

# Explorations in Human Spirituality

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## **Spiritual Development: A Comparative Study of the Theory of Fowler and Sandhu**

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Despite a large number of studies conducted on spirituality so far, there is still no consensus on the definition of spirituality. For the purpose of this chapter, spirituality is defined as “the motivational and emotional source of an individual’s quest for a personally defined relationship with people and the non-human environment; for some, it includes a connectedness with a higher being leading to enhanced feelings of well-being, inner peace, and life satisfaction” (Wong, 2006, p. 624).

Spirituality is differentiated from religion as every person can have his sense of spirituality, including an atheist. However, not everyone adheres to religious beliefs. At the same time, spirituality which covers a wider spectrum overlaps many aspects of religion. In this chapter, there are numerous instances where spirituality and religion need to be addressed simultaneously when such a dichotomy is not always possible.

It is not uncommon to find in, literature, where the terms ‘spiritual development,’ ‘faith development’ and ‘development of religious understanding’ are used interchangeably. In reality, they do not mean the same thing (Thompson & Randall, 1999). Spiritual

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development is widely understood as part of human development. Benson, Roehlkepartain and Rude define spiritual development as “the process of growing the intrinsic human capacity for self-transcendence, in which the self is embedded in something greater than the self, including the sacred. It propels the search for connectedness, meaning, purpose, and contributions. It is shaped both within and outside of religious traditions, beliefs, and practices” (King & Benson, 2006, p. 384). Faith development refers to the development of a belief in the divine whereas the development of religious understanding has to do with one’s adherence in a progressive manner to a propositional network of values, creeds, and practices found in organised religion (Thompson & Randall, 1999).

Finally, the word ‘child’ could include an infant, a teenager, or anyone who is not yet an adult, typically up to 17 years old. This term also implies in its plural form as far as this chapter is concerned.

### **Research on Children’s Spirituality**

Currently, there is neither a comprehensive theory about spiritual development nor religious development among the conceptual siblings (Benson, 2006). Within the last three decades, few theories on spiritual development which cover the whole human lifespan have emerged except for the works of major figures such as James W. Fowler, Ken Wilber, and Daya Singh Sandhu. Others, such as Adrian van Kaam (1979) who wrote *The Transcendence Self: Formative Spirituality of the Middle, Early, and Later Years of Life* had either focused on specific aspects of spirituality, or have devoted to a specific period of human development such as Elizabeth MacKinlay (2003) who edited *Mental Health and Spirituality in Later Life*. Numerous publications that appeared in the last thirty years have criticised the earlier theories of spirituality such as Dacey and Kenny (1997) who criticised Jung and Frankl’s theories. Since such critiques do not by themselves generate new theories, these authors do not fall under the proponents of theories.

In recent years, a great deal of attention has been focused on spiritual development during childhood and to a certain extent, the

youth as well. This is quite understandable, as the early experience of one's spirituality provide the foundation for the more advanced phases of spiritual development that follow in later years. In addition, a better understanding of the earlier phases of spiritual development would lead to a clearer picture of the more advanced phases of its development even though it can be more challenging to study childhood spirituality as children generally do not express their experience of spirituality as well as grown-ups.

Linear theories of development begins at birth, be it the physical, psychological, social, or moral dimension. In the case of spiritual development, the initial stage begins at childhood at least according to Fowler's theory, but not necessarily in Sandhu's theory. Though this chapter does not address children's spirituality alone, it is necessarily to highlight spirituality at childhood as developmental changes at childhood, no matter how seemingly minute, affects the rest of the life cycle. In fact, some of the consequences in adulthood are the result of the snowballing effect from developmental changes that occur during one's childhood.

Is there a childhood spirituality after all? The answer really depends on how one defines spirituality. Philosopher Ken Wilber's (2000, pp. 139-141) response is negative, when spirituality is defined as "the highest level in any line" or "the sum total of the highest levels in all the lines". However, Wilber's answer is positive when spirituality is defined in one of the following ways: when it is "a separate line of development", or when it refers to "openness, love, fluidity, etc." or when it refers to "peak experiences".

Child psychiatrist Robert Coles' groundbreaking work, *The Spiritual Life of Children* was published in 1990, the same year that Kenneth Hyde's massive review was released (Ratcliff & Nye, 2006). For Coles, it was a culmination of writing about children for three decades. Coles' other major works include the five-volume on *Children of Crisis* published in the 1970s and some ten years later, saw the publication of *The Moral Life of Children* (Coles, 1990).

Coles' study attracted a great deal of attention in North America and elsewhere partly due to his prestige and his research on children in crisis (Ratcliff & Nye, 2006). Meanwhile, Coles had shifted the

course of research and theory by emphasizing the spirituality common to religious groups while affirming the possibility of “atheistic spirituality” as described by Fowler (1981). Following Coles’ work, another shift occurred from the emphasis in religious development to research in spiritual development in children.

The year 1996 became particularly significant with the inaugural publication of the peer-reviewed *International Journal of Children’s Spirituality*, a major and official journal of the Association for Children’s Spirituality. Currently, it is published four issues each year by Taylor and Francis Group based in London. A very significant work is none other than *The Handbook of Spiritual Development in Childhood and Adolescence* by Sage Publications, which was edited by Eugene C. Roehlkepartain, Pamela Ebstyn King, Linda Wagener and Peter L. Benson (2008). Another important work though less distinguished from the former is the *Encyclopedia of Religious and Spiritual Development* edited by Elizabeth M. Dowling and W. George Scarlett (2006). Other related major publications include *Children and Spirituality: Searching for Meaning and Connectedness* by Brendan Hyde (2008); *The Spiritual Dimension of Childhood* by Kate Adams, Brendan Hyde and Richard Woolley (2008).

One significant contribution to research in children’s spirituality is the organisation of international conferences on children’s spirituality. The annual International Conference on Children’s Spirituality was first held in Chichester, England, in 2000 and the 9<sup>th</sup> International Conference on Children’s Spirituality was held at Canterbury Christ Church University, United Kingdom, from 15<sup>th</sup> till 19<sup>th</sup> July, 2009. As a result of the success in both the annual children’s spirituality conferences and the Journal of Children’s Spirituality, the Association for Children’s Spirituality was officially launched in 2006 (ACS, 2009). Another related conference was the triennial Children’s Spirituality Conference: Christian Perspectives held in the United States beginning in 2003. Its third conference was held from 14<sup>th</sup> till 17<sup>th</sup> June, 2009 at Concordia University, Chicago (Child spirituality, 2009). One another conference worth mentioning is the Asia-Pacific Conference on Children’s Spirituality

held for the first time at the Hong Kong Institute of Education, from 26<sup>th</sup> February till 1<sup>st</sup> March, 2009 (IED, 2008).

An organisation that plays a leading role in the study of spiritual development of children and adolescents is the Search Institute based in Minneapolis in the United States. Established some half a century ago, its vision is “to create a world where all young people are valued and thrive” (Search, n.d.). Search Institute, an independent, non-profit and non-sectarian organisation whose main work and research on spiritual development are conducted through the Center for Spiritual Development in Childhood and Adolescence, with major support from the John Templeton Foundation. As an international organisation, the centre seeks to examine the spiritual development in a global context (Center for Spiritual Development in Childhood & Adolescence, n.d.).

### **Significance of Spirituality in Human Development**

The very meaning of spirituality denotes a representational domain of human development, which is distinctive in terms of its own focal psychological content, functions, and stage structure (Roeser, Isaac, Abo-Zena, Brittan & Peck, 2008). Literature in spirituality supports the vital role of spirituality and its significance to human development. De Souza and Hyde (2007, p. 97) hold that spirituality is significant to the well-being of the young people and professionals from various disciplines examining such issues. They write,

A particular characteristic of society today which began to emerge in the last century... is the increasing interest in spirituality, as it pertains to children and adolescents. Professionals across varying disciplines have been examining the concept of human spirituality and expounding its relevance as a significant factor in the lives and the well-being of our young people.

Whether spiritual development is as significant as human development in physical, cognitive, emotional, social, moral, or sexual dimensions can be debatable. However, the fact that these dimensions are interrelated is out of the question. In fact, it is the spiritual dimension that plays the most vital role in the integration of

the different aspects of human development. As Roehlkepartain, Benson, King and Wagener (2006, p. 9) write: "It is the spiritual dimension that is mostly involved in a person's effort to integrate the various aspects of development."

The cognitive capacities in a normal human being led to the emergence of art, science, and technology. Spiritual development is from these same human capacities which is an inherent part of cognitive-developmental mechanisms and processes (Johnson & Boyatzis, 2006). Hence, there has been a call by scholars for recognizing spiritual development as a core developmental process on par with the rest of universal developmental processes (Benson, as cited in Johnson & Boyatzis, 2006).

What then, constitute changes which are developmental? Developmental psychologist David Henry Feldman (2008) delineates seven criteria of positive changes which constitute as developmental. The seven criteria of the changes are to be *positive*, *qualitative*, *irreversible* or no going back to an earlier framework, consist of predictable *sequence* of changes, be of a *scale* that brings impacts to a broad sector of behaviour, be accompanied by a distinctive set of strong *emotions*, and to be *intentional* in the efforts of such changes. On the other hand, whether such criteria are acceptable as changes in the developmental process is debatable, and may not fit into all developmental theories.

Another aspect of spirituality is that, it is a human construct which can be seen from different perspectives. Among them are, spirituality as a *line* of development, a *level* of development, spirituality as an *attitude*, and as *peak experiences* (Wilber, as cited in Ingersoll, 2007).

A critical issue here is whether spiritual development, as part of the human developmental process could be dissected into seemingly numerous unconnected facets as seen in its physical, social, psychological, and moral dimensions. However, seen in a holistic perspective, just as in addressing child development, it would be difficult to consider how progress in one dimension will not have an impact on other dimensions of the person (Adams, Hyde & Woolley, 2008).

### **Fowler's Stages of Faith Development**

James W. Fowler is one of the most eminent scholars on human spiritual development (Peck, n.d.). A groundbreaking publication by Fowler in 1981, *Stages of Faith: The Psychology of Human Development and the Quest for Meaning* soon became a classic and the book has made its mark in more than 40<sup>th</sup> printing in just two decades (Fowler & Dell, 2006).

Fowler's use of the term "faith" resembles very closely to what is referred as spirituality today (Roeser, Isaac, Abo-Zena, Brittian & Peck, 2008). In *Stages of Faith: The Psychology of Human Development and the Quest for Meaning*, he was not particularly referring to religion, but his work demonstrates how spirituality can be developed through the forms of a religious tradition today (Roeser, Isaac, Abo-Zena, Brittian & Peck, 2008). The following illustration clarifies what faith implies in his work:

Faith, as approached here, is not religious, nor is it to be equated with belief. Rather, faith is a person's way of leaning into and making sense of life. More than noun, faith is the dynamic system of images, values, and commitments that guides one's life. It is thus universal: everyone who chooses to go on living operates by some basic faith. (Fowler, 1981, back cover)

Drawing from the key thinkers, such as Piaget, Erikson, and Kohlberg, Fowler (1981) initially delineates the stages of faith development from the initial intuitive phase through self-transcending of full maturity. He pioneered faith development theory in the 1970s to shed light on the evolution of how human beings conceptualise God and how the influence of God makes an impact in their personal lives in terms of core values, beliefs, and meanings as well as their relationships with people (Fowler & Dell, 2006). Fowler's (1981) structural-developmental theory of faith included regression and recapitulation of previous stages and, hence, they are somewhat spiral and less linear than those of Piaget and Kohlberg. In addition, Fowler emphasised the importance of narrative which was the source for the content for the experience of faith (Ratcliff & Nye, 2006).

Fowler's revised theory was published in 1996 in *Faithful Change* (as cited in Robinson, 2008), where he proposed seven stages instead of six stages as in his earlier work published in 1981. It carried an additional stage called 'undifferentiated or primal faith' supposedly occurs at infancy. Fowler's stages of faith fit well into Wilber's (2000) third definition of spirituality as a separate line of development which maintains that, there is definitely an infancy and childhood spirituality. Over the time, such capacities in children will further develop into what would be clearly recognized as spiritual. The following briefly describe Fowler's stages of faith:

**Stage 1: Undifferentiated or primal faith (infancy).** At this pre-linguistic and pre-conceptual stage, the infant begins to form a disposition towards an environment. Gradually, this new environment will eventually be identified to be distinctive from the self. It is at this stage that the sense of trust or mistrust, self worth based on conditional and unconditional grounds are formed.

**Stage 2: Intuitive-projective faith (ages 2-6).** It is most typical of the child of two to six who is filled with fantasies and displays fluidity of thought patterns. There is a great deal of imagination and the first self-awareness, including those of death and sex. The influence acquired through the examples, moods, and actions of adults can have a permanent effect.

**Stage 3: Mythic-literal faith (ages 7-12).** This stage can take place in a ten-year-old child or even an adult. The concrete-operational person continues with much imaginations and fantasies as in the previous stage, but one with more of one's own perspective. In this stage, person is affected deeply by symbolic and dramatic materials and is able to express meanings and experience in a more linear and narrative manner.

**Stage 4: Synthetic-conventional faith (ages 12-21).** Typically taking place at puberty, the Stage 4 person is also going through the stress and strain of the changes involved in physical, emotional, and social life among other things. In addition to acutely tuning to the expectations and judgments of significant others, the adolescent's experience of the world is expanding beyond the family to include



peers, school or work, society and media, and perhaps religion as well.

**Stage 5: Individuative-reflective faith (ages 21-30).** This stage most appropriately takes form in young adulthood but for many, it usually emerges in their twenties. A double development characterizes the Stage 5 person, who claims an identity and draws a meaning frame which is conscious of its boundaries, inner connections as well as an awareness of its own worldview. This is a demythologizing stage in which symbols are translated into conceptual meanings.

**Stage 6: Conjunctive faith (ages 31-40).** This stage occurs usually around mid-life involves the integration into self and outlook to reality as symbolic power is in reunion with conceptual meanings. The Stage 6 person is ready for a new outlook such as more in-depth experience in spirituality and religious revelation, while symbols, myths and rituals can be appreciated.

**Stage 7: Universalizing faith (ages 40 and beyond).** While stage 7 remains paradoxical as the self is divided between universalizing apprehensions and the need to preserving one's well-being, the new stage involves overcoming this paradox through a moral and ascetic actualization of these apprehensions. Stage 7 persons are rare as they often become martyrs for the visions they themselves incarnate. Indeed, they are actualizers of the spirit within a human community that is truly inclusive and fulfilled.

### **Sandhu's Theory of Spiritual Development**

Counsellor educator Daya Singh Sandu, who is also a practitioner of the Sikh tradition, developed the seven experienced-based stages of spiritual development. Sandhu's (2007) experienced-based stages of spiritual development can be summarized as follows:

**Stage 1: Scourge.** This is 'a-spiritual' stage, when a person's spiritual interests are dormant. The individual is focused on materialistic matters and there is hardly any interest on spirituality. The person is going through a life without spiritual awakening and is highly egocentric.

**Stage 2: Emerge.** It may take a major life event or a trauma for a person to emerge from the previous stage of scourge. There is a tendency for human being in a time of crisis to become spiritual or religious, or both. For some people, the process of spiritual awakening could be facilitated by a spiritual teacher or guru while for others; a scripture can be a source of inspiration. This is a transforming stage which can be conducive to one's transition to higher stages. For the individual, who enters this stage for the first time, spirituality becomes important and there is deliberate interest in it.

**Stage 3: Purge.** This stage is characterized by a person's rejection of materialistic and worldly pleasures. The person changes path by turning from materialistic interests to focusing on spiritual concerns and the person may turn away from a life of scourge as part of the purging process. The person may turnover a new leaf by making conscious effort to curtail deadly habits which may obstruct one's spiritual growth such as lust, anger, haughtiness, greed, and attachments to materialism.

**Stage 4: Diverge.** Since spiritual ascent is neither steady nor linear, an individual might return to former materialistic ways of life, leaving the spiritual path. During this stage, the person may experience a loss of interest in spiritual matters. However, such a setback is usually transitory and before long, the person may achieve further development in spirituality.

**Stage 5: Resurge.** After having "slipped", regressed or lost interest in a previous spiritual journey, the person makes a come back with a better understanding and more intense interest than previous experiences. Spirituality and/or religion turn out to be important once again at this stage. The individual's interest in spirituality is revived or renewed more vigorously than before.

**Stage 6: Converge.** The person is going through a very deliberate and conscious spiritual path, where spiritual beliefs, spiritual feelings, and spiritual actions are all synchronized in the person's life. A spiritual person may lead a life proactively according to the demands of the scriptures, or a life of high moral and spiritual

standards. The individual is able to experience greater sense of peace and satisfaction by striking a balance between the spiritual and materialistic aspects of life. The person enjoys this path, where the sense of faith, hope and an appreciation for life is present.

**Stage 7: Merge.** This is the ultimate stage in spiritual development, where one experiences a union with God or Oneness. This stage brings with it mystical qualities. Life and death are both seen as blessings and there is no more difference between suffering and comforts as they come from the same Higher-Self or the Supreme Being. At this highest level of spiritual realization, one also achieves the highest level of serenity.

### **Comparison between Fowler's Stages of Faith Development and Sandhu's Theory of Spiritual Development**

At first glance, it may seem incompatible to compare a theory on the development of faith to one on spiritual development. In reality, what Fowler means by 'faith' in his Stages of Faith is akin to the word 'spiritual' as in Sandhu's theory of spiritual development (Roeser, Isaac, Abo-Zena, Brittan & Peck, 2008).

Fowler's Stages of Faith was first published in 1981 and it was only after a hiatus of more than a quarter of a century later saw the appearance of Sandhu's Experienced Based Stages of Spiritual Development in 2007. At the same time, it is necessary to bear in mind that Fowler's *Stages of Faith: The Psychology of Human Development and the Quest for Meaning* which carried more than 300 pages soon became a classic after its publication in 1981. Whereas Sandhu's theory appeared in 2007 as "Seven Stages of Spiritual Development: A Framework to Solve Psycho-Spiritual Problems" in the form of as a book chapter covering 22 pages in *Counselling and Spirituality: Views From the Profession* edited by Oliver J. Morgan. Hence, it is understandable as a result of the lapse of time, a great deal of critique and other writings had followed. Similarly, consider the impact of Sandhu's theory, there will be a great deal of writings about his work in time to come especially from those who specialize in spirituality, counselling, psychotherapy and behavioural sciences.

Sandhu (2007) developed the Experienced Based Stages of Spiritual Development partly due to his reaction with Fowler's Stages of Faith and other existing theories, such as Allport's Theory of Religious Sentiments published in 1950, Washburn's Stages of Psychospiritual Development in the 1980s, and in the 1990s, Oser's Stages of Religious Judgments and Genia's Stages of Faith. Though these models, including that of Fowler's were useful for counsellors and psychotherapists to understand how clients develop religious or spiritual interests and assist them in the course of intervention, they posed several problems. Sandhu believes that spiritual maturity develops in a desultory fashion and not in a linear manner or in sequential stages as suggested in most of those models.

Sandhu makes no mention of age as a factor in spiritual development as in the other models mentioned. Fowler's seven stages of development is based on age and somewhat spiral in the course of development, Sandhu's model suggests even more distinctly the desultory nature of spiritual development whereby a person can progress and fall back before making further progress. Hence, Sandhu sees experience as the very essence of spirituality and its development is no way close to any linear form as in the other models mentioned but one which can slide back and forth in between the "stages". However, Fowler's Stages of Faith cannot be classified as strictly linear as it is somewhat spiral in nature.

Second, Fowler's model and those of the others mentioned above are mirroring either Kohlberg's Stages of Moral Development or Piaget's Cognitive Development Stages. Whereas, Sandhu's (2007) theory of spiritual development is centered on experience which is underpinned by social learning theory more than any other theories, based on the 'experiencing is believing' principle of spirituality. In this regard, he agreed with Berenson in making a distinction between religion and spiritual as he states, "Spirituality, as opposed to religion, connotes a direct, personal experience of the sacred, unmediated by particular belief systems prescribed by dogma or by hierarchical structures of priests, ministers, rabbis, or gurus" (as cited in Sandhu, 2007, p. 65).

Third, spirituality and religion are presented as intertwined in Fowler's and other models mentioned above, except Sandhu's. For Sandhu (2007), religion is a means to spirituality and they need to be addressed separately. Since there is no general consensus on the definition on spirituality, drawing a line on where religion has a place makes a difference on what spirituality means. For some, spirituality covers a wider spectrum than religion and religion is included as part of spirituality. Whereas others clearly make a clear distinction between spirituality and religion and there is a tendency to exclude each other though they are related. Hence, it can be concluded that Fowler and other proponents mentioned define spirituality to include religion, whereas Sandhu defines spirituality in the narrower sense of the word, at least in his Experienced Based Stages of Spiritual Development, where he makes a distinction between spirituality and religion.

Fourth, though essentially dealing with spirituality, none of the stages of faith development in Fowler, first published 1981 and revised in 1996 actually matches the stages of spiritual development in Sandhu's (2007) theory. This is understandable given the wide definition of spirituality and to date; there is still no general consensus on the meaning of the term. Nevertheless, in Fowler's final phase of Universalizing Faith, the Stage 7 persons become actualizers of the spirit within a human community. Whereas in Sandhu's ultimate stage of Merge, the Stage 7, persons achieve the highest level of spiritual realization through a union with God or Oneness. Though Sandhu does not mention how likely or unlikely for anyone to achieve the final stage of Merge, Fowler did specifically mention that it would be rare for any one to become a martyr for the vision that one incarnates as in the final stage.

While the significance of one's spirituality may differ from another's entirely, there are obviously some who will aspire to progress through their spiritual journey in their ultimate search for the optimal transcendence a human being can possibly strive for.

In terms of similarities, Fowler's revised theory and Sandhu's theory consist of seven 'stages' of spiritual development. Instead of

linear progression, both Fowler and Sandhu's 'stages' tend to be spiral, or fall back in regression and recapitulation before progressing to more advanced phases. Obviously, these two theories do not fit into the criterion for irreversibility as a constituent among changes which are developmental as delineated by Feldman (2008) discussed earlier. Although there are additional similarities between Fowler and Sandhu's theories, as much as there are more comparisons which can be made between the two theories than the four main themes discussed earlier, it is beyond the scope of this article to address such issues.

### **Nurturing Spirituality in Children**

The chapter on spiritual development would remain incomplete without addressing how spirituality can be nurtured. While most adults can find their own ways to develop their own spirituality, children can be helped in this regard very much like how education becomes part and parcel of the socialization process in order to help prepare them as functional adults later in life.

Evidently, material pursuit is seen as a factor inhibiting children's expression of their spirituality (Hyde, 2008). This is in line with what Mercer (as cited in Hyde, 2008) refers as later consumerist culture whereby children are pampered with material excess visible in Western culture. Indeed, children in the East today are just as pampered with consumerism that hampers their expression of spirituality. As such, helping children through education, including nurturing by their parents and proper education at school to strike a balance between what is necessary in life and seeking material affluence could contribute to the spiritual well-being as well as the spiritual development of children.

As a means to nurture spiritual growth in children, Hyde (2008) suggests the creation of spaces that foster trust, respect, and safety both at home and in school. Lessons involving moral, religious, and language education provide opportunities for children to have their shadows emerged and their personas challenged. Besides, opportunities could be established to inculcate stillness, silence, and solitude which provide conducive environment to enhance their spiritual development.

### **Suggestions for Further Research**

Sandhu's (2007) experienced-based stages of spiritual development are still relatively new, in comparison to several other prominent theories of spiritual development. Consequently, few studies have been conducted in making contrasts between this new theory and other theories on spiritual development and obviously, this is an area where investigators can choose to work on. In addition, Sandhu's as well as other relevant developmental theories which emphasize immediate conscious experience can be studied in light of phenomenology, which already has gained significance in the social sciences and psychology (VandenBos, 2007).

### **CONCLUSION**

A comparative study, despite a brief one, such as this between Fowler and Sandhu's theories may raise more questions than it answers. Precisely, it is through such a contrast that issues on both spirituality and spiritual development can be made clearer and better understood. William R. Charlesworth (2006), one of the authors of the *Encyclopedia of Religious and Spiritual Development* best sums up the current status of theories on spiritual development. He writes, "In-depth and representative studies covering life-span development of spirituality in individuals still have to be done... Whatever understanding we now have, there is no question that spirituality has most likely been part of the human condition for as long as humans have existed" (p. 47).

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Spirituality can be described as "the recognition of a feeling or sense or belief that there is something greater than [oneself], something more to being human than sensory experience, and that the greater whole of which we are part is cosmic or divine in nature" [1]. The issue of spirituality is something that cannot be ignored. Spirituality can help you reflect and connect to your source in order to gain deeper knowledge about the purpose of your existence. Create a Broader Knowledge of the World. Humans have become sophisticated in knowledge, and this is evident in how the world is continually shaped by innovation. However, there is some knowledge about the universe that only deep spirituality can reveal. Spirituality is a significant and universal aspect of human experience. The specific content of spiritual belief, practice, and experience varies, but all cultures have a concept of an ultimate, transcendent, sacred, or divine force (Peterson and Seligman, 2004). Spirituality is consistently defined by scientists as the search for, or communion with, the sacred (Pargament et al., 2013b). It is important to add that spirituality has demonstrated a potential to bring out both the best and the worst in human nature (e.g., Pargament, 2002). We will predominantly focus here on the brighter side of spirituality. Spirituality is a way of gaining perspective. Spirituality recognises that your role in life has a greater value than what you do every day. It can relieve you from dependence on material things and help you to understand your life's greater purpose. Spirituality can also be used as a way of coping with change or uncertainty.