

Workshop #2 – Exploring God, Goddess, and Spirituality: the Secrets of the Art

Speaker: Shawn Christopher Shea, M.D. (www.suicideassessment.com)

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Length: 1.5 hours

Intended Audience: Appropriate for counselors, psychologists, psychiatric nurses, psychiatrists, social workers, substance abuse counselors, school counselors, case managers, and all mental health trainees

Description: Understanding a client's spirituality and framework for meaning is, without a doubt, one of the most important tasks for an interviewer. Yet painfully little time is spent in graduate schools and clinical training on how to do this delicate exploration in a sensitive fashion. In this workshop Dr. Shea shows exactly how it is done. Pulling upon innovative work by experts such as Allan Josephson, John Peteet, and James Griffith, he describes specific questions that help bring the clinician into the soul of the client and shows how the answers may have major impacts on the course of healing.

Objectives:

- 1) Be able to describe the distinction between religious beliefs, spirituality, and framework for meaning.
- 2) Be able to describe eight ways that an understanding of a client's framework for meaning, including religious and/or spiritual beliefs can be used in treatment planning.
- 3) Be able to apply flexible techniques for raising the topic of the client's framework for meaning in an initial interview both directly and indirectly, including the use of Griffith's "Existential Questions".
- 4) Be able to appropriately respond to the difficult question sometimes raised by client's to clinicians, "Do you believe in God?"