

Whole Person Medicine

Meeting the spiritual needs of patients

Dr Michael Sheldon

BA, MB, BS, MBCS, FRCGP, MCGP, Dip Theol.



The Complete GP

- Country Practice
- Academic – teaching and research
- Third world primary care development
- Back to Academe
- Finally inner city London practice



Medical Models

- Which model do we use in most Western countries?
- Where did this model come from?
- What's good about it?
- What's wrong with it?
- What other models are available?

The philosophical basis of medicine

- What is the philosophical basis of medicine today?
- Where have we come from?
- Most things start with the Greeks

Plato said "A healthy body and mind is the result of the rule of reason. So medicine must construct a rational understanding of the workings of the human body"

Development of Modern Medicine

- 1750 herbal preparations, no scientific base
- 1850 microscopes allow exploration of microbes
- 1900 Public Health controlling infections
 - UK life expectancy: 1900 male 48 female 51
 - 1980 male 71 female 77
- 1910 Flexner report on Medical Education
- 2000 Evidence Based Medicine

20th Century

- **Scientific Humanism** becomes the dominant medical philosophy.
- Laboratory based sciences complement bedside diagnosis
- Investigations become more sophisticated
- Pharmaceutical companies make a wide range of effective medicines available
- Science offers the hope of a cure for diseases
- The art of medicine is less important

So what is wrong with that?

We all have increased life expectancy - BUT

1. Huge increase in cost of health care
2. Dealing well with acute diseases increases burden of chronic diseases
3. Increased life expectancy – often with poor health
4. Treatment side-effects
5. Separation of Science and Art

Some changes in modern times

- Humanistic somatic
- Psycho-somatic
- Psycho-social-somatic
- Narrative
- Post-modernism
- Alternatives and Complementary methods
- Spirituality
- **WHOLE PERSON APPROACH**

That's great – but what is the art and science of medicine today?

- **Evidence Based Medicine**
 - Is half of the equation
 - The individual patient is the other half
- **Who delivers this treatment and care?**
 - The doctor is less than half of the equation
 - An integrated team of professionals
 - Plus the patient and carers as part of the team
- **What is the desired outcome?**
 - What is good health?

Medical Belief Systems

- Medical practice is based upon a philosophical belief system.
- In the West this has been scientific humanism for over 100 years.
- There are other belief systems which are used today – e.g. Chinese Medicine.
- At the heart of these belief systems is a theory of **anthropology**

The current philosophy affects the treatment given

- Obviously the illnesses diagnosed and the treatments offered depend to a large extent on the belief system underlying current medical practice.

Anthropology

- Anthropology is the science of man – the study of humankind, cultures, beliefs and development.
- What you believe about humanity lies at the heart of your belief system.
- In Scientific Humanism, humans are regarded as highly evolved animals “with attitude”

What is a whole-person?

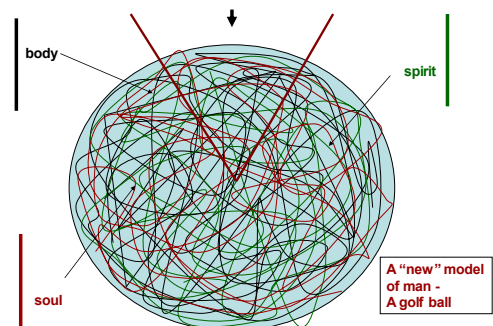
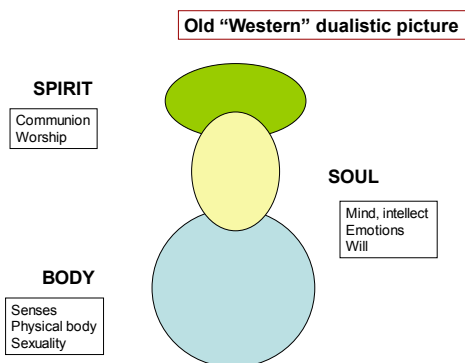
- **Physical being**
 - Physical body
 - Physical needs, reflexes, basic desires
 - Biological level of functioning
- **Rational being**
 - Thinking and reasoning
 - Feeling - emotions

What is a whole-person?

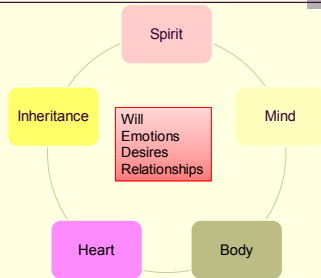
- **Social Being**
 - Made for relationship
 - **Spiritual being**
 - Moral behaviour
 - Purpose and meaning
 - Belief system
 - Fully human –
- what does it mean to be human?

What is the spirit?

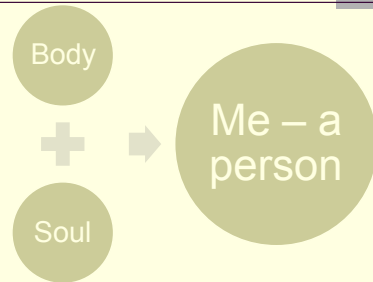
- Old model of body, soul and spirit not helpful as leads to dualism
- New model based on “golf ball” picture
- Seamless functioning of the spirit in ALL human activity
- Spirit connects us with God/Spirit World



I am an indivisible whole person



No Dualism Please



Discussion Points

1. **The Philosophy of Medicine**
 - Does the Medical Model determine my practice, or is there room for me to incorporate my own beliefs?
2. **Art and Science**
 - Do we understand the complementary nature of scientific knowledge and personal beliefs?
3. **Dualism and anthropology**
 - Does human spirituality play any part in health care?

Bio-medical model of medicine

- Biological basis of body
- Mind is dependent on brain activity
- No dualism
- Physical not metaphysical
- Disease categories based on pathology
- Laboratory results take precedence
- Therapy usually physically based
- Physician's responsibility

A post-modern "wholistic" model

- Patient's experience of illness
- Importance of understanding health
- Patient choices
- Co-operation rather than paternalism
- Doctor as advocate and support
- Team work

Is spirituality part of a medical model?

- **Three responses –**
 - 1 Not at all, it may be important, but like the need for sewers and clean water, not part of a medical model. (Dualism)
 - 2 Yes it is an important part of the delivery of health care, involving equality, respect of patient's beliefs, compassion etc.

The third option

- The spirit plays an important part in both becoming ill and then in overcoming sickness, so it is an integral part of any successful model of care.
- BUT this presents 3 big challenges
 - What is spirit and how does it act in health?
 - How do we assess spiritual illness?
 - When we understand more, how do we treat spiritual ill health?

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Feedback

Integrated health care

The whole-person approach seeks to integrate the best from the bio-medical approach with social science, psychology and other appropriate models of humanity, including spirituality.

Illness = disease + person

The Three Windows

- **Physical window**
 - Normal 'medical model' view of problems, translated into a whole-person approach
- **Psychological window**
 - Normal psychological counselling viewpoint looking at mind, emotions and life events
- **Spiritual window**
 - Looking at the spiritual and religious aspects of a person's health problems

7 stage model of the human spirit

- 1 Self-image
- 2 Relationships with others
- 3 Relating to the world
- 4 Moral and ethical practice
- 5 Purpose and meaning in life
- 6 Decisions, choices and Will
- 7 Belief and faith

1 Self Image

- Each person is a **unique** individual
- View of themselves and **self-understanding**
 - Realistic view of strengths and weaknesses
- Ability to **“love” self** and then others
- Ability to grow and **mature** and acquire **wisdom**

2 Relationships with others

- Family
- Friends
- Strangers

- Quality of ability to relate, to give and receive love, to mend broken relationships and relate appropriately in different situations

3 Relating to the world

- Locus of control – themselves or others?
- Attitudes to work
- Social responsibilities
- Cultural influences
- Creativity

4 Morality and ethical practice

- Basis of their personal ethics
- Are they based on external standards
- Attitude to religious standards of morality
- How aware are they of their conscience?
- Attempts to act morally and consequences

5 Purpose and meaning

- What hope do they have for the future?
- Priorities in life
- What fulfilments and disappointments have there been?
- What are the desires of their heart?
- What do they see as the purpose of life?

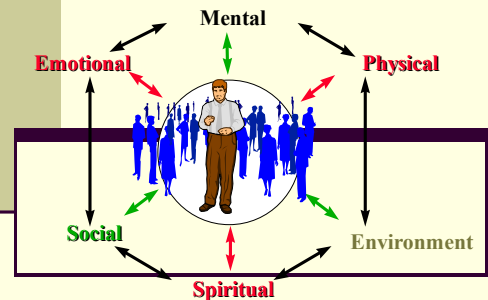
6 Decisions, choices and will

- Making good decisions
- This means understanding and making good choices
- Will Power to follow good path
- Perseverance
- Facing challenges

7 Belief and Faith

- What do they put their faith in (faith is belief in action)
- Concentrate of health and healing rather than everything in life
- Beliefs which were handed down to them
- What do they actually believe in ?
- How do they put their faith into practice?

Assessment in whole-person care



An integrated assessment - physical

- **Physical window**
 - Listening in a relaxed manner to the patient's story
 - Build up a trusting relationship
 - Concentrate on the medical aspects
 - Picking up on verbal and non-verbal clues to explore further
 - Exploring their health beliefs
 - Appropriate examination and investigations

Taking a herstory

| Traditional | Whole-person |
|-------------------------------------|---------------------------------|
| Present complaint | Open up to patient's story |
| Past history | Listen |
| Direct questioning | Observe patient's belief system |
| Add on social to aid discharge home | Patient - led |

Psycho/social assessment

- Done by a counsellor
- Usually takes 2 to 3 sessions
- Patient gives permission to share findings with other team members
- Report is integrated with the other physical and spiritual findings.
- This assessment can be combined with the spiritual one

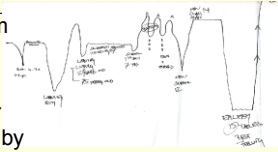
Counselling

- **Two basic tools**
 - Life-lines
 - Significant people/support networks
- **Additional questionnaires and counselling tools**
- **Well developed counselling skills**
- **Broad theoretical base with knowledge of**
 - A number of models of counselling (Person centred, TA, Gestalt, REBT)
 - Personality developmental models



Life-line

- Timeline starting from birth.
- Key episodes in their lives are represented by peaks and troughs, symbols, words and numbers.
- Tell their story as they go along.



Significant people / support networks

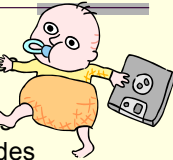
- Patient draws a circle representing themselves.
- Other circles are drawn at varying distances to represent significant people (+ve and -ve)



Summarising the information

• Report

- Engagement with the process
- Strong emotions and goals
- Significant issues and events
- Significant beliefs and attitudes
- Relationships
- Self-perception
- General conclusions and actions



Spiritual Assessment

- About the human spirit and not just religious experience
- Varies according to known beliefs of the person
- Assessment and not therapy at this stage
- Start with explanation of what the spirit is and does

Spiritual Assessment

- Best undertaken by a chaplain or pastoral counsellor
- Usually takes one or two sessions
- Based on the 7 stage model
- Exploring patient's understandings, beliefs and actions.
- Highlight problems in – self image, relationships, world-view, ethical practice, hope, purpose, meaning, will and beliefs

What would whole-person care look like?

- Major differences would be –
- 1: Integrated team includes patient
- 2: Full assessment of person through three windows
- 3: Diagnosis made in whole person terms
- 4: Continuing assessment is dynamic
- 5: Therapy will be multi-disciplinary but integrated

Principles of whole-person health

- 1 Patient is central
- 2 Importance of narrative
- 3 The true story of the patient's health
- 4 Man – whole greater than the sum of the parts
- 5 Making a diagnosis
- 6 Definition of health
- 7 An integrated health care team
- 8 Self-help by patient is encouraged
- 9 Outcomes to be achieved
- 10 Growth, development and maturity

1 Patient is central

- Illness is the patient's experience (distinguish from disease and sickness).
- Each person is unique in physical and personal make-up.
- Patient has great needs during illness – to understand, to adapt, to cope and to survive in a positive way.
- It's their health problem, they need to help themselves, to help make decisions, to adapt their beliefs, fears and behaviour.

2 Importance of narrative

- Life is a story
- Do we know what our story is?
- Can we change our story?

- Narrative medicine helps the patient to make sense of their pain and suffering so that they can cope with it. It gives them the power to change their story to a healthier one.

Telling the story

- Telling their story increases a person's understanding of their health.
- Importance of language – verbal, non-verbal and emotional.
- The more times the story is told the nearer it can come to the truth.
- The story is told within the context of a trusting relationship

3 Seeking the truth

- As the person increases in their understanding of the truth about their health issues so they have the power to become healthier

- They can then better adapt, cope, make allowances, take action, seek appropriate help, make better decisions etc.

4 Model of a whole-person

- We have a model of man as –
 - Physical being
 - Social being
 - Rational being
 - Spiritual being
- The whole is greater than the sum of the parts
- You cannot separate off the different parts of a person and treat them separately.

5 Making a diagnosis

- Bio-medical model
 - Diagnosis made in patho-physiological terms
- Patient-centred model
 - Diagnosis made in terms of problems
- Whole-person model
 - Diagnosis is **layered** on three levels

Whole-person diagnosis

- Bio-Physical level
 - Signs and symptoms which are the end result of multiple internal and external factors
- Causation level
 - Multi-factorial causations of the physical end-points of symptoms and signs
 - Patho-physiological
 - Psycho-somatic
 - Life events
 - Attitudes and beliefs
- Person level

6 Definition of Health

- A new definition of health is needed.
- Health is a statement about the present moment which mainly indicates the **functional ability** of the person.
- Health has as many multiple facets as the person does

NOT the definition of Health

- NOT the absence of disease – we all have diseases
- NOT the absence of symptoms – we all experience pain and suffering
- NOT complete happiness and fulfilment

The real definition of Health

- Strength to be human – to live and die
- Minimising morbidity and then -
- Adapting to residual pathology
- Coping with pain and suffering
- Growing through difficulties
- Learning compassion and kindness
- Coming closer to “inner peace” - Shalom

The strength to be human

- To be human –
 - In relationship with self
 - In relationship with others
 - Free to mature and grow
 - Fulfil the purpose of our life
- Health is not a state but a journey
- Health is relative and not absolute
- We become the people we are through our relationships with others

7 The health care team is integrated

- The individual doctor being responsible for all of a patient's health needs is no longer appropriate
- BUT – a collection of arrogant health care professionals, all fighting to guard their territory, and telling the patient different things
 - is worse than useless – its dangerous

An integrated health care team

- The patient needs to be at the centre of the team
- An integrated team has –
 - Skill mix
 - Respect for one another
 - Awareness of own limits of competence
 - Cooperate and support one another
 - Teach each other
- This implies – time to meet together, and good communications

8 Self-help by the patient is encouraged

- Health is a life-long affair
- The patient is the best person to conduct the orchestra – BUT needs to be able to hand over the baton when too ill.
- This requires –
 - Courage and confidence
 - Knowledge and understanding
 - Good health seeking behaviour

9 Outcomes to be achieved (1)

Physical

- Limitation of harmful effects of diseases
- Cure wherever possible
- Limitation of consequences of diseases
- Maximise physical functioning
- Reduce morbidity
- Prolong life and a good quality of life
- Psycho-social
- Spiritual

9 Outcomes to be achieved (2)

- Psycho-social
 - Relief from psychological pain
 - Improved relationships
 - Greater understanding of own health
 - Ability to take preventative action
 - Ability to adapt to a healthier life-style

9 Outcomes to be achieved (3)

- Spiritual
 - Personal growth
 - Increasing compassion and relationships
 - Peace at heart (relief from anxieties)
 - Hope for the future

10 Maturing and developing

- To be healthy is to have greater control over health related decisions
- We can learn and so mature in our health
- In different stages of our lives different aspects of health become more important.
- A healthy life ends in a healthy death

3 simple rules

- Be patient centred
- Be integrated
- Be committed

So how can we be part of the answer?

- What do we do?
 - Medical practice
 - Counselling
 - Pastoring/Chaplaincy
 - Social work
- Do we just acknowledge each other and make referrals?
- What does it mean to become integrated, whole person therapists?

Feedback and Discussion

Guiding principles

- Give love
- Provide hope
- Exercise faith
- Within an integrated team
- Having a practical theology
- Practiced with humility
- Available to all

Further Resources

- www.wphtrust.com
- www.wholecare.com
- www.drmikeysheldon.com