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Compassion, Competence & Commitment
Understanding & Applying Spirituality in Social Work

● Dr. Jaimon Varghese



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Compassion, Competence and Commitment

Understanding & Applying Spirituality
in Social Work



Fourth chapter depicts the psychological aspect of spirituality. Contemporary trend is to consider spirituality as a psychological variable and explore its neurological basis. This chapter deals with history and applied fields of psychology, personality and spirituality; factors influencing human behaviour and spirituality; psychological processes in human behaviour and spirituality; psychosocial bases of human behaviour and spirituality; group behaviour and spirituality; coping, stress management and spirituality; human development and spirituality; psychopathology, psychotherapy and spirituality; and finally the psychometrics and spirituality.

Finally the fifth chapter explores the connection between spirituality and social work. Social work is truly an applied field of spirituality. This chapter briefly discusses social work values and spirituality, principles of social work and spirituality, social work methods and spirituality, and fields of social work and spirituality. Spirituality has significant scope in the social work practice. Spiritually sensitive social work is the emerging field, the lost and found area of social work and the innovative intervention strategy at individual, group and community levels of social work practice.

This book will be useful resource for social service professionals to understand the philosophical and psychological foundation of spirituality and its application in social service sector. While discussing the ethical, anthropological and psychological features of spirituality, it attempts to highlight the application of spirituality in sustainable development, peace building and social work.

(Jaimon Varghese)

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Compassion, Competence and Commitment

Introduction

Compassion, competence and commitment are three fundamental components of professional social work. They correspond to spirit, mind and body of the profession or its spiritual, mental and physical dimensions. They are interrelated ideals or mutually inclusive principles of social work profession. They coexist and complement to each other. Compassion refers to the spiritual dimension of the profession. It is the basis for sensitivity, empathy and sympathy. It is the spirituality that makes one compassionate and sensitive to the needs and problems of others. Spiritual sensitivity is expressed in the form of universal love and compassion. It is love for humanity, compassion for life in all forms and the empathetic feeling of oneness with the living and nonliving world. It is also the attitudinal dimension of the profession. Compassion ultimately gives values to one's work. Competence corresponds to the head or brain or the intellectual quality. Competence consists of knowledge base and core skills. This is the professional aspect of social work. Competence differentiates professional social workers from voluntary workers. Compassion and competence alone cannot mould efficient social work professionals. Commitment is essential part of the profession. It is the quality of heart or emotional part. Commitment symbolises dedication, motivation, hard work, tireless effort, skilful performance and the works of the hand and body. The relationship between compassion, competence and commitment can be illustrated with the following diagram.