



The Discipline for Pastoral Care Giving: Foundations for Outcome Oriented Chaplaincy

Larry VandeCreek, Arthur M. Lucas

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Structure your ministry to start with patients' needs, hopes, and resources and to be clear what difference your ministry can make! Hospital chaplains value who they are and what they do as contributions to patients' and families' healing and well-being. And they are continually stretching to enhance their ministries. Hospital administrators and other professionals on the care teams, however, often need help to grasp those same values in outcome oriented, observable, documentable, changes-for-the-better terms. The Discipline for Pastoral Care Giving: Foundations for Outcome Oriented Chaplaincy offers a powerful new paradigm for enhancing supportive, effective spiritual care for patients and families as well as communicating substantive outcomes to leaders and clinicians alike. This is all the more important in these times when every possible resource must be well used for the good of our patients and their families. By evaluating the pastoral care you offer, you can become more aware of the discrete skills you exercise in the assessment, planning, intervention, and reflection process. Such evaluation efforts highlight the discrete differences excellent spiritual care makes. This can help you track contributions you are making in terms of the patient's healing and well-being. Having a sound, replicable way to make the process more conscious also helps you communicate your assessment, strategies, and contributions more clearly to other care team members. Furthermore, consistently using The Discipline over time will enable you to discover patterns of spiritual dynamics in how people live with different health care challenges in their lives. These patterns translate into valuable insights as your care for others. The process discussed in The Discipline for Pastoral Care Giving calls on the chaplain to:

- identify the patient's spiritual needs, hopes, and resources
 - construct a patient profile through identifying the individual's sense of the holy, sense of meaning, sense of hope, and sense of community
 - design the desired outcome(s) you hope your care will contribute--for example, a person who has suffered a spinal cord injury integrates the effects of their injury in their sense of identity and meaning, a person living with cystic fibrosis healthfully grieves the loss of others in the CF community, a patient 'disabled' by the absence of her support community regains use of her personal resources for coping and self-care
 - develop and share a plan for the patient's spiritual care
 - choose interventions (which may range from facilitating a life review, to compassionate confrontation, to reading Scripture, to active listening, to arranging a family care conference)
 - measure outcomes, identifying and communicating the difference your care has made in terms of the patient's healing and well-being
- The Discipline for Pastoral Care Giving offers case studies, personal experiences, helpful figures and charts, and suggestions for dealing with patients experiencing unique, complex health care challenges, including adults living with cystic fibrosis and violent victims of violence. The wise advice and practical suggestions in this book will help you recognize and document the solid value of your hospital ministry.

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