

From Illness to Deep Self-Reflection: The Psychological Dynamics of Life Reevaluation in Cancer Patients

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Purpose

During the course of cancer treatment, patients face spiritual challenges, and different religions have varying doctrines and beliefs regarding life, death, illness, treatment, and dying. This study aims to explore how religious beliefs affect the lived experiences of cancer patients post-diagnosis and their perceptions of life values and meanings.

Methods

This study employed a qualitative research approach, conducting in-depth interviews with twenty-one cancer patients using a semi-structured interview guide. The interviews were fully recorded, and the transcripts were used as the textual data for analysis.

Results

Through the analysis of interview content, this study found the following impacts of religion on cancer patients:

1. Practicing religious beliefs

Participants highlighted religion's impact on impermanence, releasing attachments, pain, and karma. They stressed treating pain as illusory, releasing attachments, and approaching challenges calmly.

2. Personal growth and reflection

Participants shared experiences of illness, contemplation of death, and reevaluation of priorities, discussing self-reflection, overcoming challenges, and transforming adversity.

3. Evolving perspectives on disease and life

Participants adapted their views on cancer and life, focusing on accepting pain, releasing fear, finding peace, and embracing faith's power.

Conclusion

In summary, participants highlighted the significant impact of religious beliefs on coping with illness, emphasizing acceptance, detachment, and calmness. Their experiences underscored personal growth and reflection, leading to reevaluated priorities. Overall, these insights contribute to understanding how religious beliefs and personal growth influence individuals' responses to illness and life challenges.

Relevance to HPH

This article holds relevance to Health Promoting Hospitals and Health Services as it sheds light on the significant role of religious beliefs and personal growth in coping with illness.