

16 Competencies for Spiritually Integrated Mental Health Care

#	Category	Competency
1	Attitude	Demonstrating empathy, respect, and appreciation -Mental health providers make a conscious, daily effort to show empathy, appreciation, and respect for clients from diverse backgrounds (spiritual, religious, or secular).
2	Attitude	Appreciating religious and spiritual diversity -Mental health providers view spirituality and religion as important aspects of human diversity, along with factors such as race, ethnicity, sexual orientation, socioeconomic status, disability, gender, and age.
3	Attitude	Being aware of your own beliefs -Mental health providers pay attention to how their own spiritual and/or religious background may influence their clinical practice and their attitudes, perceptions, and assumptions about the nature of psychological processes.
4	Knowledge	Learn about diverse beliefs and practices -Mental health providers know that many diverse forms of spirituality and religion exist, and explore spiritual and religious beliefs, communities, and practices that are important to their clients.
5	Knowledge	Understand spirituality and religion as different but overlapping -Mental health providers can describe how spirituality and religion can be viewed as overlapping yet distinct constructs.
6	Knowledge	Know the difference between spirituality and psychopathology -Mental health providers understand that clients may have experiences that are consistent with their spirituality or religion, yet may be difficult to differentiate from psychopathological symptoms.
7	Knowledge	Recognize spiritual development over the lifespan -Mental health providers recognize that spiritual or religious beliefs, practices, and experiences develop and change over the lifespan.
8	Knowledge	Learn about clients' spiritual and religious resources -Mental health providers are aware of clients' internal and external spiritual and religious resources and practices that research indicates may support psychological well-being and recovery from psychological disorders.
9	Knowledge	Recognize harmful religious and spiritual involvement -Mental health providers can identify spiritual and religious experiences, practices, and beliefs that may have the potential to negatively impact psychological health.
10	Knowledge	Develop awareness of legal and ethical issues -Mental health providers can identify legal and ethical issues related to spirituality and religion that may surface when working with clients.
11	Skill	Working with religious and spiritual diversity -Mental health providers are able to conduct empathetic and effective therapy with clients from diverse spiritual or religious backgrounds, affiliations, and levels of involvement.
12	Skill	Conducting a religious and spiritual assessment

		-Mental health providers inquire about spiritual and religious background, experience, practices, attitudes, and beliefs as a standard part of understanding a client's history.
13	Skill	Helping clients identify and access their religious and spiritual resources -Mental health providers help clients explore and access their spiritual and religious strengths and resources.
14	Skill	Helping clients identify and deal with spiritual and religious problems -Mental health providers can identify and address spiritual and religious problems in clinical practice and make referrals when necessary.
15	Skill	Staying up-to-date -Mental health providers stay abreast of research and professional developments regarding spirituality and religion specifically related to clinical practice and engage in ongoing assessment of their own spiritual and religious competency.
16	Skill	Acknowledging your limits -Mental health providers recognize the limits of their qualifications and competence in spiritual and religious domains, including their responses to clients' spirituality or religion that may interfere with clinical practice, so that they (1) seek consultation from and collaborate with other qualified clinicians or spiritual or religious sources (priests, pastors, rabbis, imams, spiritual teachers, and so on), (2) seek further training and education, and/or (3) as appropriate, refer clients to more qualified individuals and resources.