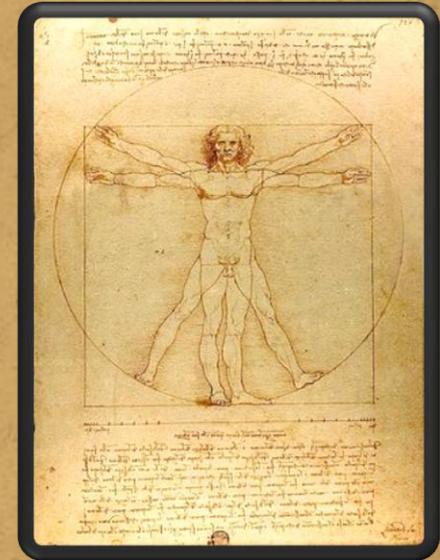


Healing for the Terminally Ill

Reframing Meaning at the End of Life

Objectives for this Workshop

1. A clearer understanding of the loss of meaning pain and symptoms
2. A deeper appreciation for the concept of healing vs. cure
3. Specific approaches to use in alleviating suffering caused by loss of meaning



The Importance of Meaning

Spirituality is the aspect of humanity that refers to the way individuals seek and express meaning and purpose and the way they experience their connectedness to the moment, to self, to others, to nature, and to the significant or sacred.

Christina Puchalski
Making Health Care Whole

The Importance of Meaning

**As the body cannot live without food,
so the soul cannot live without
meaning.**

Richard Rohr
Falling Upwards



Signs of Meaning Loss

- Loss of long-held beliefs/practices
- Seeking forgiveness, feeling abandoned
- Depression/isolation/anger
- Anxiety over “being a burden”
- Non-compliance with POC
- Unexplained symptoms

Michael Rabow, MD
Palliative Care of the Soul

The Painful Existential Questions

Signs of Meaning Loss

Why me?
Why now?
What did I do to deserve this?
Why won't God take me?
There must be some purpose
for me?
Is there hope?
Can I be forgiven?
What happens when I die?
How long will this last?
How will I be remembered?



Meaning Loss is an Opportunity

If you get rid of the pain before you answer its questions, you get rid of the Self (psyche or the soul) along with it.

Carl Jung





Healing vs. Cure

- To be healed means to regain wholeness in the physical, emotional, intellectual, social, and spiritual aspect of human experience
- Healing is independent of illness, impairment, cure of disease, or death
- Healing is the personal experience of transcendence of suffering

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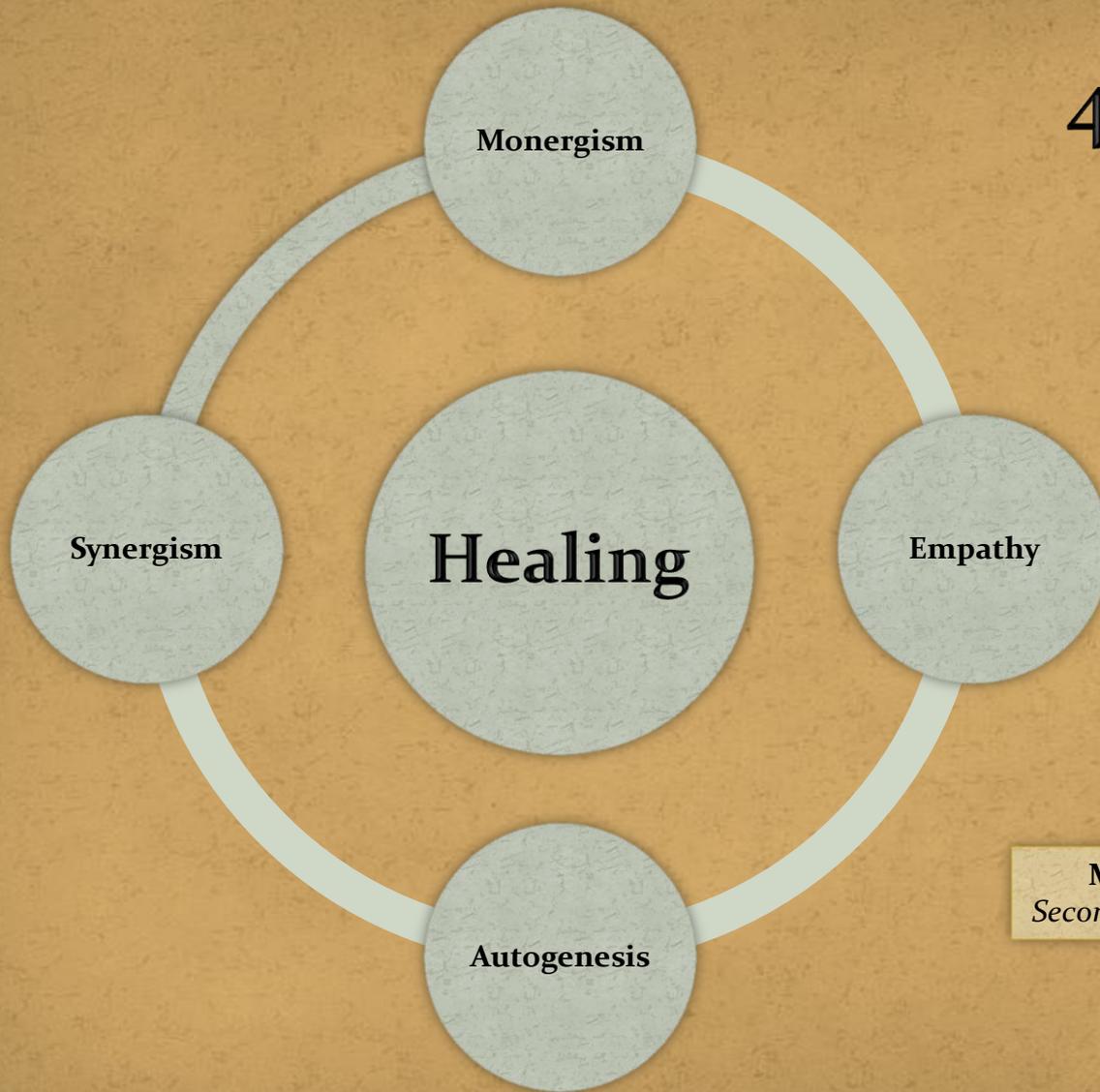


Healing vs. Cure

Healing is also effective when the individual experience of illness has been made meaningful, personal suffering shared, and the individual leaves the marginal situation of sickness and is reincorporated — in health or even death — back into the social body.

John Pilch
Healing in the New Testament

4 Spiritual views of Healing



Martin Marty
Second Opinion 7, 1988

Approaches

William Breitbart

Individual Meaning-Centered Psychotherapy

1. Summary of concepts and sources of meaning
2. Cancer and meaning
- 3 & 4. Meaning from a historical context of life
5. Meaning from attitudinal values
6. Meaning from creative values & responsibility
7. Meaning through experiential values
8. Termination and feedback.

Harvey Chochinov

Dignity Therapy

Approaches

- When did you feel most alive?
- Are there things that you would want your family to know or remember about you?
- What are the most important roles you have played in your life?
- Why were they important to you?
- What are your hopes and dreams for your loved ones?
- What have you learned about life that you would want to pass along to others?

Approaches

Gary Smalley & John Trent
from *The Gift of the Blessing*

1. meaningful touch
2. spoken words
3. expressing high value
4. picturing a special future
5. offering an active commitment to see that future become reality

Various Approaches I Use

Approaches

1. Simply **Listening**, breaks the isolation of existential suffering
2. Teaching surviving loved ones how to die
3. The Gift of Receiving, invitation to intimacy
4. Thanking the dying Patient for what they have taught me.



Various Other Ideas

Rabow & McPhee

Approaches

Intrapersonal

How are you within yourself?

What does your illness/dying mean to you?

What do you think is needed for you to be healed?

Interpersonal

Who is important to you?

To whom does your illness/dying matter?

Do you have any unfinished business with significant others?

Transpersonal

What is your source of strength, help, or hope?

Do you have spiritual concerns or a spiritual practice?

How does your spirituality relate to your illness?

What do you think is trying to happen here?



Approaches

**When we sit with a dying person,
we understand that what is
before us is not a “problem to
be solved” but a mystery to be
honored.**

Parker Palmer
A Hidden Wholeness

Trust



**May you have the
commitment to know
what has hurt you, to
allow it to come close
to you, and in the end
to become one with
you.**

- Gaelic Blessing