

What Are the Main Issues in Spiritual Care for Traumatized Children, Youth and Adults?

Shame

- Self-blame; “victim” label; told they are “too sensitive...get over it”
- Enormous pressure to forgive
- What they had to do to survive

Core Beliefs about Self

- “I am bad”; inherently defective; deserved it
- Well ingrained over time
- Behaviors reinforce core beliefs

Core Beliefs about God

- Anger toward God is sinful...blasphemy
- God as tester...punisher... “Santa Claus”
- God can’t love me because of what I’ve done
- God and the survivor on opposite sides

Harmful Spiritual Plitudes

- “God doesn’t give you more than you can handle”
- “God had a plan” “Everything happens for a reason”

Wrestling with God: is relational; empowering

- “Rules” and Church
- Can’t talk about “that” in church (Where then? Why not?)

Minimize Suffering + Emphasize Redemptive Lessons

- There is some trauma in which there is nothing to rejoice, and we as people of faith need to be ok with that.
- Anger viewed as sin instead of as a normal reaction to pain
- “Honor your father and mother” teachings never had the provision: “...unless they are beating the hell out of you.”

Healthy, Caring Relationships

- Telling our story...being heard
- Hearing the story can change the brain and heal the soul
- Finding one’s story in the Sacred Story
- Discerning identity...mission...vocation

Healing Rituals & Liturgies