Multidimensional Measurement of Religiousness/Spirituality for Use in Health Research:

A Report of the Fetzer Institute/National Institute on Aging Working Group
A publication of the John E. Fetzer Institute


The interpretations and conclusions contained in this publication represent the views of the individual working group members and do not necessarily express any official opinion or endorsement by either the National Institute on Aging, the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, the Fetzer Institute, its trustees, or officers.

Please contact the Fetzer Institute for additional copies of this publication, which may be used and reprinted without special permission.

October 1999
Reprinted October 2003
This project was initially designed to bring together experts interested in addressing measurement issues around religiousness/spirituality and health from a multidimensional perspective. The booklet, which included the Brief Multidimensional Measure of Religiousness/Spirituality (BMMRS), was published as a step to encourage the examination of religion/spirituality and health with sensitivity to the depth and complexity of the topic.

The response to this effort has been much greater than anticipated. We continue to receive daily requests for the booklet. To date, 2,000 copies of the publication have been distributed and another 1,200 have been downloaded from the Internet.

In a recently completed survey of booklet users assisted by the Kercher Center for Social Research at Western Michigan University, more than 80 percent of respondents believed the booklet was useful in enabling researchers to enter, or to conduct better research in the field of religiousness/spirituality and health outcomes. The most popular subscales being used are the Religious/Spiritual Coping and the Daily Spiritual Experiences Scales (DSES). One fourth of respondents have used the booklet in either a course that they teach, in a seminar, or in a symposium. Practitioners in clinical work are also using the booklet and the measurement instruments in addition to researchers.

As BMMRS and subscales are increasingly used in research projects, the number of publications citing the booklet indicates that research projects are beginning to be published. The journals represented include American Journal of Psychiatry, Annals of Behavioral Medicine, Gerontologist Medical Care, Journal of Health Psychology, Journal of the Scientific Study of Religion, and the Journal of Adult Development.


In a joint request for applications entitled Studying Spirituality and Alcohol, sponsored by the National Institute on Alcohol Abuse and Alcoholism of the National Institutes of Health and the Fetzer Institute, many of the 16 funded research projects used the measures from this booklet.

Please check for additional information regarding the DSES on page 17.

We want to thank all researchers and scholars who have provided us with thoughtful comments and suggestions concerning their projects and the needs of the field. We remain interested in learning about the general dissemination of work that utilizes a multidimensional approach and the BMMRS, as well as learning more about clinical uses of the booklet and BMMRS. Continue to give us feedback on the use and development of this collection of scales by e-mailing us at info@fetzer.org.
Table of Contents

Page

Preface ................................................................................................ ii
Introduction ..................................................................................... 1
Daily Spiritual Experiences ............................................................ 11
Meaning ........................................................................................... 19
Values ............................................................................................... 25
Beliefs ............................................................................................... 31
Forgiveness ...................................................................................... 35
Private Religious Practices ............................................................. 39
Religious/Spiritual Coping .............................................................. 43
Religious Support ............................................................................ 57
Religious/Spiritual History ............................................................. 65
Commitment .................................................................................... 71
Organizational Religiousness ......................................................... 75
Religious Preference ........................................................................ 81
Brief Multidimensional Measure of
Religiousness/Spirituality: 1999 ..................................................... 85
Appendix A: Additional Psychometric and
Population Distribution Data ......................................................... 89