



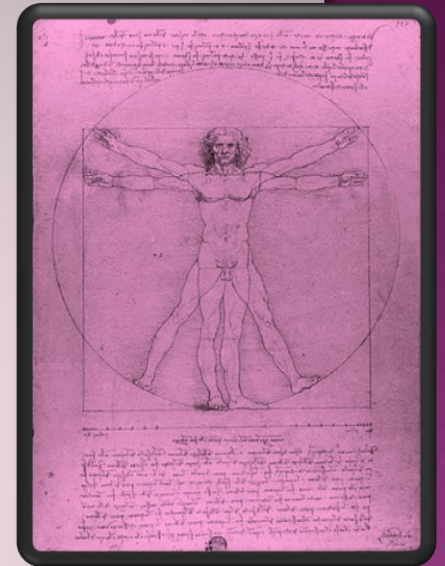
Spiritual Midwives

A Narrative Approach to
Providing Palliative Care

Fred Grewe, DMin, BCC

Objectives for this Workshop

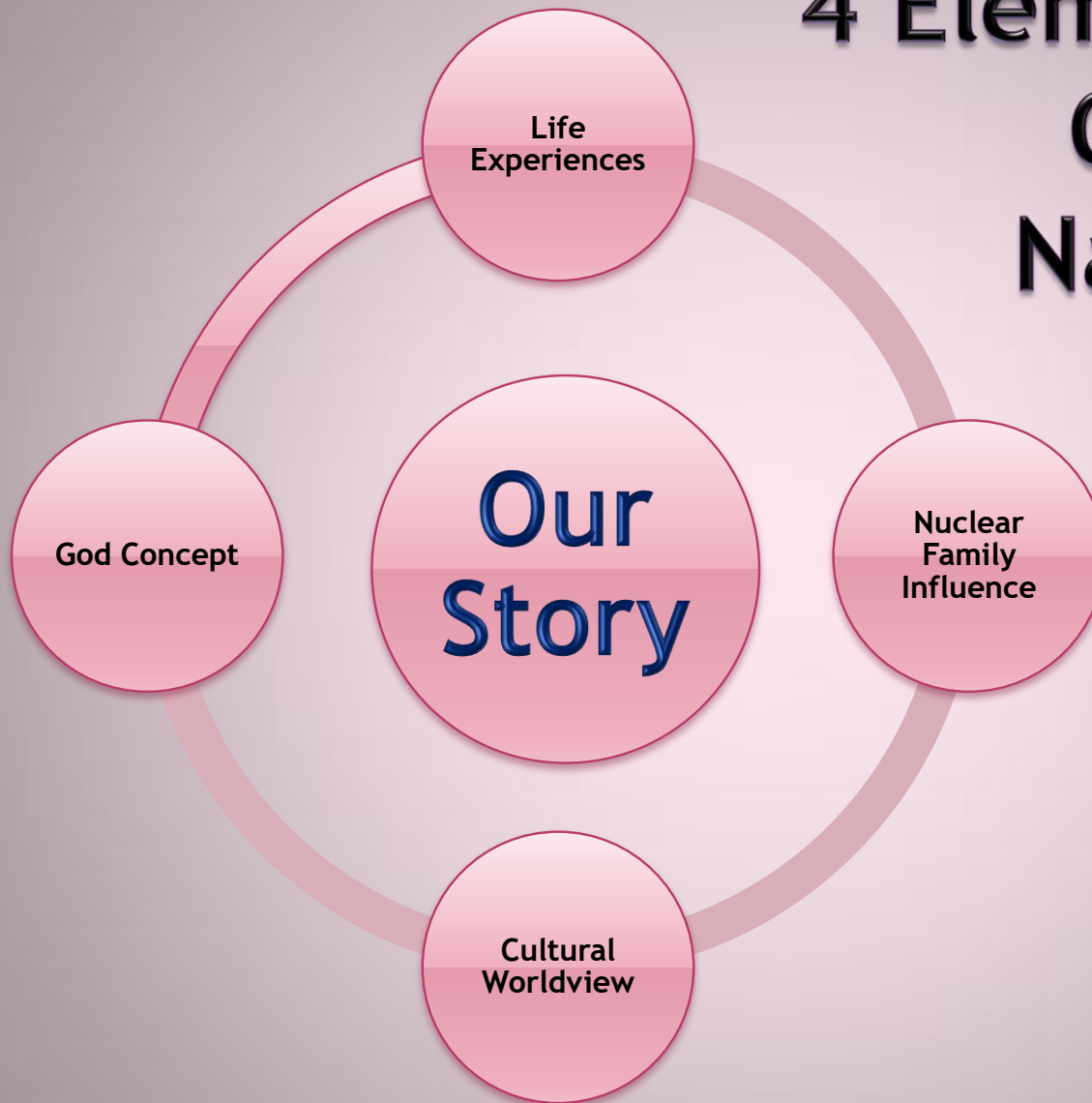
1. We will explore the need of patients to be author's of their own life narrative to achieve a sense of spiritual peace in the midst of their disease process
2. We will consider some practical tools for a team approach in aiding patients stuck in this life scripting project

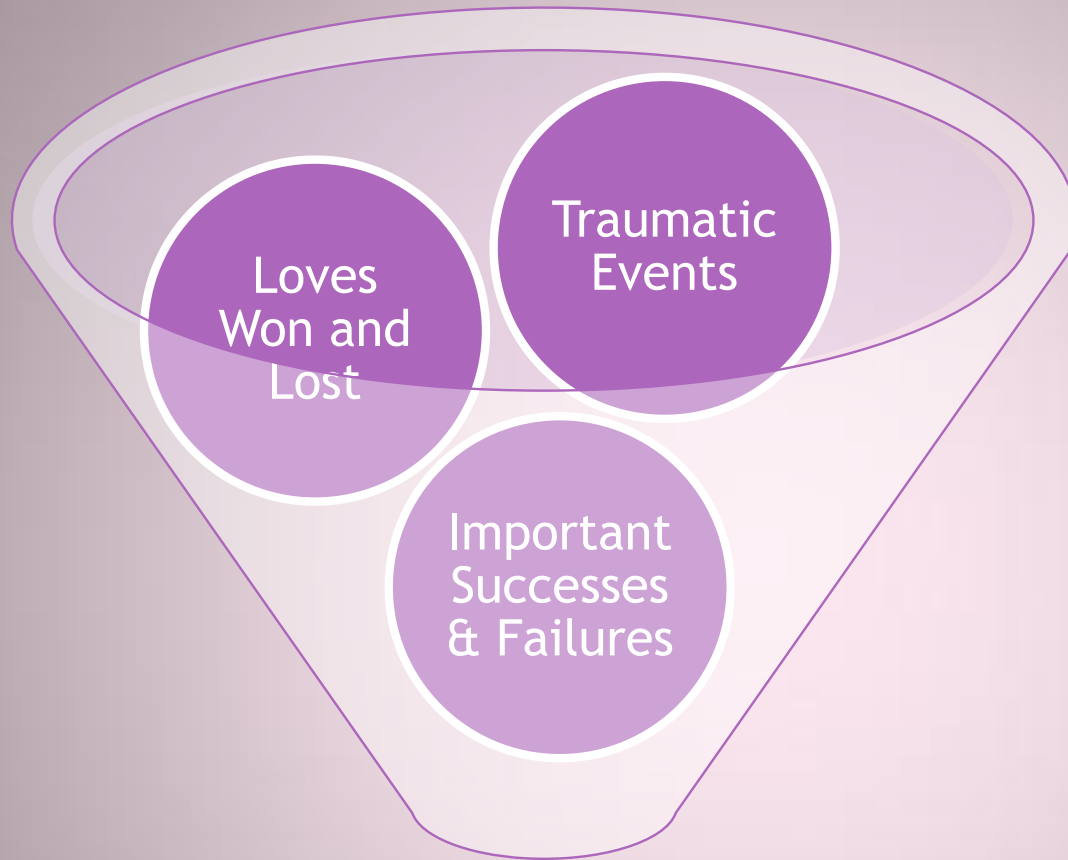


*“We are made not merely of flesh
and blood, but of stories ...”*

African Proverb

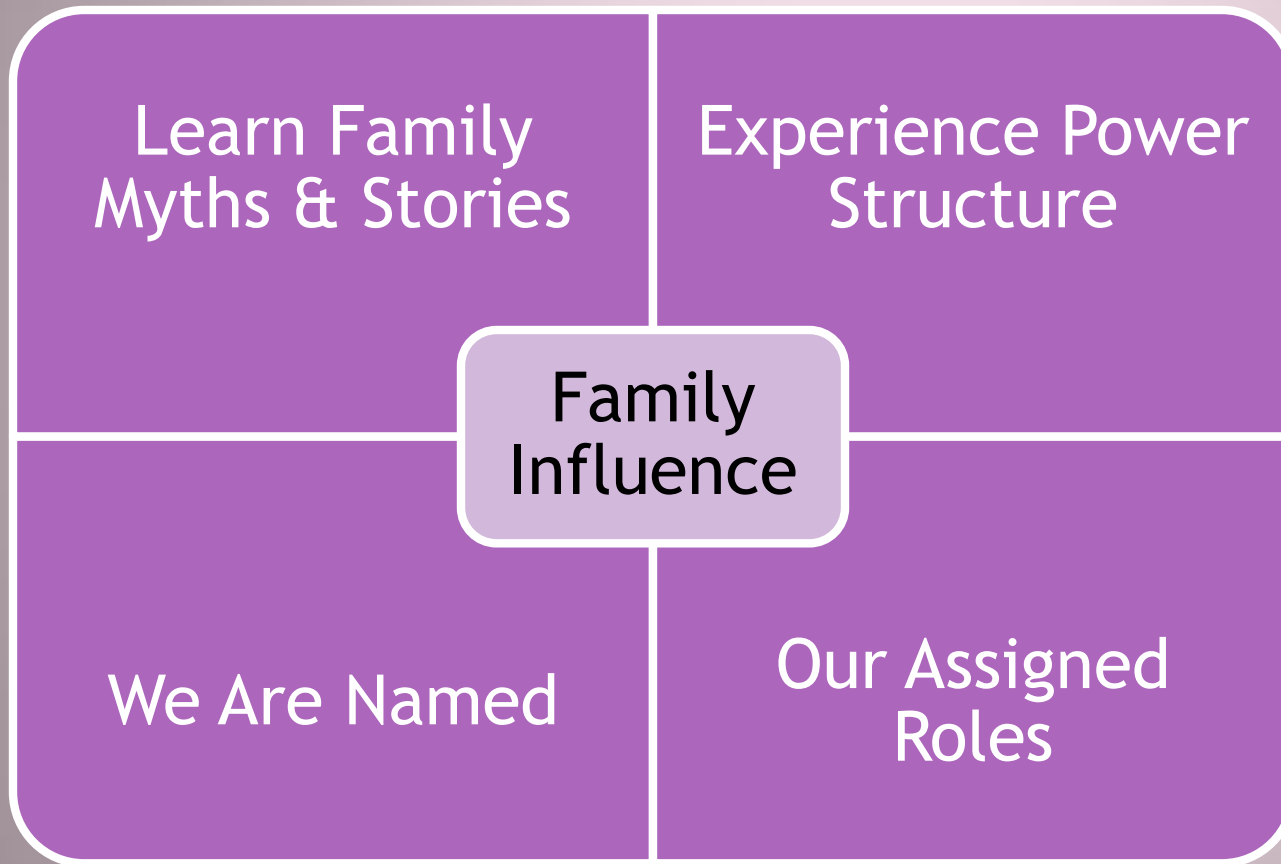
4 Elements of Our Life Narrative



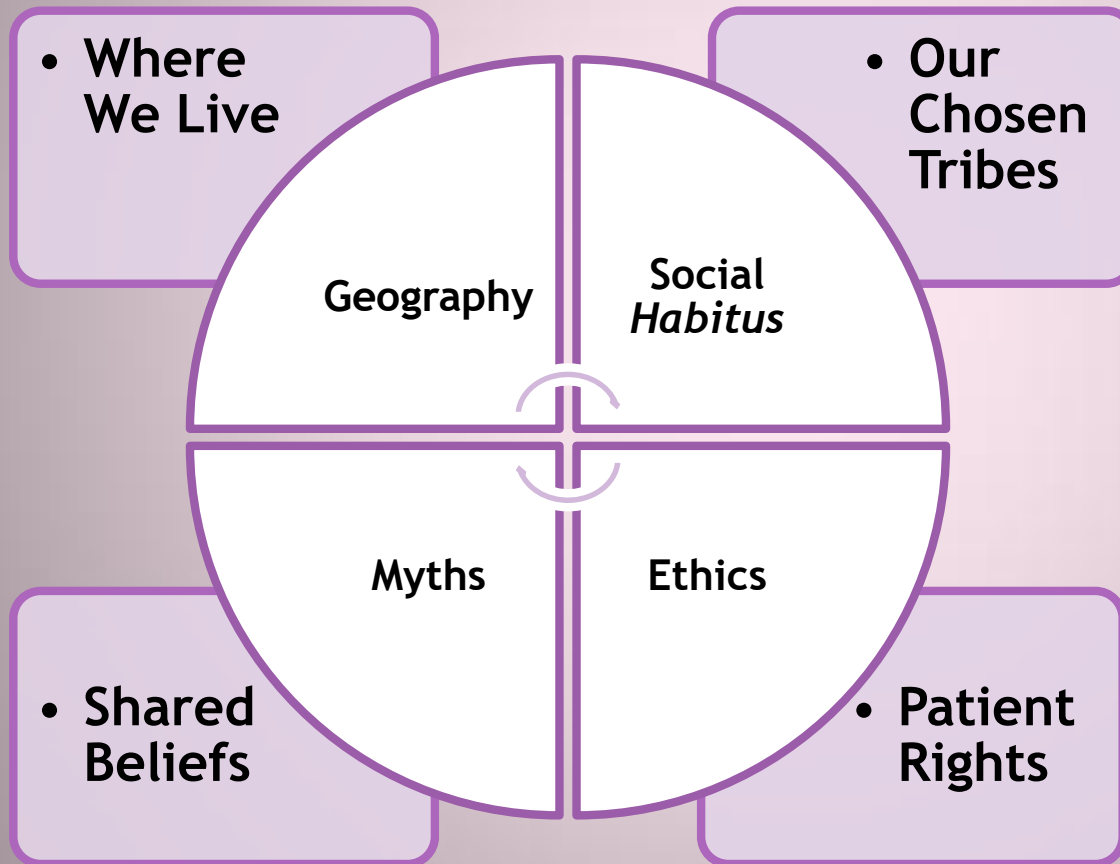


Life Experiences

Nuclear Family Influence



Cultural Worldview



God Concept

Judge

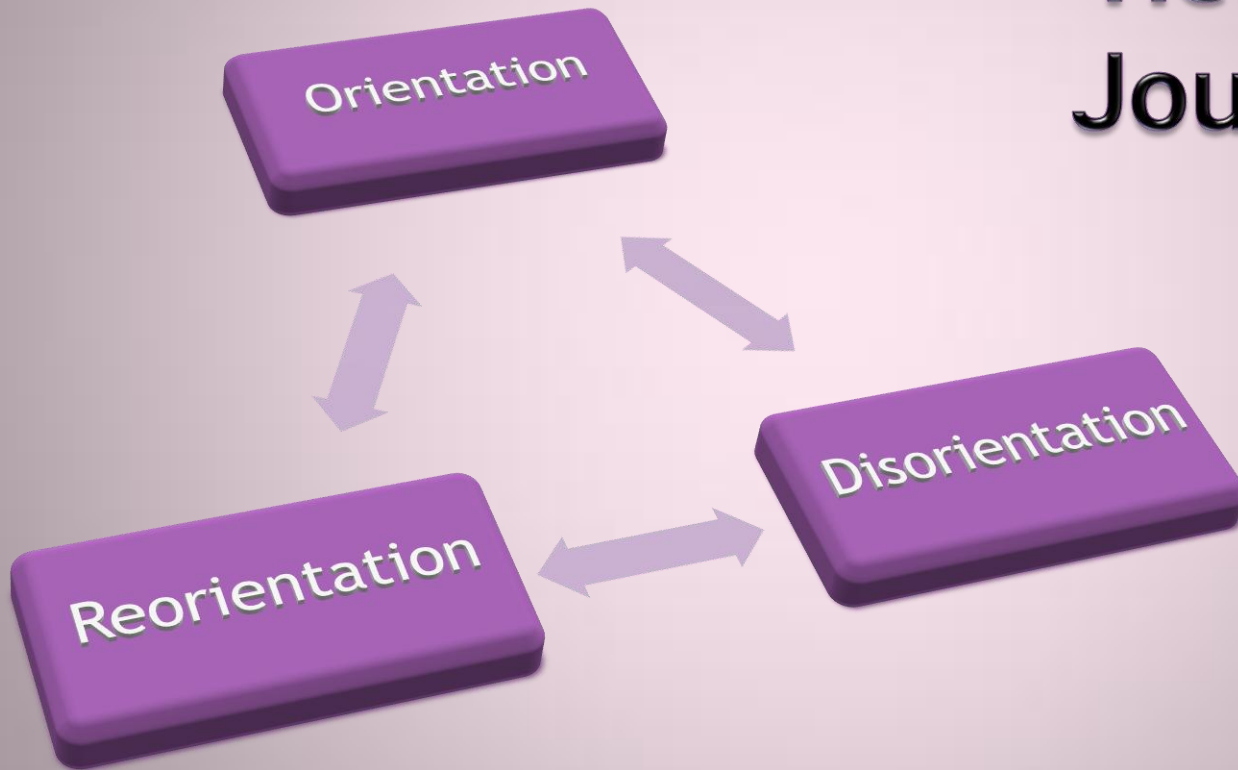
Observer

Caring

Powerful



The Heroe's Journey



Joseph Campbell
Hero with 1,000 Faces, 1998

Orientation

The stories we weave together from these various strands of information create our basic orientation to life and to the way things ought to be. These stories are very fragile and at some point will be assaulted.

Disorientation

- Divorce
- Death of a Loved One
- Dismissal from a Job
- Disease

Disorientation

The most common response to this disorientation process is *suffering* - which can be fertile soil for spiritual growth.

Reorientation

Inspired by philosopher Ronald Dworkin, Atul Gawande in his *Being Mortal* writes, “Whatever the limits and travails we face, we want to retain the autonomy—the freedom—to be the authors of our own lives. This is the very marrow of being human.”

Reorientation

Thomas Moore author of *Care of the Soul* writes,

“Our story is the most precious thing we have. Our lives depend on it.”

(Original Self)

Reorientation

Moore continues,

“Whenever a story puts an end to reflection and further story telling, that story is now serving as a defense. The whole point of a good story is to give birth to other stories and deep reflection.”

(Original Self)

Midwives to Reorientation

- Let nature take its course
- Keep everyone safe
- Help clean up the mess when it's over.



Midwives to Reorientation

some suggestions

- Let patients express their grief
- Get to *know* them
- Healing includes restoring roles and relationships
- Act as a mirror



Midwives to Reorientation

some suggestions

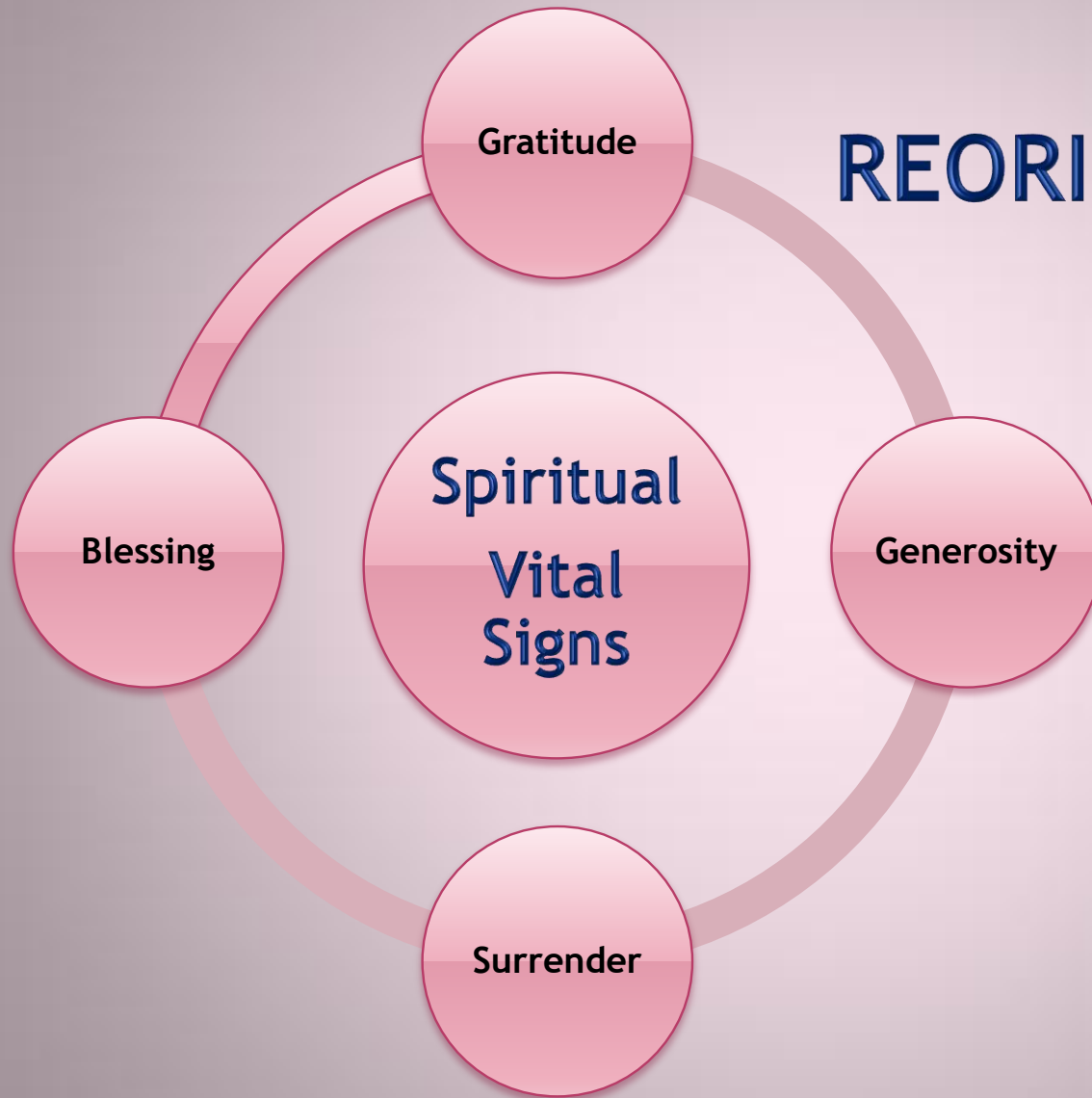
- Invite patients into present reality
- Gently challenge
- Help deepen the story
- You are part of a Team
- Offer encouragement and acceptance





“I see you.”

SIGNS OF A HEALTHY REORIENTATION



Fred Grewe
Time to Talk about Dying, 2018



Empty-handed I entered
the world
Barefoot I leave it.
My coming, my going -
Two simple happenings
That got entangled.

- Kozan Ichikyo (1360)

CONTACT

fred@fredgrewe.com

www.fredgrewe.com