

Book Review

Canda, E. R., et al. (2020). *Spiritual diversity in social work practice: The heart of helping (3rd ed.)*. Oxford.

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In *Spiritual Diversity in Social Work Practice: The Heart of Helping* by Canda, Furman, and Canda, the authors dive enthusiastically and joyfully into three massive topics: spirituality, diversity, and the practice of social work. A braver undertaking is hard to imagine.

In the examination of spirituality, the authors include information on the multitude of organized religions as well as provide an examination of nonsectarian perspectives such as existentialism, the transpersonal perspective, and beliefs of Indigenous people. Guiding principles of spirituality are noted as value clarity, respect for diversity, reflection, support and empowerment, holistic thinking, attention to best practices, and intersections of spirituality and religion. Spiritual well-being is described both as a process, healthy spirituality, and an outcome, having an effect on health, mental health and relationships. At the close of this first section, readers are presented with exercises through which they might determine their own ideas about religion and spirituality.

In fact, the volume is full of such opportunities, giving readers not only the opportunity to learn about the specifics of individual religions, the research around examining spirituality and the ways in which that might be accomplished, but also the opportunity to self reflect and begin to assess the ways in which individual religiosity or spirituality affect work with clients in the practice of social work.

To these authors, the exploration of diversity as related to spirituality and social work includes wholeness in the ways in which the individual develops. The conceit is that wholeness of person rests on a frame like that of a loom and that personhood is developed by placement of a strong and durable warp over and through which the fibers of the woof are integrated, forming the whole. The pattern which then develops includes individuals' placement of spirituality in their lives. This was the only section that seemed to be somewhat contrived. It reads as if the authors know full well what the intent of the section is, but for the reader, the illustration could perhaps be more fully fleshed out.

The section devoted to social work is heavy on self-awareness, spiritual development and ethical considerations. This is as it should be. However, the authors present specific exercises, guides, and scenarios to be used in those instances in which the client asking for help is examining/dealing with personal spirituality. The scenarios alone are 40 in number and provide untold opportunities for discussion with colleagues/clients or for personal growth.

This is an impressive volume, covering almost 600 pages in length. It is, however, eminently readable, understandable, and engaging. The aforementioned exercises, guides, and scenarios all combine to make it an infinitely useful volume to be used as a text.