Suggested Reference


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The Experience of Spiritual Pain for Dying Migrants away from Birth Country

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Background
Dying well encompasses the holistic dimensions of the physical, emotional, social and spiritual domains of living. When aspects of life-meaning, culture and religion are not acknowledged in end-of-life, spiritual pain may result. Dying migrants bring cultural expressions, rituals and traditions from an identity developed in their birth country. Cultural insensitivity from practitioners in understanding the importance of these cultural expressions may increase the distress for these migrants. Experiencing longing to see loved ones and places left behind and be immersed in religious and cultural mores contributes to spiritual pain.

Methodology
Hermeneutic phenomenology using Heidegger’s philosophy to guide the interpretation of the stories was used. Ontology as a mode of looking at each story enabled an understanding of ‘being in end-of-life’ for migrants in this research.

Methods
• Ten adult migrants were recruited through hospices;
• The ability to be interviewed coherently in English was a requirement;
• The ability to cope with the length of interview was a requirement;
• A mix of ethnicities was achieved from eastern and western countries of origin.
• The interviews were in a conversational mode,
• The transcripts were checked by the participants before and during the second interview.

Findings

1. Possessing invisible differences and living with merged duality
   a. Coming from Zimbabwe and then South Africa. Our practices and that were very similar to NZ

2. Being in life review
   a. I miss my friends, my buddies and my colleagues. All back in Malaysia. And here I have nobody except my sons and my wife.

3. Seeking resolution and transformation
   a. And that’s why I want to take the kids and we can go all over special temples and spiritual places and we can have our blessing then. That has spiritual meaning in our Indian culture, you know.

Discussion
• Notions continually revisited reflexively in end-of-life to achieve some comfort;
• If difficulties with settling in are encountered, loss of ability to practice cultural mores is experienced and impacts spiritual peace when dying;
• Enacting continuity and memorialisation before end-of-life become crucial if returning to birth country is not possible;
• Unresolved feelings of grief from migration signify a lasting attachment to birth country (Continuing Bonds theory);
• ‘motherland’ as a metaphor: migrant is child, birth country is mother who represents security, heritage and comfortable place to be in (Attachment Theory);

New Knowledge and Implications
This research found that for migrants, finding belonging is fundamental to settling in their adoptive country and achieving spiritual peace in end-of-life. The new knowledge from this research centred on how life review was enacted for each migrant in end-of-life and how resolution was found, which in turn, is dependent on finding belonging or a degree of it in country of adoption. The implications of this research for practice include:
• education to increase practitioner awareness;
• the use of formal and informal life review with dignity therapy and meaning making to benefit migrants grappling with dying away from homeland.
• good local government organisation, dispersal of information and inclusive approaches towards migrants in events and services;

Spiritual well-being, a crucial part of end-of-life and palliative care can contribute to resolution of end-of-life despair for migrants.
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