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Why Conduct a Spiritual Assessment? A Theoretical Foundation for Assessment

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Abstract

In spite of increased interest in spirituality, the concept of a spiritual assessment remains a questionable practice in the eyes of many social workers. This paper develops five rationales to underscore the importance of including spirituality in assessment. These reasons can be summarized as follows: spiritual assessment provides insight into clients' world views, serves as a vehicle to identify strengths, and demonstrates respect for client autonomy. In addition, the profession's ethics implicitly recommend the administration of a spiritual assessment and, for a growing number of accrediting organizations and agencies, it is explicitly recommended. This paper concludes by discussing the implications for practitioners and educators.

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