



# Connections

Giving hope, comfort, peace and sharing community with those we serve.

**IN THIS ISSUE**

## A pulse on Spiritual Health Care in the province of Manitoba

Spiritual Health Care has been an integral part of whole person care since 1871 when the Grey Nuns founded the first 4-bed hospital. For well over a century faith groups have established hospitals, personal care homes, hospices, and other health and human service organizations that have spiritual health care embedded into their missions.

Fast-forward to the 21st century: Things have changed. Our healthcare system is primarily focussed on clinical care and although spiritual health services (SHS) continue to be of utmost importance in healing the whole person, constant advocacy is required to ensure that it remains available in our healthcare facilities, and that it is provided by professional healthcare practitioners.

This specialized field continues to be misunderstood and underrepresented. Often vacant positions are not filled (ie the coordinator for SHS in the IERHA) or in acute care get filled by other allied healthcare professionals. Personal care homes need to find their own funding to support these positions.

Organizations like IHCAM, Manitoba Multifaith Council and the Catholic Health Association of Manitoba have been advocating for years to ensure that SHS are not lost in caring for the human person.

Spiritual health care is a priority for IHCAM. In fact, our members meet for the purpose of sharing religious values, to discuss common concerns and issues in health care, and deliver programming based on spiritual care and health.

In 2012, Manitoba's Spiritual Health Care Strategic Plan, *Health and the Human Spirit: Shaping the Direction of Spiritual Health Care in Manitoba* was developed to provide direction to the spiritual health care system in Manitoba and promote a comprehensive and shared understanding of the spiritual aspect of health care as a vital component of whole person, patient/resident centered care.

IHCAM's ED joined the Provincial Spiritual Health Care Steering Committee in 2017, under the leadership of Judith Burch and Rosie Jacuzzi, that made a significant start in implementing the Spiritual Health strategic plan by utilizing working groups with representatives from spiritual health care stakeholders. In March 2018, the Committee submitted its final report that encompassed its accomplishments and recommendations for the future. If you would like to read it, click on this link: [FINAL-Spiritual-Health-Strategy-Report-March-31-2018-002.pdf](https://www.ihcam.ca/files/2018/03/FINAL-Spiritual-Health-Strategy-Report-March-31-2018-002.pdf) (ihcam.ca).

Sadly, it was put on a shelf and none

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of the recommendations were implemented. On the flip side, the province of Manitoba hired VIRGO Planning and Evaluation Consultants Inc. in 2017 that resulted in *The MB Mental Health and Addictions Strategy, Improving Access and Coordination of Mental Health and Addiction Services: A Provincial Strategy for All Manitobans Mental Health and Addictions*. They are implementing recommendations for improving access to and coordination of mental health and addictions services in MB, and fortunately, spiritual health has been identified as an important part in the healing process.

There is so much work to do, but I am now seeing a glimmer of light in this long tunnel. A new working group has been struck to focus on spiritual health and cultural care. It encompasses representatives from IHCAM, MMC, CHAM, CASC, Indigenous Health, the ADM of the Mental Health, Wellness and Recovery, and Shared Health - Mental Health & Addictions. Ela Partyka has recently been hired as the clinical lead responsible for spiritual health at MH & A, and we hope to add another Shared Health rep to this committee. I am looking forward to see what the new year will bring. Let us pray.

# EXPLORING OUR MENTAL WELL-BEING AT THIS TIME OF YEAR

Christmas this year offers a different proposition than last year to the relief of many of us. The usual mix of heady expectations, heartwarming nostalgia, and emotional complexity surrounding the holiday season was upturned by the necessity of pandemic survival. We managed the challenges of family separation, being more alone than we'd choose in most cases. It was a survival year, and many of us will be grateful that we're no longer in that space.

While life has improved immensely for many of us in Canada, the rest of the world continues to be heavily impacted. We may be out of the eye of the storm, but life still feels tentative for many of us, and certain patterns of life have gone.

As I've explored this topic with others, I've reflected on the impact of disrupted rhythms over the course of time. Throughout the pandemic, our daily, weekly, monthly, and yearly rhythms have been overturned. If you'd kept a list of every disruption that occurred over the course of the last months, it would probably be lengthy. And though some of those disruptions may have appeared insignificant, the cumulative effect can be destabilizing. These disruptions have left a lingering impact on our mental health as well.

One study has found that the mental wellbeing of people living in the UK has declined since the onset of the pandemic due to changes in employment situations, social interactions, and parental responsibilities. <sup>[1]</sup>



Nevertheless, disruption and difficulty can bring about good things. While our losses have been real and profound, we have been fully engaged in the challenges. In seeking one another out, finding ways to support each other, and implementing various ways to survive, we have made it work— together.

For me, this feels resonant with Advent this year. It's no longer a survival year that we're relieved to have gotten through. We're at the next stage of looking, but allowing ourselves to have hope and to long for restoration brings great vulnerability.

Advent is also a time when God invites us into that longing as we look forward with hope and consider the vulnerability of the child in a manger.

As we recall the disrupted rhythms of the year, I'd like to invite you to **enter into a moment of reflection**. Please join me as I offer some questions to explore our wellbeing this Advent season.

⇒As you consider the rhythms of the year, what were you most grateful for? What held you together? Perhaps there was something you were able to keep doing or a new activity which offered a new pattern

for you. Spend a moment celebrating that specific gift and dwell on what it offered you. Offer God a moment of thanks.

⇒Next, reflect on something that felt disruptive which was less welcome. Take care to pick a topic you're ready to engage with. We can easily bury emotions in survival mode. This can serve us well. It can also mean that when we revisit these experiences, we may find ourselves encountering more difficult emotions afresh, so take care. Once again, offer what you experience to God.

⇒Finally, consider your deepest need at this time. Where do you long for the restoration of a disrupted rhythm? Does it feel within your power to achieve this, or is it presently beyond your ability? What feelings arise? What are you most looking forward to as you look ahead? Allow this to be a prayerful moment. You may choose to draw on Isaiah 30:18: *"Therefore the LORD longs to be gracious to you; therefore He rises to show you compassion, for the LORD is a just God. Blessed are all who wait for Him"* (BSB).

May we all know the blessing of waiting as we continue to recover, both in vulnerability and strength, knowing we are never alone.

Corin Pilling,  
Sanctuary Health Ministries

[1] <https://www.news-medical.net/news/20211027/Study-shows-sustained-deterioration-of-mental-health-in-UK-across-COVID-pandemic.aspx>



SANCTUARY  
Mental Health Ministries

## ***Faith, Grief, and COVID-19***

*A Conversation* is a resource that addresses the questions so many of us are facing during this pandemic:

How do we understand and process grief as people of faith?  
How can we support vulnerable and grieving members of our community while practicing physical distancing?  
Where can we find hope and joy in this season?

Four short films feature insights from a panel of experts with knowledge and experience in the fields of counselling, psychology, theology, and palliative care. Topics addressed include:

- the complex and dynamic nature of grief in this season,
- the presence of grief and lament in Scripture,
- the role that culture and faith play in shaping our experiences of grief,
- the importance of empathy and hospitality in the grieving process,
- practical ways to support those who are grieving.

The films are accompanied by a discussion guide with questions, reflections, and prayers—ideal for use in small groups. The guide also offers tips for facilitation, best practices for online meetings,

[SUBSCRIBE FOR FREE](#)

# **FAITH, GRIEF, AND COVID-19: A CONVERSATION**

*"This has been a blessing for me personally and professionally. The principles are very much useful not only for the elderly residents but for everyone who needs support. Thank you so much for your leadership and your untiring effort to bless us and help us grow as spiritual care givers to our community."*  
Neil Tagarao, Spiritual Care Practitioner, PCH

*"I can honestly say there was not one thing with the series that I didn't truly enjoy. The program content was very well developed and it kept a person really connected. I highly recommend for others to take this course."*  
Roy Bechard, Spiritual Care Practitioner, PCH

## 2 HOUR WEEKLY MODULES

Understanding the Aging Journey

Spirituality in Aging

Good Communication

The Power of Storytelling

Dementia

A New Home, A New Way of Life

Loss, Grief, Death & Dying

Roles, Boundaries and Self-Care

**START DATE**  
April 5/6, 2022

PUBLIC: \$125

CHAM & IHCM Members: \$100  
Includes workbook and on-line  
program development

### ON-LINE REGISTRATION

[http://www.eventcreate.com/  
e/join-the-journey-spring2022](http://www.eventcreate.com/e/join-the-journey-spring2022)

### CONTACT

Julie Turenne-Maynard  
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[jtmaynard@cham.mb.ca](mailto:jtmaynard@cham.mb.ca)

## AN 8-WEEK TRAINING PROGRAM

Designed to help develop a deeper understanding of how to accompany older adults in every aspect of their journey, whether they are living at home or are in Long-Term Care.

## WHO SHOULD PARTICIPATE

This training is beneficial for family members, staff of Seniors Care facilities, Spiritual Care volunteers, Church leaders, and others who desire to serve and care for older people.

*Medical science has brought about countless breakthroughs in the way we care for older people. But it has also led to a realization that physical and mental health are essential – but not enough. True, holistic care means understanding and supplying their spiritual needs as well.*

*join the journey*

**BODY  
MIND  
SPIRIT**



## Recent participant feedback:

*I really have enjoyed this spiritual care series and how it is structured. What a blessing! Thank you for what you've done to enrich our lives so we can continue with greater vision to touch others with God's love and care.*

Christine

*Thank you for making this possible. What a fountain of wisdom and understanding, and resources to draw from!*

Ruth

*I learned tangible ways in which to help people in need of spiritual care. Learning active/reflective/spiritual listening. The format was easy to follow with video, reading and role play/break out sessions. These sessions helped me to exercise what was being taught.*

*I liked the self assessments and additional resources suggested like the videos and articles/poems etc...*

*I like that the series dove into many aspects of care including palliative and self-care... Thank you.*



# Mark Your CALENDAR



2022  
**Caring for the  
Human Spirit®**  
Virtual Conference

March 28 - 30, 2022

The *Caring for the Human Spirit®* Conference is a premier spiritual care forum for cutting-edge topics to enhance your spiritual care practice and ministry. This inspirational and transformative 3-day conference is designed to provide spiritual care providers with the skills, best practices, and research, that can advance their career and improve optimal care for those in need.

Some confirmed keynote speakers include:  
Ira Byock: Evidence of Spirituality In Healthcare Is Everywhere (When We Know How To Look).

Faith Roberts: Diversity - A prism that shines differently for each individual.

Charles James Parker: Exploring Spiritual Care to Diverse and Underserved Communities

The conference agenda can be found at:  
[Agenda \(spiritualcareassociation.org\)](http://spiritualcareassociation.org)

IHCAM registers for this conference annually and invites you to participate in sessions that are of interest to you. If you would like to receive more information about the program details in the new year, please contact Julie at [jtmaynard@cham.mb.ca](mailto:jtmaynard@cham.mb.ca)



RECONCILING HEART AND SOUL  
Moral Injury and  
Pathways to Healing

RÉCONCILIANT LE COEUR ET L'ÂME  
Préjudice moral et  
le chemin vers la guérison

**MAY 1- 4TH, 2022**

**IN WINNIPEG & ONLINE**

## CONFERENCE OBJECTIVES

- Share expertise on moral injury and its impact on practitioners and those we serve/encounter
- Focus on moral injury through a variety of lenses, in particular, the Indigenous experience.
- Create space for a variety of voices speaking to their experience of MI
- Motivate with leading practices in research and professional development; with attention on the calls to action of the TRC
- Strengthen participants as they consider their world view lens and explore a variety of healing pathways.

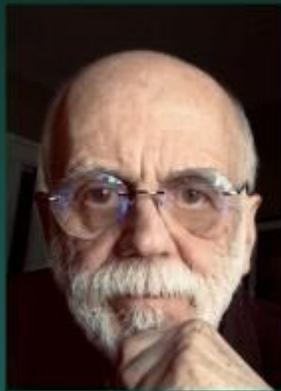
Winnipeg will host the first Hybrid conference for CASC. Conference fees will reflect in-person and online options allowing greater participation from. Satellite locations (CPE Groups, Spiritual Care Departments, regional gatherings, etc.) can also bring together attendees to connect virtually at a reduced registration fee. To read more:

[2022 Conference - Canadian Association for Spiritual Care](#)

For more information contact Chenene Layne at 204.237.2356 or [clayne@sbgh.mb.ca](mailto:clayne@sbgh.mb.ca) or [webmaster@spiritualcare.ca](mailto:webmaster@spiritualcare.ca)



11th Annual  
Lieutenant Governor's Award  
For the Advancement  
of Interreligious Understanding



CONGRATULATIONS TO  
THE 2021 RECIPIENT

**PASTOR BILL MILLAR**

SAVE THE DATE - JANUARY 11, 2022, 5:30 PM  
LIVE EVENT VIA YOUTUBE

YouTube link will be available soon.



## THE REALITIES OF STRESS

If you are a professional  
or personal caregiver, we  
invite you to accept this  
**FREE GIFT** for You.

The **Realities of Stress** is a unique, self-guided  
online "retreat" in the form of interactive course.  
Filled with fun exercises, videos, audios and  
imagery to nourish your soul.

Click on this link to get started: [The Realities of  
Stress \(thinkific.com\)](http://thinkific.com)



Interfaith Health Care  
Association of Manitoba

Association confessionnelle  
de la santé du Manitoba

## INTERESTED IN APPLYING FOR AN EDUCATION GRANT?

IHCAM's Education Fund has been established as part of its commitment to providing on-going support and training to its members. We value excellence in leadership, board governance, and person-centred care, and encourages our members' trustees, employees and volunteers to explore ways to grow in compassion.

Investing in our people will allow them to perform their duties to the best of their abilities, and help to create the conditions for them to grow throughout their journey in the facility and community they serve.

We want to provide IHCAM members the opportunity to acquire additional skills & knowledge to strengthen their effectiveness in the position they hold in our member institutions. Our hope is that by investing in the development and formation of individuals today, our organizations and the overall community will benefit for years to come.

For more information on this program and access to grants and the FAQ, click on this hyperlink. <http://ihcam.ca/news.php?lang=en>

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[www.ihcam.ca](http://www.ihcam.ca)



# Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD)

**PTSD CAN LEAVE YOU FEELING STUCK WITH A CONSTANT SENSE OF DANGER AND PAINFUL MEMORIES. BUT WITH NEW COPING SKILLS, YOU CAN FEEL SAFE AGAIN AND MOVE ON FROM THE TRAUMA.**

## WHAT IS PTSD?

After a traumatic experience, it's normal to feel frightened, sad, anxious, and disconnected. But if the upset doesn't fade, you may be suffering from post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD). PTSD can develop following any event that makes you fear for your safety. Most people associate PTSD with rape or battle-scarred soldiers—and military combat is the most common cause in men.

***But any event, or series of events, that overwhelms you with feelings of hopelessness and helplessness and leaves you emotionally shattered, can trigger PTSD especially if the event feels unpredictable and uncontrollable.***

PTSD can affect people who personally experience the traumatic event, those who witness the event, or those who pick up the pieces afterwards, such as emergency workers, healthcare workers, and law enforcement officers. It can even occur in the friends or family members of those who went through the actual trauma. Whatever the cause for your PTSD, by seeking treatment, reaching out for support, and developing new coping skills, you can learn to manage your symptoms, reduce painful memories, and move on with your life.

## WHAT CAUSES PTSD?

When you experience a stressful event, your nervous system reacts with the fight-or-flight response. Your heart pounds faster, your blood pressure rises, and your muscles tighten, increasing your strength and reaction speed. Once the danger has passed, your nervous system calms your body, lowers your heart rate and blood pressure, and winds back down to its normal state.

PTSD occurs when you experience too much stress in a situation. Even though the danger has passed, your nervous system is “stuck,” unable to return to its normal state of balance and you're unable to move on from the event. Recovering from PTSD involves helping your nervous system become “unstuck” so you can heal and move on from the trauma.

## SIGNS AND SYMPTOMS

PTSD develops differently from person to person because everyone's nervous system and tolerance for stress is a little different.

**While you're most likely to develop symptoms of PTSD in the hours or days following a traumatic event, it can sometimes take weeks, months, or even years before they appear.**

Sometimes symptoms appear seemingly out of the blue. At other times, they are triggered by something that reminds you of the

original traumatic event, such as a noise, an image, certain words, or a smell.

While everyone experiences PTSD differently, there are four main types of symptoms.

**Re-experiencing the traumatic event** through intrusive memories, flashbacks, nightmares, or intense mental or physical reactions when reminded of the trauma.

**Avoidance and numbing**, such as avoiding anything that reminds you of the trauma, being unable to remember aspects of the ordeal, a loss of interest in activities and life in general, feeling emotionally numb and detached from others and a sense of a limited future.

**Hyperarousal**, including sleep problems, irritability, hypervigilance (on constant “red alert”), feeling jumpy or easily startled, angry outbursts, and aggressive, self-destructive, or reckless behavior.

**Negative thought and mood changes** like feeling alienated and alone, difficulty concentrating or remembering, depression and hopelessness, feeling mistrust and betrayal, and feeling guilt, shame, or self-blame.

If you are interested in continuing to read this article, or if you feel that you may be suffering from PTSD, please click on this link:

<https://www.helpguide.org/articles/ptsd-trauma/ptsd-symptoms-self-help-treatment.htm>



## A Christ-Centered Ministry

Supporting the Practical, Emotional and Spiritual Needs of Family Caregivers



Twelve 1.5 hour sessions (1 per month) that include: announcing the topic, highlight session overview, facilitating discussion and reflection, small group activity, sharing, and closing with prayer and intentions.

### Roles and Communication

- Roles in Caregiving & Decisions We Face
- More in Music—Where Words Fail, Music Speaks
- Speak Up! Overcoming Challenges of Advocacy
- Staying Engaged : Keeping Them Engaged

### Planning & Support

- The Spirituality of Asking For and Receiving Help
- Staying Organized and Preparing for What's Next
- The Realities of Stress and Learning to Cope
- The Thing About Compassion

### Safety & Quality of Life

- One is Enough ! Learning to Live One Day at a Time
- Walking with Christ. Nourished By Grace
- A Season for Everything—The Ebbs and Flows
- End of Life—Planning For and Navigating Decisions

This program is designed to address the most important and commonly reported needs of family caregivers.

Guided by the authors' experience in the field of caregiving, pastoral ministry, and professional clinical training, Nourish for Caregivers content has been developed using a methodology built using evidence and insights, and grounded in the Christian faith.

## VIRTUAL ECUMENICAL SESSION STARTING JANUARY 17th, 2022

**Cost:** Free - Donation appreciated

**For more information and to participate**

Julie Turenne-Maynard

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Interfaith Health Care  
Association of Manitoba

Association confessionnelle  
de la santé du Manitoba



**FAITH**

makes all things possible

**HOPE**

makes all things WORK

**LOVE**

makes all things BEAUTIFUL

.....  
MAY YOU HAVE ALL THE THREE  
FOR THIS CHRISTMAS

*Merry  
Christmas!*

**The  
Interfaith  
Healthcare  
Association  
of Manitoba  
office will be  
closed from  
December  
25th to  
January 3rd,  
2022.**

DEAR FRIEND, I PRAY THAT YOU MAY  
ENJOY GOOD HEALTH AND THAT ALL  
MAY GO WELL WITH YOU, EVEN AS  
YOUR SOUL IS GETTING ALONG WELL.

3 JOHN 1:2

If the need for wellness and hope is what you are seeking most, whether in your own life, or in the life of someone you love, let us pray for you.  
May God, the Creator, the Messiah, watch over you, protect you, and keep you, always.