

Faith and Spirituality

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2023 Statewide Symposium in Support of Service Members, Veterans & Their Families

APRIL 19-20, 2023 | PHOENIX, ARIZONA

 arizona coalition
for military families



Faith & Spirituality

April 19, 2023



Therapy vs. Spirituality for Moral Injury: A Debate

Session 1



Welcome - Facilitators



Mike Wold
Be Connected Faith Network
Arizona Coalition for Military Families



Shawn Heistand
Connection Coach
Arizona Coalition for Military Families





Bridging the Divide Between Therapy and Spirituality: A Debate

Mike Wold, Co-leader
Arizona Coalition for Military Families
Be Connected Faith Network

Agenda for today

- 1 **Goals**
- 2 **Social Determinants of Health**
- 3 **Moral Injury**
- 4 **Be Connected Faith Network**
- 5 **Mock Debate - Therapy versus Spirituality**
- 6 **Summary**

Our Goals

- To show the important role that spirituality and faith community support can play in the healing of veterans especially those dealing with moral injury
- To show the value of therapy alone and spirituality alone in healing veterans and demonstrate how integration of the two can provide even better healing results
- To encourage you to attend the second Faith and Spirituality Session to learn from veterans who have suffered from moral injury about specific actions that chaplains and faith community leaders can take to help them
- To demonstrate the value of “bowls therapy”

Social Determinants of Health

1. Basic Needs
2. Employment
3. Family and Social Support
4. Higher Education
5. Housing
6. Legal
7. Mental Health
8. Physical Health
9. **Spirituality**



Spirituality and PTSD

Spirituality can improve post-trauma outcomes through:

- Reduction of behavioral risks through healthy religious lifestyles.
- Expanded social support through involvement in spiritual communities.
- Lessening of feelings of isolation, loneliness & depression related to grief and loss.
- Enhance coping skills & understanding trauma that result in meaning-making.
- Improve physiological mechanisms (i.e. "relaxation response") through prayer or meditation.
- Places veterans amongst caring individuals who can provide encouragement, emotional support, & financial assistance.

A Pathway to Healing

- Many service members and veterans are people of faith and view clergy and the chaplaincy as **confidential, trusted** sources of support.
- Veterans are 5X more likely to approach their **faith leader** than a mental health professional with an issue of concern.
- Fostering a sense of belonging for military connected people through faith within congregations can be a key part of a community's overall effort to **reduce veteran suicide**.
- Spiritual connection gained through discussion, activities and events can provide **hope, reduce isolation** and be a springboard to promote other **healthy behaviors**.

Introducing Our Debaters



Dr. Adam McCray



Pastor Brett Everett

Bowls Therapy

David Donaldson

Phoenix VA Health Care System

Whole Health Program

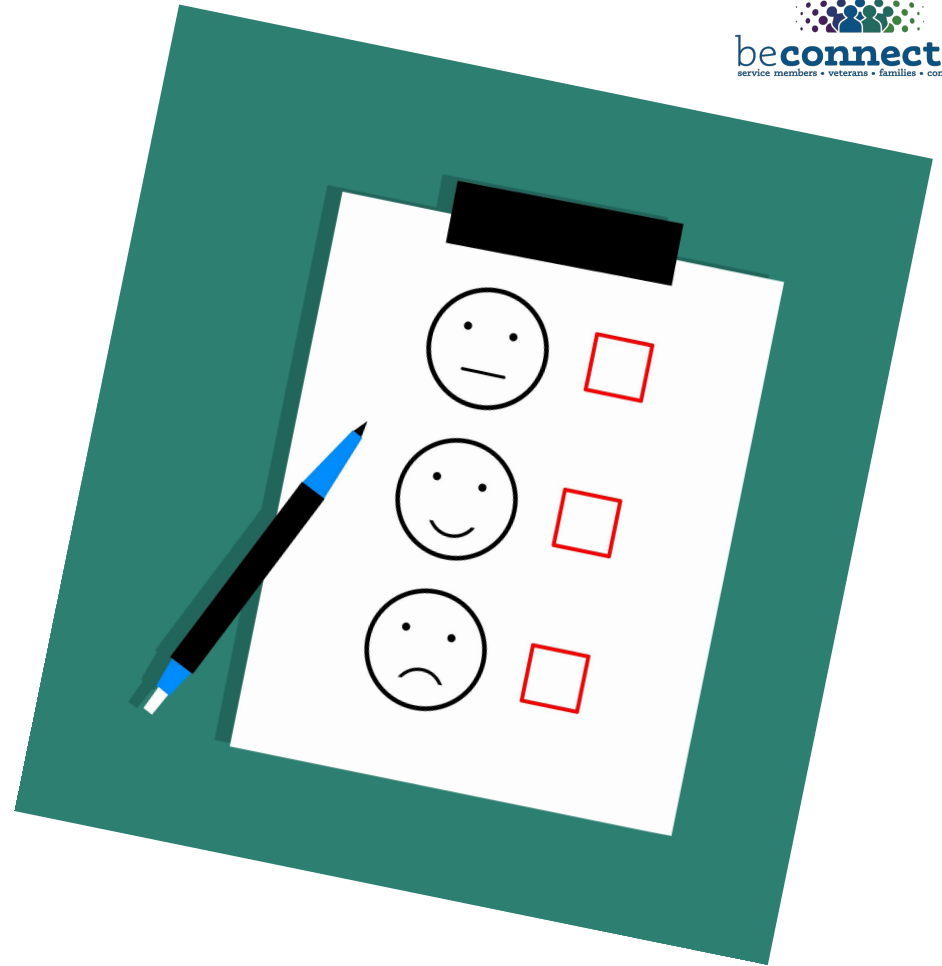


Summary

- **Spirituality** is one of the 10 social determinants of health
- **Chaplains** and **faith community leaders** can help veterans heal from their spiritual wounds
- Therapy is more successful if it is **integrated with spirituality**
- **Plan to attend Session 2** of the Faith and Spirituality Track this afternoon to learn specific things chaplains and faith community leaders can do to **help veterans deal with moral injury**

Session Evaluation

We want to hear from you!





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**Faith Network:
www.connectveterans.org/faith**