

Book Review

Theory of Spiritual Care for Nursing Practice

Battey, B. W. (2009).

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I have observed that nurses are not well organized and are not doing a very good job of providing spiritual care. There seems to be no “procedure” or structure for nurses to follow. In fact, views about spirituality seem to vary widely among nurses, and some still are debating about whether nurses should be providing this care. This author takes a strong position that nurses should be providing spiritual care, and goal of this author is to help make that possible.

I really like Dr. Battey’s spiritual assessment, and the nurse’s role focused on the 5 R's make good sense. The purpose of spiritual care is to provide an environment to support the client’s development of resiliency, optimism, helpfulness, and social bonding. The role of nurses is set out in the rubric, the “5 R’s” of spiritual care.

1. **Recognizing** spiritual distress and aspects of the client’s personal definition of spirituality.
2. **Responding** in a humanizing, compassionate manner.
3. **Recording** according to ethical and legal guidelines and agency policies.
4. **Reporting** on a “need to know” basis to appropriate health care providers.
5. **Referring** to an appropriate spiritual advisor, such as a priest, rabbi, imam, or others. (Battey, 2008)

I’m especially glad that she did not water down spirituality to only the humanistic aspects, but also include the genuinely spiritual aspects that are the patient’s faith tradition and religious beliefs. Nurses are not chaplains, so this theory proposes that *nurses be responsible for only these five dimensions of spirituality of the individual client’s definition: Beliefs, Values, Meanings, Goals, and Relationships i.e. BVMGR* (Battey, 2008, 2009). The client’s beliefs are the focus, not the nurses’.

Some nurses may choose to do more than the 5 R’s and the BVMGR, particularly when clients are members of their own faith community or advocates of similar spiritual beliefs. However, for most nurses, when the 5 R’s have been accomplished, according to this theory, the nurses have done enough. I would agree.

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