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Spirituality, Religion, and Aging Illuminations for Therapeutic Practice

Holly Nelson-Becker

Loyola University Chicago, hnelsonbecker@luc.edu

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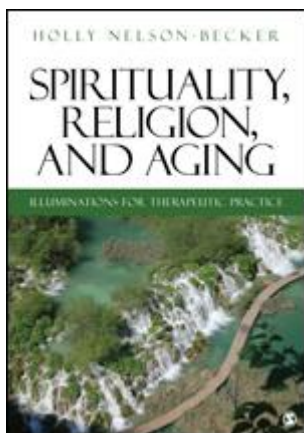
Nelson-Becker, Holly, "Spirituality, Religion, and Aging Illuminations for Therapeutic Practice" (2017).
Faculty Books. 125.

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Spirituality, Religion, and Aging

Illuminations for Therapeutic Practice

[Holly Nelson-Becker](#) - Loyola University of Chicago, USA

February 2017 | 488 pages | SAGE Publications, Inc

Format	Published Date	ISBN	Price
Paperback	02/15/2017	9781412981361	\$40.00
Electronic Version	02/21/2017	9781483315249	\$32.00

This highly integrative book was written for students, professionals in aging, ministers, and older adults themselves. Readers will gain the knowledge and skills they need to assess, engage, and address the spiritual and religious needs of older persons. Taking a fresh approach that breaks new ground in the field, the author discusses eight major world religions and covers values and ethics, theories, interventions, health and caregiving, depression and anxiety, dementia, and the end of life. Meditations and exercises throughout the book allow readers to expand and explore their personal understanding of spirituality. Referencing the latest research, the book includes assessments and skill-based tools designed to help practitioners enhance the mental health of older people.

KEY FEATURES:

- **An integrated, interdisciplinary approach** prepares future mental health professionals to work on teams and bring the best of their disciplinary knowledge to contexts of transdisciplinary practice.
- **A standard chapter format** helps readers develop a deeper understanding of spirituality and religion in aging and includes questions for discussion; a suggested meditation; exercises; related websites; and recommended readings.
- **Important core information on aging** includes necessary foundational gerontological content and the latest concepts and published research in spirituality and religion within aging communities.
- **Seven fully developed case studies** help students consider important issues in working with clients' spiritual and religious beliefs, values, and practices.
- **Detailed examples of clinical strategies** prepare mental health professionals to support personal strengths and help clients cope with spiritual struggles.

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Reviews:

"Professor Holly Nelson-Becker's groundbreaking book provides a holistic framework of knowledge, values, and clinical practices that promote gerontological practitioners' comfort and competence to address spirituality and religion. Her subtitle key word 'illuminations' is apropos. Nelson-Becker deftly integrates understandings from social work, nursing, psychology, counseling, health sciences, chaplaincy, and other fields to craft an interdisciplinary approach that is sensitive to the vulnerabilities and strengths of aging and dying that reveal, as she said, "openings for light." She synergizes profound insights with practical daily life realities. She presents these insights with scientific acumen and poetic sensibility. All of this is supported by her extensive experience as a clinician, researcher, educator, and pastoral minister. The resulting approach to gerontological practice respects diverse religious and nonreligious expressions of clients' spiritual journeys and supports the professional and spiritual growth of clinicians. I enthusiastically recommend this book."

Edward R. Canda, Director of the Spiritual Diversity Initiative
The University of Kansas School of Social Welfare

"Religion and spirituality play an important role in the lives of older adults. This book will be an important resource to aid helping professionals to become more aware of this fact and integrate this awareness in their work. The book will also be helpful to clergy and chaplains who frequently provide care to older adults and their loved one but rarely have any training in gerontology. The book includes helpful discussions of important topics including spiritual assessment, care for those with dementia and care at the end of life."

George Fitchett
Rush University Medical Center

"Spirituality is a vital part of aging and this book is a comprehensive resource providing both theoretical

and clinical insight to understand the complex aspects of spirituality for older people. The text is an outstanding guide for all disciplines."

Betty Ferrell
City of Hope Medical Center

"In this essential and insightful book for our times, Holly Nelson-Becker draws upon current research and scholarship regarding spirituality, religion, and aging from a range of disciplines and shares stories, examples, and anecdotes from her own work with older adults and their families. Readers will appreciate this approach of bringing together findings from scientific research and insights from practice and presenting them in an easy to understand language and style. One of the key strengths of this book is its accessibility and applicability for practitioners. Although high-quality research is being conducted and published, oftentimes this work is not reaching health practitioners, social workers, and therapists who are serving older adults and their caregivers. This book has the potential to connect research and practice audiences around these important topics.

Given the continuing increase in the population of older adults from varied ethnic and cultural backgrounds and the spiritual and religious challenges they experience, the book includes a continuing discussion of diverse faith traditions and their implications for mental health practitioners. Another important strength of the book is its emphasis on active learning. Each chapter includes discussion questions, meditation exercises, spiritual exercises, and case studies aimed at engaging readers in using what they are learning. Internet and other resources are also included to help interested readers in obtaining additional information on topics of their interest. These pedagogical features further contribute to the books' overall goal of preparing students and health care providers to address psychological and spiritual needs of older people from varied ethnic and cultural backgrounds. This text is a timely and relevant contribution to the growing body of work on spirituality, religion, and aging that has the potential to further knowledge, have meaningful impact for multiple audiences, and ultimately improve the lives of older adults."

Chandra M. Mehrotra, PhD
The College of St. Scholastica
