

How Early Intervention Occupational Therapists Navigate Spirituality with Families

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Background

- Spirituality is important to occupational therapists³
- They don't know how to 'operationalize' it^{1,2,3}
- Very little is known about the spirituality of families involved in early intervention.^{1,2,3}

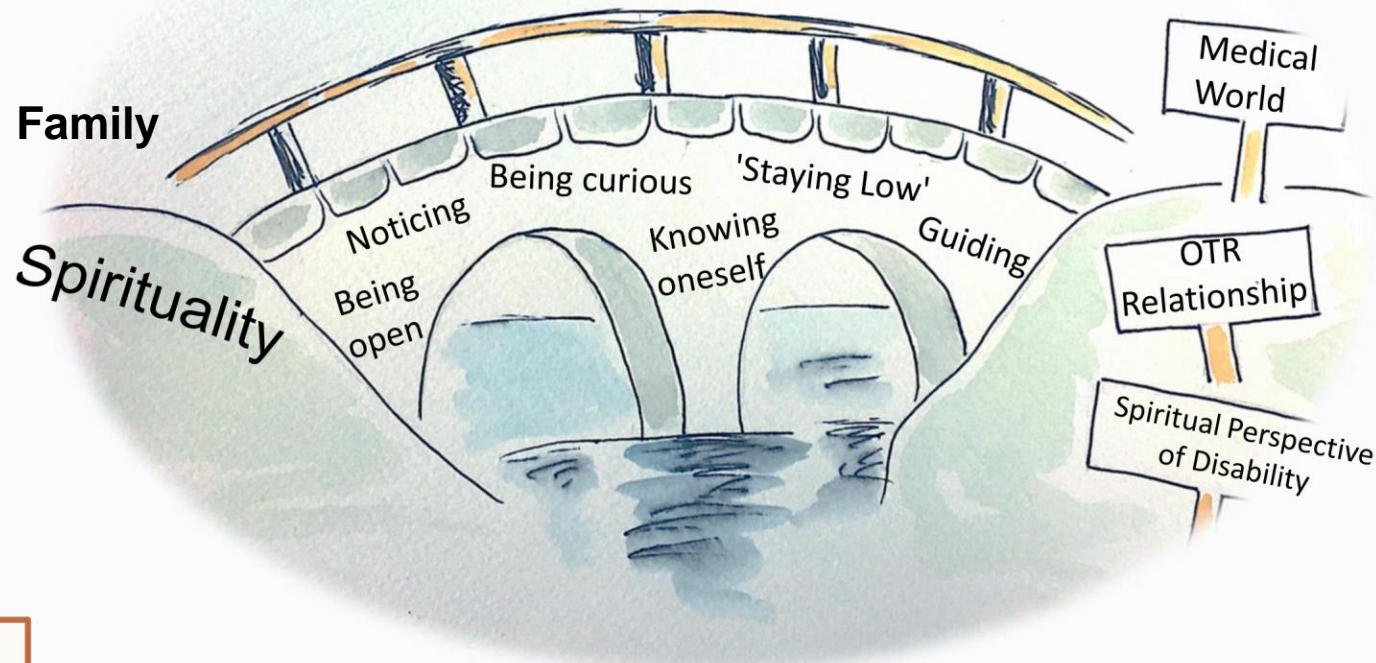
Research Aim

To explore the OTRs' understanding of how they used or chose not to use families' spirituality in early intervention

Methods

- Qualitative descriptive study
- Purposive, convenience sampling
- 3 OTRs in Early Intervention with 2+ yr. of experience
- Semi-structured interviews; narrative analysis

Findings



**"I have this very deep spiritual side
but I am also a scientist and sometimes people need
help navigating their child's disability."**

References:

¹Farrar, J. E. (2001). Addressing spirituality and religious life in occupational therapy practice. *Physical and Occupational Therapy in Geriatrics*, 18(4), 65-85. ²Johnston, D., & Mayers, C. (2005). Spirituality: a review of how occupational therapists acknowledge, assess, and meet spiritual needs. *British Journal of Occupational Therapy*, 68(9), 386-92. ³Thompson, K., Gee, B.M., & Hartje, S. (2018). Use of religious observance as a meaningful occupation in occupational therapy. *The Open Journal of Occupational Therapy*, 6(1), 1-19. ⁴McCorquodale, L., & Kinsella, E. A. (2015). Critical reflexivity in client-centred therapeutic relationships. *Scandinavian Journal of Occupational Therapy*, 22(4), 311-317.

Discussion

- OTRs linked their process of addressing spirituality back to the therapeutic process and relationships, not particular activities
- Navigating spirituality as related to cultural humility
- Family's spiritual perspective of disability is a part of what the family brings with them

OS/OT Implications

- Need for on-going self reflection (critical reflexivity⁴)
- OTRs can use a variety of strategies to address spirituality
- A family's spirituality isn't limited to activities but can provide insight into the way a family understands disability and other relationships