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Religion and Spirituality in Psychiatry

Although medicine is practiced in a secular setting, religious and spiritual issues have an impact on patients' perspectives regarding their health and the management of disorders that may afflict them. This is especially true in psychiatry, because spiritual and religious beliefs are prevalent among those with emotional or mental illness. Clinicians are rarely aware of the importance of religion and understand little of its value as a positive force for coping with the many difficulties that patients and their families must face. This monograph addresses various issues concerning mental illness in psychiatry: the relationship of religious issues to mental health; the tension between theological and psychiatric perspectives; the importance of addressing these varying approaches in patient care and how to do so; and differing ways of treating patients using Christian, Muslim, and Buddhist principles. This is a book specifically addressing the challenges that mental health professionals face when seeking to consider and integrate spiritual, religious, and cultural issues relevant to patient care.

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