

Suffering and spirituality: Implications for mental health

Spirituality in Psychiatry Special Interest Group Annual Conference

Date: Friday 20 March 2026

Venue: RCPsych, 21 Prescot Street, London E1 8BB (in-person only)

Time	Session
9.00am	Registration and refreshments
9.45am	<p>Welcome and introductions</p> <p>Dr Lucy Grimwade, Chair, Spirituality in Psychiatry Special Interest Group</p> <p>Introduction to the conference</p> <p>Professor Christopher Cook, Vice-Chair, SPSIG, Spirituality, Theology and Health at the Institute for Medical Humanities, Durham University</p>
10.00am	<p>Andrew Sims Memorial Lecture:</p> <p>Beyond "Fixing:" Suffering, Spirituality, and the Slow Work of Mental Health Care</p> <p>Professor John Swinton, Professor in Practical Theology and Pastoral Care and Chair in Divinity and Religious Studies at the University of Aberdeen</p> <p>Chair: Professor Christopher Cook</p>
11.00am	Morning refreshments
11.20am	<p>Improbably Speaking</p> <p>Dr Rebecca Lawrence, writer and psychiatrist, NHS Lothian</p>
11.50am	Valuing our vulnerability

RCPsych is an inclusive organisation with over 22,000 members who have a diverse range of views, which we look to represent across the programme. To further open dialogue, scientific discovery and enrich learning, we provide our members with the opportunity to hear from a range of professionals. The speakers, panellists and participants views and comments are their own and not the established views of the College.

	Dr Glenn Roberts
12.20pm	Lunch
1.20pm	Multi-faith panel discussion and Q and A <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Kartar Singh Bring, Mental health chaplain• Dr Shah Tarfarosh, Consultant Liaison Psychiatrist, John Radcliffe Hospital, Oxford• Nigel Wellings, Independent Psychoanalytic Psychotherapist Chair: Dr Timothy Dixon, Deputy Head of Chaplaincy, Tees Esk and Wear Valleys NHS FT
2.15pm	Small groups – breakout rooms
3.00pm	Afternoon refreshments
3.30pm	Speakers panel Q and A Chair: Dr Jonathan Buckley, Consultant General Adult Psychiatrist
4.00pm	Closing remarks Professor Christopher Cook Poster and essay prize presentation Dr Lucy Grimwade, SPSIG Chair
4.15pm	Close of conference