3.2 Instructions: Spiritual Assessment

**Getting Started**

It is both a challenge and an opportunity for social workers to integrate their professional values and ethics when they encounter a broad range of issues in daily practice. In this activity, you will consider the role of spiritual assessment in providing ethical care to clients and your own thoughts, feelings and concerns about this practice.



**Resources**

* Textbook: *The social work practicum: A guide and workbook for students*
* Article: Evaluation of the FICA Tool for Spiritual Assessment



**Background Information**

Faith, spiritual issues and concerns are sometimes overlooked or minimized in social work practice. Some agencies include a review of spiritual, faith or religious issues in their assessment process while others do not. Faith and spirituality can also be topics that social workers can feel uncomfortable with, creating fears of imposing values or beliefs on others or raising internal conflict in discussing differing core values or worldviews. Whereas these can be legitimate concerns, exploring the role and impact of faith and spiritual questions in the life of a client is also essential to providing culturally competent services and helping a person to integrate needed changes into his or her thoughts and behaviors. As you explore these ideas through conversation with your peers, you will continue to build confidence and awareness of how best to approach faith and spirituality in practice. Be conscious of differences in your classmates’ approaches and how there may not always be one right answer. Rather, a range of options may be appropriate or best practice in this area.



**Instructions**

1. Read the article [Evaluation of the FICA Tool for Spiritual Assessment](http://www.jpsmjournal.com/article/S0885-3924(10)00325-8/pdf).
2. Review Garthwait, Chapter 12 – Planned Change process.
3. Navigate to the threaded discussion and respond to the following questions:
   1. Discuss your view on why addressing faith and spiritual issues is or isn’t important to the planned change process. State 2-3 reasons in support of your position. Discuss where or how will you fit faith and spirituality in your view of orienting theories as described by Garthwait (chapter 12).
   2. Based on the article, briefly discuss your response to the definition of spirituality provided? How would you change or expand on this definition? Do you think this definition is helpful or unhelpful? How does it resonate with your own approach to faith?
   3. After reviewing the FICA tool, describe how you might use this tool in working with a client to take a spiritual history? How could the tool help you to have conversations about faith or spirituality in a meaningful way with a client? Describe any thoughts you have on the content of the tool and the best way to approach using it and responding to a client’s answers.
   4. Finally, discuss personal fears or concerns you may have about having discussions about faith or spirituality with clients. Why do you have these concerns? What would help you to increase your level of comfort in this area? Since we can’t separate our faith from who we are, how do you see using your own faith in the process? What NASW Code of Ethics Standards can help as we seek to address issues of faith and spirituality with clients?