

Introduction 'The spiritual care of a dying child and the family is a territory with no reliable map'.

Today we look at another aspect of that connection: Research shows, for example, that children who have positive active relationships to spirituality are 40 percent less likely to use and abuse substances, and have 60 percent less depression than other teenagers. There are also differences in the brain structure. She also cautions that religion without spirituality can have an opposite and negative impact. At the end, you hear the voice of Rabbi Joel Sisenwine: Even the youngest siblings have preschool and standing playdates or afternoon lessons in foreign languages, dance, violin, or piano. These mothers and fathers are determined to give their children a competitive advantage in school and life. We all want our children to reach their full potential, and we watch to identify their areas of aptitude and natural strength, so that we may actively support their gifts. We are good parents, loving parents, parents of the highest intention and unyielding commitment. Our conversations tend to focus on how we can prepare our children to be successful in school or on the team, or about their academic or other accomplishments. We want them to be emotionally hardy and resilient, to know happiness and how to take setbacks in stride, to learn how to manage big feelings like anger and disappointment. When they do not get what they want, we hope that they will be able to successfully set a new course, readjust, "hit reset," and move forward to succeed. There is a bit of anxiety about admissions or placement tests for selective schools or programs, from preschools and child-care programs through high school and college. We know that this formative age is the epicenter for opportunity, so we push on. Like all parents, we have hopes and latent expectations, after all. From the moment our children are born, we imagine their future selves. Our hopes for our child-the young adult he or she will grow up to be-inform everything we feel and think and do as parents. If our baby throws a spongy ball, we hope-maybe dream-for the Dallas Cowboys. A clever discovery in the playroom translates into visions of our future inventor or entrepreneur. A love of books brings images of the future scholar or writer. We envision our young children as accomplished, impassioned adults who have achieved school, sports, or stage success and used it as a pathway to opportunity, to love and be loved, to have wonderful friends, and in every way to enjoy a good life and career. We gaze at our gurgling baby or adventurous toddler with love-and a twenty-year trajectory of aspiration. And yet all of those conversations, elaborate schedules of extracurricular activities, and high aspirations often miss the single most crucial ingredient of all, the only thing that science has shown to reliably predict fulfillment, success, and thriving: It is important to take a moment here to precisely define "spirituality" as I use it in this book, and as it exists as a crucial dimension of spirituality in science: Spirituality is an inner sense of relationship to a higher power that is loving and guiding. The word we give to this higher power might be God, nature, spirit, the universe, the creator, or other words that represent a divine presence. But the important point is that spirituality encompasses our relationship and dialogue with this higher presence. Spiritual development, as I define it as a scientist and use the term in this book, is the growth and progression of our inborn spirituality as one of our many perceptual and intellectual faculties, from taste and touch to critical thinking skills. Spiritual development is the changing expression of this natural asset over time as new words, explanatory models, and ideas-whether theological, scientific, or family views-allow us to feel or not feel part of something larger, and experience an interactive two-way relationship with a guiding, and ultimately loving, universe. The precise embodiment of that transcendent universe-the other side of the two-way spiritual conversation-comes in many different forms and has many different names. It can take the form of spirit, the natural world, God, or a sense of oneness with the world, the larger community of which we are a part. This two-way spiritual dialogue may or may not include religion. Natural spirituality is a direct sense of listening to the heartbeat of the living universe, of being one with that seen and unseen world, open and at ease in that connection. It comes as naturally to children as their fascination with a butterfly or a twinkling star-filled night sky. Science now tells us that this spiritual faculty is inborn, fundamental to the human constitution, central in our physiology and psychology. Spirituality links brain, mind, and body. However, in contrast to these other lines of development, children are born fully fluent in this primal, nonverbal dimension of knowing. Bird and flower, puddle and

breeze, snowflake or garden slug: A smile, a loving touch, the indescribable bond between child and parent that science has yet to fully explain, all of these speak deeply to them, too. Spirituality is the language of these moments, the transcendent experience of nourishing connection. We support their development when we read with them, talk with them, sing and play with them, feed and bathe and encourage them. One great thing about our group of soccer parents is that we are diverse, hailing from many countries, many cultures: We are also spiritually diverse: Christian, Hindu, Jewish, Muslim, Buddhist, and spiritual-but-not-religious. When ideas of spirituality or religion arise in our discussions, we have a nice range represented. Some of us have multiple religious traditions in our families and honor them all; others celebrate in secular ways. In the midst of this diversity, we are struck by the remarkable commonalities in how our children experience both the wonderful and difficult parts of life. Regardless of religious or spiritual orientations, parents instantly recognize what I would call inherently spiritual qualities in their children-their open, curious, loving ways; their immediate instinct to respond from the heart. These often show up in the way the children interact with babies or older family members, with pets or creatures they find in nature, in their creative sparkle with friends, or perhaps in the way they come up with kind or generous things they can do to help or surprise someone: What we hear at the soccer field-and find in the families represented there-is a microcosm of what researchers are finding through studies of spirituality in children and families around the world: Use It or Lose It Spirituality is a vast untapped resource in our understanding of human development, illness, health, and healing. Specifically, research in medicine and psychology has found that people with a developed spirituality get sick less, are happier, and feel more connected and less isolated. In the context of illness, people with a developed spirituality show positive effects for resilience and healing. Further, research shows that natural spirituality, if supported in childhood, prepares the adolescent for critical developmental tasks of that age. If supported in adolescence, natural spirituality deepens and can become a significant resource for health and healing through adult life. How do we know? As scientists, we look for proof in corroborating evidence from many sources. For instance, we have identified a genetic contribution by using a rigorous study designed to pinpoint it. In neuroimaging scans, we have found synchronization of the regions of the brain when in spiritual or contemplative practice. In developmental terms, we look for parallels between spirituality and other developmental pathways biological, psychological, emotional that have long been understood. Using a classic twin-study design to separate out nature from nurture and drawing from nearly two thousand twins in the Virginia Twin Registry, genetic-epidemiologist Kenneth Kendler has shown that there is a meaningful genetic contribution to spirituality. This is a finding replicated multiple times on different samples of twins. Neuroscientists including Andrew Newberg and Mario Beauregard have published numerous scientific peer-reviewed articles on the neural correlates of meaningful spiritual experience, personal prayer, awareness of a higher power, mystical experience, and confrontation with symbols of good and evil as identified through functional MRI fMRI -neuroimaging that measures brain activity by blood flow to a region. By tracking blood flow, these scientists have charted a neuroimaging road map of the brain that reveals the neurological design through which humans experience spirituality. In developmental terms, the timing of change in developmental spirituality coincides, exactly, with that of other forms of development and appears interrelated; it emerges alongside secondary sex characteristics, abstract cognitive development such as meta-cognition and meaning making, and onset of fertility. This has been the focus of groundbreaking research in my lab, studies in which we have tracked the development of natural spirituality and its protective effects from childhood through adolescence into emerging adulthood. The confluence of evidence is clear. Spiritual development is a biological and psychological imperative from birth. Natural spirituality, the innate spiritual attunement of young children-unlike other lines of development-appears to begin whole and fully expressed. As the child grows, natural spirituality integrates with the capacities of cognitive, social, emotional, and moral development, as well as physical change, to create a more complex set of equipment through which to experience transcendence and spirituality. Ultimately, if maintained and integrated with these other aspects of development, spirituality supports the child through the challenging developmental passage of adolescence. What does this look like in real life? Your child is born with a faculty for physical movement that shows development in the progression of fine and gross motor skills. We see it clearly as our baby advances from

pumping her legs and yanking her socks off, to picking up a single raspberry and squashing it between her thumb and forefinger. She develops the confidence to ask questions that occur to her as her own experience deepens the way she thinks and engages on the field and at practice. She hones her skills, including her intuitive skills for discerning the many intangible, unspoken aspects of soccer and her life as a soccer player. Eventually, she is not only cognizant of the best form in her field skills but sees an even larger picture of interconnectedness. Should I stay up late tonight, watching TV with my friends? This fully integrated "knowing" informs her technically and athletically, but also socially and emotionally, down to how she feels about playing and her contribution to the team, and how she sees this part of herself in the context of her larger life. All of this is shaped by her ongoing inner dialogue and her interactions with all of us: This process of integration is also shaped by her internal dialogue and through interactions with parents, family, peers, and community. As parents, we can take those ideas into the playing field of daily life and show our children how we live and express spiritual values in everyday interactions with other people, with animals, with nature, with our own inner life, and with the life of the mind and big ideas. We can take our children to explore sacred places and spaces: We can encourage and model acts of expansive love and kindness. This exploration cultivates spiritual knowing and attunement, a sense of the spiritual dimension that is always present and is deeper than superficial attributes and higher than competitive and materialistic priorities. Supported by this exploration, the continuing conversation with us, and by her own internal spiritual dialogue, she continues to define what spirituality is and what the journey is for her. Our culture has not necessarily been welcoming to spirituality and its questions.

A Generation of Wary Parents One morning on a school visit, I stepped into the hallway to check for last-minute arrivals before starting my presentation. I had been invited to speak to parents on the subject of the science of spirituality. One mother stood in the hallway at a bit of a distance and I asked if she was looking for this room. She smiled and introduced herself, but she was clearly hesitant to step through the door. She said she had just dropped her children off for school when she had remembered she had seen a flyer for the talk. National surveys have reported the number of Americans who do not identify with any religion has grown in recent years such that about one-fifth of the public overall-and a third of adults under age thirty-were unaffiliated with a religion as of , the lowest in the nearly three generations since researchers started tracking the numbers. At the same time, surveys also report a notable growth in the population of adults who classify themselves as "spiritual but not religious" or who describe their religion as "nothing in particular" but do believe in God or a universal spirit. A Fetzer Institute survey in found that 60 percent of adults said they are now more spiritual than they were five years before. A recent Gallup poll shows that more than 90 percent of Americans pray and believe in an ultimate creator. A poll inParents magazine in conducted by Beliefnet showed that a consistent 90 percent of parents "talk to children about God or higher power," two-thirds say grace at meal times, 60 percent pray during the day, and half pray at bedtime with their child. A poll by Barna Research Group in Ventura, California, showed 85 percent of parents consider it their job to teach their own children about spirituality. The Barna poll also reported that through the week prior to the poll, the majority of parents did not open or direct a discussion of spirituality with their child under the age of thirteen years.

Chapter 2 : The spiritual care of a child (edition) | Open Library

Spiritual Care "We believe that for true healing to occur, spiritual needs, as well as physical and emotional needs, must be addressed." — Dr. Kurt Senske, Upbring Chief Executive Officer Healing of the Mind, Body and Soul Upbring is on a mission to break the cycle of child abuse.

Its intellectual life has been provided for, we have a progressive system of education from the kindergarten to the close of the graduate courses of a University. But when we examine into the problem of the best spiritual care of a child, we find ourselves far from fixed guidance. Civilization itself, over-refined and sensuous, hampers both word and deed. There is a moral constriction in public sentiment, and aspiration is too often hampered by what others say. Do we not too often overlay childhood with impressions of a bitter struggle for wealth, fame, position, or material success, to the inevitable coarsening of temperament, and degradation of ideals? Do we not undermine fibre when we buy our children indolence and ease? Do we not put toy pistols and noise for patriotism, and stories of mischievous children, who daily imagine new tricks, for the great and ancient heroisms of the race? Do we not apparently value recklessness instead of courage, competition instead of loving-kindness? Do we not put forth hasty impulses or soft-tongued sentiments for real convictions? At the same time we are confronted, as a nation, with the gravest and most inspiring possibilities of history. Every impression influences type. The only right we have to bring children into the world, is to add to the spiritual force of the universe. Populations are not nations, mere creatures are not significant, and uninspired children are but a kind of spawn. Pertness and irreverence are our national disgrace. Thinking men and women are convinced that brilliant ability in the way of business does not necessarily make men or corporations honest, nor does public office make men incorruptible to private privilege; professional standing in art or literature is not always accompanied by high moral character; and we are confronted, not only with conditions of labor among the poorer classes that are appalling, not only with luxury and idleness in the wealthier ranks, but by the reasons for these conditions, and by problems which, reaching out to all classes, seem to concern the generic life of man. Even the scientific study and application of the psychology of childhood, valuable as it is, does not of itself produce strong character. How can we meet modern civilization with weapons which shall guard our children from the darts of sin? How can we strengthen them for the physical strain of life, for their private duties, and their public responsibilities? How can we bring up our children in spiritual health? Let us begin an old, and yet new programme. Let us believe that the relation of the soul to God is the most important thing in life. The foundations of the spiritual life lie deep in prayer and reverie. Leisure, culture, and meditation have social uses, as well as the jumping hurry of doing. Can we lift our children higher than our own ideals? Can we lift them at all, if we do not work out our ideals in some practical way? Let us give our children a positive religious training. Let our religious teaching be definite and continuous. If we wish to drive a nail into the wall, we do not say: Oh, let the wall alone. When those boards are older, the spike will go in of itself. Nor do we give it one or two desultory raps with a hammer, looking elsewhere as we pound. We choose the exact spot where the nail is to go, and with deliberate strokes, and an eye on the nailhead, pound it firmly, until it is fixed in the desired spot, then clinch it. I shall have roses and apples there by and by. Not that I have ever planted rose-slips there, or set out fruit-trees, I do not believe in forcing a crop that way, but in a few years roses and fruit-trees will probably spring up there of their own accord. We cannot make our children spiritual, any more than we can make a garden grow. But we know that if we will plant good seed in good soil, and rightly tend it, by and by the desired plant will appear. Life springs, though we know not how. But what shall we plant? What spiritual flowers and fruit do we wish to cultivate in our children? What shall we sow broadcast, to be quickened of God? Let us decide, first of all, whether or not we wish them to bring forth the fruits of a distinctively Christian life. Let us next ask ourselves whether we are willing to put into the spiritual care of our children the time, strength, money, love, and patience necessary. On another sheet let us mark the traits that our children now actually have through their heredity, temperament, or present environment. We shall at once perceive that childhood is a thing of beginnings, of promise; but a social work second only to the creation of life is now before the conscientious

parent, upon whom is laid the task of fashioning a new generation, and preserving greatness, heroism, and idealism for the race. Only God can bring up a child. Nothing will bridge the abyss of the actual and the ideal, except faith, hope, love, work, and the immediate help of divinity. We also find that we must fling ourselves into the task. Apathy never awakens enthusiasm. Prayer, not inattention, wins. And yet what thunders at us, even above the general roar of American life, is that parents who apparently wish to guide their child aright, themselves chase every phantom of the world, and surround themselves with influences antagonistic to a faithful Christian life. Later, these very parents mourn that their children do not display the inspirational traits of humanity. Why do we not foster these lovely qualities, if we really desire that they should live and grow? Next, let us set down on another sheet of paper an outline of the religious education that we propose to give our children before they are, say, ten years of age. Ought not children of ten to have a general familiarity with the whole Bible, a connected idea of Biblical history, and of its heroic figures, and a memoriter knowledge of the Ten Commandments, many passages of Scripture, the Creed, and the church catechism? Ought they not to know many of the great hymns of the church, words and music? Ought they not to be familiar with the lives of ten or twelve of the historic missionaries of the church, knowing the country in which they labored, the class of people chiefly reached, and the main things which civilization owes to their work? Ought they not to know something of the pictures, sculpture, and architecture of great religious art? Ought they not to have an idea of the long struggle for religious liberty and human freedom? Any teaching of doctrine should be as clear as the teaching of a lesson in history or mathematics. The study of religious truth should never be made easy or maudlin, but should demand thought and attention. Ought not children of ten to understand something of the meaning of law, and the way in which law reaches from the nursery to the moral order of the universe? Ought they not to have been thrilled by the heroic Christian virtues? Ought they not to have been drilled in the showing forth of practical piety, in the self-restraint, unselfishness, courage and fidelity of the Christian life? Above all, ought not a child of this age to be definitely and positively a Christian child? Where do we get our idea that all human beings should be dragged from waywardness to God? From Him they came, and His they are. The Sabbath-school, however helpful, cannot, in an hour a week, produce this type of education. School systems cannot at present carry it out. Its foundations must be laid in the home, and it must be maintained with daily vigor and thoroughness. First, the Sabbath must be at once removed from worldly care, business, and mere idleness or pleasure. For much of the present-day hysterics and insanity are due, from a strictly medical point of view, to our lack of rest, insight, and repose. Seven-day business eats out nerve and brain. But inspiration is tonic, and a well-ordered Sabbath is the utmost refreshment of nature. Again, the Bible is the fundamental textbook. Modern education wastes a great deal of time. A child may be taught at home to read directly from the Bible of course a Bible with pictures, and it may be made his earliest story-book. By this method, a child learns to read with great rapidity. After drill in his Bible work, he can read any book, and all the time otherwise spent on less literature has been gained, with the additional point that he has learned to love the Bible, which, with its fascinating pictures, stories, and strangely beautiful wording, is his first introduction to the world of letters. And this earliest familiarity and affection he will not only never outgrow, but his style will be marked with vigor and fine imagery. When he gets to be five or six years old, a child will beg for the rest of the story, and will read it, or wish it read to him, many times over, for, to an imaginative child, it is a story of endless interest. They are highly educational, and may be made an intellectual delight. We err if we are too formal. Let us not think of family prayers as an unvarying formula, but as a progressive form of life. They should be vital and eager, adapted to the age and development of the child, and increasingly intellectual in outlook. With small children a simple hymn and reading are enough, using the Sunday-school lesson as the basis of the reading, letting the children themselves read it each morning during the week, and taking up each day one or two topics connected with it for explanation. At the close of prayers it does not hurt to play "Onward, Christian Soldiers," or some other stirring music, letting the children march around the house as a part of their devotions, and, if they wish, carrying a flag or a doll-baby! As they grow older, this form of worship may gradually change and become a season of eager study. The Sunday-school lesson is used only once a week. Whole books of the Bible are undertaken and read through. Revelation has a special charm for children. We all know the story of the little boy who, when called by his

mother to do an errand, asked to be let alone for a few moments, until he "finished binding Satan for a thousand years;" and the Angel with a Chain, the Beast, the White Horse, and the New Jerusalem hold the hearts of children with a spell. Next in turn comes a love of the Psalms and the great imagery of Job. This period, I am thinking of children between seven and ten, is the time to introduce church history and missionary biography. How they enjoy the animals he saw, and how the African names roll out! In reading these heroic lives, and in talking of them, something great seizes upon the life of a child. Such books add to the moral fibre of the child, and are intensely stimulating intellectually, and yet they do not in any way lead to precocious thoughts or feelings. Cut out from the newspapers, also, incidents displaying human heroism, and speak of them at prayer time. Such topics ought never to be forced in a cold way, but should come up naturally from some question, event, or stray bit of reading. Prayers should rise for every emergency of sorrow, illness, trial, temptation, and also in thanksgiving and gratitude for the usual joyful course of life.

Chapter 3 : Spiritual Life | Board of Child Care

Note: Citations are based on reference standards. However, formatting rules can vary widely between applications and fields of interest or study. The specific requirements or preferences of your reviewing publisher, classroom teacher, institution or organization should be applied.

By Amy Menna, Ph. Can they both coincide? The answer to these questions cannot be revealed in an article or by anyone else but the survivor. This article is about Spirituality and how the survivor can reclaim it in his or her life. It is not about God unless the survivor called his or her Higher Power God. As we grow up, we are constantly learning about ourselves and the world. We are brought up with the notion that the world is a safe place. But what happens when it is not? What do we do then? How do we draw from a Spiritual Presence when we have felt so alone in the past? This disconnect happens as a defense mechanism again feeling the effects of the trauma. In this complex world, it is best to have full access to all of them to survive. Many survivors of trauma become angry at God or the Entity they believe in. There are questions such as; "Where were you? It seems like having a connection is for those who are able to have faith and trust. For many survivors, it is important to recapture their spirituality in order to aid their healing. It is essential that they be given permission to create a Higher Power of their understanding. It is possible to create a new connection, one that is based on love, acceptance, and safety. These qualities are often shaken when an individual experiences trauma. They are replaced with feelings of judgment and shame. It is not meant to be exhaustive nor will it feel right for every individual. It is suggested that you do this with a friend, counselor , or spiritual advisor. It may be a place too scary to go alone. Validate the effects the trauma has had on your life. Trauma affects lives in so many different ways. It is important to honor how it has affected yours. It may have had an impact on your relationships, self-esteem, feelings of safety, and the list could go on ad nauseam. Write a list of the effects the trauma has had on you in the following areas; Physical.

Chapter 4 : Full text of "The spiritual care of a child"

Respondents agreed on 3 barriers to providing spiritual care: inadequate staffing of the pastoral care office, inadequate training of health care providers to detect patients' spiritual needs, and being called to visit with patients and families too late to provide all the care that could have been provided.

Multi-Faith Approach Our pediatric chaplains minister from a multi-faith perspective and are culturally sensitive to all people, regardless of religion, creed, race, gender, nationality or beliefs. This sanctuary offers personal reflection and is designed for comfort and peace. Godly Play Children are encouraged to express their beliefs, spirituality and feelings through a method of sacred storytelling called Godly Play. To request the program, call the Spiritual Care Department. Children become fully engaged as they assist the storyteller in the movement of three-dimensional wood figures and felt pieces while listening to a story unfold. Next is an art activity where they are invited to express themselves. While the artwork is sometimes directly related to the story, creativity and imagination are encouraged. Children can also play with the storypieces and retell the story in their own way. Bereavement Support Families experiencing the loss of a child can find support through our professional healing ministry. We understand the grieving process and can support you throughout this challenging journey. Compassionate presence Families are provided time to be with and nurture their child. End-of-life support is provided to families by social workers, nurses, chaplains, child life specialists and other professionals who are trained in bereavement support. Chaplains can perform rituals such as blessings or baptisms. Support Materials Information is provided to parents about community resources, perinatal loss and more. Memory Making Families are given memory boxes containing items that assist the entire family in creating lasting remembrances after a loss. Tear Catchers Support Groups For more than 3, years, small decorative jars have been used to capture the tears of those mourning the death of someone deeply loved. Recognizing that no one or nothing can stop the flow of tears of a grieving parent, the Tear Catchers program offers two support groups. Both groups provide parent-to-parent support guided by professional chaplains, social workers and others. Call the Spiritual Care office to confirm dates and times. Perinatal Support Group Loss through miscarriage, ectopic pregnancy, stillbirth or newborn 1st and 3rd Mondays of the month 7 - 8:

Chapter 5 : Spiritual Care: Learning at a hospice for children

The spiritual well-being of the child and family greatly influences coping and condition management. Therefore, spiritual assessment becomes an integral part of nursing care for these families.

Yet as a crucible for learning about spiritual care, it is an amazing community, offering insights about living with dying which may be helpful to caregivers in a wide variety of settings. Canuck Place in Vancouver is the first free-standing hospice for children in North America. Since I have worked there as part of a large multidisciplinary team of professionals and volunteers who support hundreds of children with life-limiting conditions, together with their families. In this article I would like to share some of what I have learned there. What is Canuck Place? Each year more than families participate in programs offered through Canuck Place. More than staff and volunteers are involved in interdisciplinary collaborative teamwork to support each child, their siblings, and their parents along a palliative care journey that might stretch not just a few months, but for many years. This work is financed through donations and some government grants, so that all programs are without cost to the families. Canuck Place is "child-centered and family-focused". To that end, our excellent medical and nursing expertise provides a foundation which supports the life goals of the children and families. We are not simply treating diseases, but coming alongside families on a difficult journey, in ways that are designed to give strength and encouragement for life, without being intrusive. Any child referred to us already has a community of caregivers; our role is to join that community in ways which are balanced and helpful. They support each family at every stage of their experience, alongside teams of volunteers who are available to be with the children in 4-hour shifts 12 hours daily, seven days a week. The house is full of the liveliness of children, offering many opportunities for children and their families to embrace life each day, even if it is also a place where sadness, grief and loss are simply accepted as part of normal life. But we also know that after visiting, most families are deeply grateful for the opportunity to be part of the program. If the disease cannot be reversed, and a referral to a hospice has been offered, "what do we hope for now? Of course in many instances parents are not able to put into words precisely what they think or feel. What they want is not more questions, but practical support, encouragement, and an intangible something which will help them balance. Children want to live, to experience new things, to discover friendships which matter; they are best supported through play or schoolwork or outings which give opportunity for relational support and friendship. The most important element of care in a hospice for children is the quality of relationship. This reflects an essential spiritual value of what it is to be human. The role of spiritual care Spiritual care begins with our Family Team Meetings, the baseline for all our work. These are regular meetings with family members, one of our physicians, a nurse, and a member of our counselling team. In the course of an hour of informal conversation, we invite the family to discuss their perceptions, concerns and questions, while our team offers their observations and insights. These meetings follow what we call the PESST model; that is, we try to consider everything that needs to be addressed under five key categories: Beyond an exchange of information, there is always the possibility of learning something together that no one knew before the meeting began. As information, insight, and emotion are communicated with sensitivity and openness, the meeting holds the possibility of being transformational, where the participants may perceive and understand in new ways In this context, spiritual care is not an appendix to medical knowledge or nursing care; rather we are attempting to treat children with challenging medical circumstances as the unique persons they are, within the family structures and community networks which are theirs. As each of us is similarly involved in the journey from birth to death, we all enter these meetings not only as clients and staff, but as fellow-travellers. Perhaps we are both, thus needing not only the precision of medical insight and skill, but also the intuition and spiritual sensitivity of those who can identify with us on our journey through life, and beyond. When parents first encounter Canuck Place they are impressed by the house itself. However, as in any hospice the building plays only a supporting role to the people who together create the matrix of care, which can be such a positive experience for families. The foundation of spiritual care at Canuck Place rests upon the interrelationships of those who work and volunteer together, creating a community of care with the family that is not just a slogan

but tangible and real. This matrix of interrelationships is the real "container of care", an interlocking network of expertise, time, energy, and personal caring presence for every family. Because this is true, it is essential for care team members to maintain the same standards of relational wholeness with each other that we wish to offer to the families. Interrelationship is a core spiritual value in this work. What is spiritual care? Many people assume that spiritual care is the same as religious care. However, if you were to ask people to compare their sense of the words "religion" and "spirituality", there would be similarities, differences, and places of overlap. Some might say that religion names a reality that comes to us from outside ourselves, while spirituality expresses in inner dimension. Human being is the experience of striving to make sense of life, working at goals of meaning and significance, whether they are consciously identified or not. In other words, while some people are religious, everyone is spiritual. Thus, my shorthand for spirituality is "meaning-making". To help volunteers identify characteristics of spiritual care, I offer an experiential learning opportunity: As you remember that time, notice your feelings, hopes, fears. Was there anyone in the picture whom you remember now as being a help to you? How were they helpful? What did they say or do? How were they present to you? What made the difference? There is a boldness required in being with one who is suffering, yet it must be expressed in humility and gentleness. Spiritual care involves a willingness to go where angels fear to tread, with grace. Offering spiritual care At the heart of spiritual care is a great paradox. On the one hand, the person being cared for may experience a positive encouragement or presence that feels like a gift. This might seem the farthest thing from what is needed, wherein lies the paradox. In this sense spiritual care is like being a midwife. In the same way, spiritual care is a process of accompaniment in which the caregiver is sometimes most helpful when he or she is literally out of "control". The experience of labour and childbirth is an apt image of spiritual life and therefore suggests appropriate spiritual care. Similarly, spiritual life often involves a process of learning that feels like letting go, yet results in a sense of positive growth. Spiritual care is both boldly courageous and intimately humble. It cannot be forced upon another, but only offered, in a kind of relational dance that always allows the other to indicate their willingness to step through a new threshold. The spiritual caregiver must be fearless and immediately prepared to embark on an unknown journey that might involve startling discovery, or looming dread. Yet this courage is present in the most non-threatening personal presence, waiting, ready, willing to engage, yet not owning or pushing the process. It really is a willingness to be comfortable being uncomfortable, caring for another. Often conversations about serious or challenging things may stall at thresholds where a person is afraid of his or her own thoughts, or where an unknown, never expressed feeling is crying out to be recognized. Spiritual care must demonstrate a calm open-heartedness that does not flinch at the prospect of a new, even distressing conversational direction. When this is embodied appropriately, the one struggling may feel emboldened also, to risk going through a new door, emotionally or spiritually, now accompanied by another. Spiritual care is a strenuous engagement at the intersection of opposites, the place where immanence and transcendence meet, where a depth of relationship and of discovery becomes possible even between people who had little previous experience of each other. Immanence is a term used to reflect profound meaning within oneself. Transcendence is the experience of direction or significance or grace from beyond. Learning to pay attention to both is the primary work of spiritual care. It begins with a listening heart, an attentive mind, but includes an openness to wonder and awe, and the possibility of discovery which may change present meanings. It is vulnerable to the extent of being open to profound change, even transformation. Ernest Hemmingway once said, "Life wounds us all: We can feel so weak and small and broken, yet sometimes experience breakthroughs of insight, light, and wholeness which seem incongruous with our loss and grief. I have felt most alive in the worst time of all! Gifts of spiritual care may in fact be more present in people who themselves have suffered greatly, and who are thereby freed from personal need of accomplishment or fear of failure to be more fully present to others. Spiritual care begins with a listening presence, which is not at all passive. Some people seem naturally gifted with the ability to accompany others in this way. For others, it remains a mystery, that one human being could be with another, with few words or actions, and yet seem to make a tangible difference. The word "hospice" is related to the word hospitality; spiritual care is a kind of hospitality, in which the caregiver creates space for another, without expectation or pressure, yet which engenders acceptance,

opportunity, freedom, and the possibility of change in experience or perspective or both. Some children seem to have wisdom beyond understanding, yet remain very child-like in their everyday experience. Parents may discover a gift in friendship with another parent, where the sharing of woundedness in grief creates a bond of powerful strength that gives hope and new energy. As caregiver, I sometimes experience in the midst of profound family brokenness what I can only call a mysterious wholeness underneath or in the midst of them. Joy and sorrow are not mutually exclusive, but strangely interwoven in the fabric of life. Spiritual care in this setting is not practiced as an independent discipline, but as an expression of the heart and spirit and mindfulness of a team of people who are willing to risk personal growth through shared pain. Love transcends all. Whether you are comfortable using religious or spiritual categories or not, we are all somehow bound up together in this whirling mystery of agony and grace we call life. But the interpersonal distances that may seem so great can sometimes be transcended more readily by a smile or touch than with words, as though the spiritual essence of life was lighter than a feather. Above all, there is a mystery in love which interlaces all spiritual experience, even as it is central to all human life. Where there is love between people, we have seen breakthroughs of pain-filled relationship breakdown. Love seems to create invisible pathways of energy which can delay dying, comfort the inconsolable, and give new meaning to a life that seems dead. The book of Ecclesiastes conveys the thought that is beneath and around and infused through so much of the experience of living with dying in a hospice for children: Spiritual care is an affirmation of that truth.

Chapter 6 : Spiritual Care | Wolfson Children's Hospital | Jacksonville, Florida

Spiritual care of the child with cancer at the end of life is a process concept that forms a mid-range descriptive theory highlighting the important nursing processes, antecedents and consequences involved in spiritual care of this patient population.

Chapter 7 : Trauma & Spirituality - PTSD Resources - Gift From Within

Government guidelines assist social workers considering the needs of children looked after by local authorities across a range of these fields (health, education, identity, family and social relationships, social presentation, emotional and behavioural development, self-care skills).

Chapter 8 : Spiritual care of the child with cancer at the end of life: a concept analysis | Read by QxMD

A negative response to your child's spiritual exploration is a lost opportunity, a moment when you could have, but didn't, support your child's tender, vulnerable, and emerging spirituality.

Chapter 9 : What Does It Mean To Raise A Spiritual Child? | Here & Now

Spiritual care is a vital aspect of holistic nursing care; however, gaps in knowledge and practice prevent children from receiving adequate spiritual care at the end of life.