



For Carers, by Carers: Spirituality



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Spirituality means different things to different individuals at different times. It can often be thought of as faith. Spiritual care seeks to help people discover, or rediscover hope, resilience and inner strength. It is recognising that we are more than a physical being. It does however, unify and endorse the belief that we all have a belonging or purpose, to oneself and each other within communities, and as such are valued within this world. It encourages the values of connection, hope, peace, love, thoughtfulness, kindness and compassion. It also is about how our lives are intrinsically interconnected through caring for the person.

It is possible, without recognition of our own self-worth, that we become tested and stretched to unhealthy limits. It is important to know when and how to seek help, to keep well and maintain healthy relationships, to support our own spiritual, physical and mental health in times of change while caring.



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Counselling services are available through your GP or local carer centre, as well as an annual health check and flu vaccination if you are a carer.

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“Times of change can be challenging and lead to guilt – give yourself time, reassure yourself you are doing well. It is normal to be affected by the changes to our environment, lifestyle and livelihood.”

What carers would like to share with you:

- “If you don’t have your feelings, they will have you. You shouldn’t feel guilty or hide what you’re feeling.”
- “Never be afraid to ask for help. We can often cope with the big things, but it can be the little things that can break us.”
- “Get to know who you are and what makes life easier.”
- “If you constantly have tears in your eyes, it’s time to call someone for help.”
- “Prayer, reflexology, meditation, respite, counselling, sleep and talking with others all help. Find out what works for you!”
- “Making new memories through journaling, singing, arts and crafts, making video diaries can be a gift that allows connection to one another again. It can also assist with grief when you can remember the person, seeing them and also hearing them again.”



- There are songs that capture the empirical essence of spirit, which can be helpful to listen to, e.g. The Seal Lullaby, Bliss, A Hundred Thousand Angels. You can search for these online.
- Staying connected with your loved one can have reciprocal benefits. You are the one best placed to know their likes and dislikes when they are unable to express them. Reminiscence, hugs, taste preferences, clothing and hair all have importance in maintaining individuality and care.
- Time is the greatest gift that we can give to one another, and ourselves. It is important to give yourself time out too. Take time to read a book, pamper yourself or go for a walk.

And did you know?

1. The NHS offers staff support for counselling, occupational health support, chaplaincy.
2. Know that you are not alone. If you ever need to talk to someone, please call the Alzheimer Scotland 24-hour Freephone Dementia Helpline. Tel: 0808 808 3000
3. Faith in Older People www.faithinolderpeople.org.uk believes spiritual care is much broader than any one faith or religion, and is of relevance to everyone.

