

Participant’s Guide

Episode 4

Taking A Spiritual History

Summary

The rationale for including a spiritual history as part of the health history is explained and illustrated. The questions we ask can help us discern how to best care for our patients, while also communicating to them that we care about more than just their physical health.

Speaker

A person in a suit smiling

Description automatically generated with medium confidence

Dr. Andrew Wai is a Combined Internal Medicine and Pediatrics (Med-Peds) physician at Loma Linda University in Southern California. He has been involved with CMDA since his first year of medical school and continues to host the LLU student group at his home. He is passionate about raising up the next generation of Christian healthcare professionals. For further information or to contact Dr. Andrew Wai, please email him at andrew.w.wai@gmail.com.

Discussion Questions

1. What from this video inspired, edified or challenged you?
2. Have you ever taken a spiritual history? Why or why not?
3. Jesus is recorded as having asked hundreds of questions during his three years of ministry. What can questions accomplish more effectively than statements?
4. Dr. Wai states, “A spiritual history can help you make a spiritual diagnosis.” How might this spiritual diagnosis affect your future spiritual interactions with the patient and also the treatment you might provide?
5. What are some of the questions that could be most helpful to ask as part of a spiritual history?
6. Which of the following questions Jesus asked are possible questions you might ask your patients?
7. “Do you want to be healed?” (John 5:6b, ESV).
8. “What do you want me to do for you?” (Mark 10:51a, NIV).
9. “Can any one of you by worrying add a single hour to your life?” (Matthew 6:27, NIV).
10. What is one take-home item from today’s session that you hope to implement?

Additional Resources

1. Curlin FA, Chin MH, Sellergren SA, et al. The association of physicians' religious characteristics with their attitudes and self-reported behaviors regarding religion and spirituality in the clinical encounter. Med Care. 2006;44:446–53.
2. Koenig, H.G., Perno, K. & Hamilton, T. The spiritual history in outpatient practice: attitudes and practices of health professionals in the Adventist Health System. BMC Med Educ 17, 102 (2017).<https://doi.org/10.1186/s12909-017-0938-8>
3. Koenig HG. Religion, spirituality, and health: the research and clinical implications. ISRN Psychiatry. 2012;2012:278730. Published 2012 Dec 16. doi:10.5402/2012/278730.
4. Larimore W. Spiritual Assessment in Clinical Care. Part 1—The Basics. Today’s Christian Doctor 2015(Spring):46(1):22-26.