortunate, everyday life somehow.…” |
| I: Are you integrated in a spiritual community?  | “My family used to be very religious. That was very good for me, gave me comfort. But that was so long ago…” | “Just recently, I was practicing the saxophone in church for a meditation. This really moved me. But it has nothing to do with church or religion.” | “I like to meet friends, sometimes. And at times I take classes at the adult education center.” | I have a few acquaintances, but most of my friends have died or are in an old folks’ home. Sometimes I think about going there too because I could use some company. But really I cannot afford it…”  |
| R: What role would you like to assign to your doctor, nurse or therapist in the domain of spirituality? | “Hm, I never really thought about that. Do you think I ought to go to church again? I just don’t know what I should do there all alone, without my wife….” | “It really is none of your business. I can discuss my private thoughts with my wife!” | “I am very pleased that you are asking about my spirituality!” | “Well, if you think you could help me find more support or even make new friends, I actually wouldn’t mind.” |
| Learning objectives | To learn to recognise loneliness in simple patients who show only few or no symptoms (in this case only aggravation of blood sugar level). | Dealing with skeptical patients who resist spiritual offers. Encouragement to continue playing the saxophone. | Patients with “exalted” spirituality, neglecting physical care: high blood pressure, sleeplessness, restlessness. Aid in focusing on physical exercises and home remedies. | Learn to encourage patients who are bitter, resentful and demoralised to find and make use of resources. |
| Bridge from GPs to MAs for further interventions, such as regional social activity offers and/or home remedies | Referral to MA: check web-portal for local offers;encourage to engage in congregational activities and to make use of pastoral counselling. | Needs neither spiritual nor local offers. He really just needs the doctor for medical advice. Referral to MA:Possible home remedies to alleviate cough: thyme tea, warm oil compresses. | Referral to MA for home remedies, relaxation exercises to reduce anxiety, physical exercises to ground patient and let her become more assertive, web-portal to meet people (to reduce loneliness). | Referral to MA for local offers; neighborly help;Home remedies against pain to wean from ibuprofen, such as quark poultice. |