

Spirituality and Psychiatry SIG Conference 2024

‘What’s God got to do with it?’

Is there a place for God in Psychiatry?’

Date: 15 March 2024



Venue: 21 Prescot St, London, E1 8BB

10.00am	Registration
10.30am	Welcome Professor Chris Cook, Chair of the SPSIG Emeritus Professor in the Institute for Medical Humanities at Durham University, Honorary Chaplain with Tees, Esk & Wear Valleys NHS Foundation Trust, and Chair of SPSIG
10.35am	Introduction to the conference Sarah Eagger, Retired Consultant Psychiatrist & Spirituality SIG Exec member
10.40am	Chair: Professor Chris Cook Keynote speaker 1 – God and Higher Power in Twelve-Step Recovery Wendy Dossett, Associate Professor of Religious Studies at the University of Chester
11.20am	Questions
11.30am	Reflection
11.35am	Patient perspective Lucy Grimwade, Child and Adolescent Consult Psychiatrist & SIG Exec Member interviews Macey-Lee Fisher, 17 year old with autism, trauma and psychosis who through this has started a journey of exploring God.
11.55am	Comfort break
12.05pm	Multifaith Panel Chair: Dr Sarah Eagger How is your relationship with God healing for you and those of your faith? Kripamoya Das, Hindu Priest Maureen Goodman, Programme Director, Brahma Kumaris, UK

	<p>Imam Ibrahim Meah, Islamic Chaplain, Deputy Head of Chaplaincy at Tees Esk and Wear Valley NHS Foundation Trust</p> <p>Dr Chi-Chi Ekhaton, Vice Chair of Ascension Trust, GP and Clinical Lead of Ascension Trust Beacon Initiative</p>
1.05pm	Lunch
2.00pm	<p>Chair: Professor Chris Cook</p> <p>Keynote Speaker 2-Kenneth I. Pargament-Professor Emeritus of Psychology at Bowling Green State University, USA</p> <p>Help or Hindrance: Addressing God as a Resource and a Source of Struggle in Mental Health Care</p> <p>(Video presentation followed by Live Q&A)</p>
2.40pm	Questions
2.50pm	<p>Breakout groups: reflective questions</p> <p>Chair: Chetna Kang, Consultant Psychiatrist, Broadcaster and SIG executive member</p>
3.35pm	Afternoon break
4.00pm	<p>Panel and plenary with clinicians:</p> <p>How do we talk about God in the clinical encounter? How do our own beliefs come into play and how do we manage that?</p> <p>Dr Gwen Adshead, Chair, Consultant Forensic Psychotherapist</p> <p>Hashim Reza, Consultant Psychiatrist, special interest in mental health in Muslim communities</p> <p>Chetna Kang, Consultant Psychiatrist, Broadcaster and a Priest in the Hindu tradition of Bhakti Yoga</p>
4.55pm	<p>Closing comments</p> <p>Sarah Egger</p>
5.00pm	End of conference

Speaker biographies

Professor Chris Cook is Emeritus Professor in the Institute for Medical Humanities at Durham University, and Honorary Chaplain for Tees, Esk & Wear Valleys NHS Foundation Trust. From 1997 to 2003 he was Professor of the Psychiatry of Alcohol Misuse at the University of Kent. He was ordained as an Anglican priest in 2001. Chris was Professor of Spirituality, Theology & Health in the Department of Theology & Religion, and Director of the Centre for Spirituality, Theology & Health, at Durham University from 2012-2022. He is current Chair of the Spirituality & Psychiatry Special Interest Group at the Royal College of Psychiatrists and was Co-Chair of the Section on Religion & Spirituality at the World Psychiatric Association from 2022-2023. His book publications include: *Hearing Voices, Demonic and Divine* (2018), and *Christians Hearing Voices* (2020). He was lead editor of *Spirituality and Psychiatry*, second edition (2023).

Sarah Egger is Chair of the Janki Foundation (a UK-based charity that promotes spirituality in healthcare) and a retired consultant psychiatrist formerly at Imperial College, London. She is on the executive committees of both the Religion, Spirituality and Psychiatry section of the World Psychiatric Association and the Special Interest Group on Spirituality at the Royal College of Psychiatrists (UK). She has practiced Raja Yoga meditation for over 40 years and is a Mindful Self Compassion teacher.

Wendy Dossett is Associate Professor of Religious Studies at Chester University, Director (Research) of Chester Studies of Addiction, Recovery and Spirituality Group, and Principal Investigator of the Higher Power Project, which explores the language of spirituality in Twelve Step Mutual Aid. She has a PhD in Buddhism, also studies the range of Buddhist approaches to addiction recovery. Her research and knowledge centres on the public relevance of the study of religions, spirituality and the secular. She researches a variety of responses to anxiety and dislocation associated with modernity, especially in relation to the phenomenon of recovery from addiction. She is also interested in the interface between religion, society and education, which explores the language of religion and spirituality in recovery from substance use disorders and other addictions. The outcomes of this research are used in CSARS Group training projects for people seeking recovery and for substance misuse treatment professionals.

Lucy Grimwade is a Consultant Child and Adolescent Psychiatrist working in community mental health services in Durham, TEWV Mental Health Trust. She is vice chair to the Spirituality Special Interest Group of the Royal College of Psychiatrists, and has published in the area of spirituality, mental health and young people. Her higher speciality research project was a literature review of spirituality assessment in a child psychiatry context. Her relationship with Father-God is the source of inspiration, strength and comfort in every detail of her life. She experiences God as an all-powerful-unconditionally-loving-attachment figure, who has power to re-create and heal

Kripamoya Das is an Englishman who converted to Hinduism in his youth and has been following and teaching the path of Vaishnavism for more than fifty years. As well as being engaged in pastoral care for an extensive congregation, he performs Hindu ritual and ceremonies, including weddings and funerals. He travels widely for speaking engagements, has written five books, and is married with three children.

Maureen Goodman has had the opportunity to work with many diverse communities. Her interests include young people, sustainability and building spiritual capacity. As the Brahma Kumaris representative at the United Nations, Vienna, she meets and dialogues with leaders actively engaged in politics, religion, science and community.

Ibrahim Meah is the deputy head of chaplaincy at Tees Esk and Wear Valley NHS Foundation Trust, he has worked in chaplaincy in the North-East of England for over 15 years covering mental-health, acute and the prison service.

He graduated from Madinatul Uloom Al Islamiyyah, Islamic theology seminary, Kidderminster in 2002 after which he started working as an Imam in his home city of Sunderland. In 2008 he started his journey in chaplaincy and two years ago he became one of the deputy heads of chaplaincy in TEWV NHS. In his local community he is one of the founders of Baitul Ilm Academy and Sacred Trust Maktab and is heavily engaged in religious teaching and engagement.

Dr Chi-Chi Ekhaton is a GP in London and a GP Appraiser for NHS England. She is Vice Chair of Ascension Trust, a Christian organisation known for initiatives that seek to help the vulnerable in society. She has been part of the Bishop of London's Health Inequalities Action Group (HIAG), a multi-faith initiative led by the Bishop of London to explore London's health inequalities and how faith groups can and do contribute to the health of their communities, contributing to a published report: 'On Faith, Place and Health: Harnessing the Power of Faith Groups to Tackle London's Health

Professor Kenneth Pargament is a professor emeritus of psychology at Bowling Green State University. He has published extensively on religion, spirituality, and health, and authored *The Psychology of Religion and Coping: Theory, Research, Practice and Spiritually Integrated Psychotherapy: Understanding and Addressing the Sacred*. Dr. Pargament is Editor-in-Chief of the 2013 two-volume APA Handbook of Psychology, Religion, and Spirituality. With Julie Exline, he has authored the recently released *Working with Spiritual Struggles in Psychotherapy: From Research to Practice*. He was Distinguished Scholar at the Institute for Spirituality and Health at the Texas Medical Center. His awards include the Oskar Pfister Award from the American Psychiatric Association in 2009, the Distinguished Service Award from the Association of Professional Chaplains in 2015, the first Outstanding Contribution to the Applied Psychology of Religion and Spirituality Award from the Division 36 of APA in 2017, and an honorary doctor-of-letters from Pepperdine University in 2013. He was recently named One of the 50 Most Influential Living Psychologists.

Dr Chetna Kang is a Consultant Psychiatrist, Broadcaster and a Priest in the Hindu tradition of Bhakti Yoga. She has been on the Executive Committee of the RCPsych's Spirituality and Psychiatry SIG for 10 years. She is a General Adult and Liaison Psychiatrist based in London and specialises in integrative psychiatry. Recently published in BBC Radio 4's very first 'Thought for the day' book, she is well known for her spiritual commentary on mental health and current affairs, she presents Thought for the day on Radio 4's Today programme and features on World of Wisdom with BBC World Service.

Dr Gwen Adshead has spent over thirty years providing therapy across a range of secure hospitals, community and prison settings. In her role as both a forensic psychiatrist and psychotherapist, she explores the psychological mechanisms that can lead to violence and cruelty; and she works alongside others to rehabilitate and offer secure psychiatric care to some of the most violent offenders

Dr Hashim Reza works as a part-time consultant psychiatrist at Oxleas NHS Foundation Trust after having worked full-time in different clinical and managerial roles in the NHS since 1997 that included the clinical lead role in NHS London for the development and implementation of the electronic Care Records Service in 2005-2012 and chair of the Informatics Committee of the Royal College of Psychiatrists in 2017-2021.

His interests have included history of psychiatry with a particular focus on how the popular beliefs in regard to mental illnesses have developed in Muslim communities, suicidal behaviour and evaluation of psychiatric rating scales.