

THE RABBINIC CERTIFICATE IN GERONTOLOGY AND PALLIATIVE CARE  
THE PHILOSOPHICAL FOUNDATIONS OF THE HELPING PROFESSIONS

ONLINE COURSE

SWK 5123

DR. LYNN LEVY

This focus of this course will be on the philosophical foundations that are at the core of the helping professions. The themes of this course provide a unique lens through which clinicians, educators and clergy members may develop their own philosophy of helping as they minister to their communities and spheres of influence at the critical and pivotal stage of later life.

The content of this course will provide a spiritual, biblical and philosophical framework that can be uniquely applied to individuals at the later stages of life when individuals and families may confront illness, frailty, loss, and suffering. Resilience will be a common thread throughout the course material as we begin to understand and unwrap the skills and behaviors that are at the core of syntonetic responses to trauma. The philosophical perspective provides a framework for understanding the existential crisis that clients, congregants, and community members will ultimately confront as they navigate illness, loss of functioning, and life and death choices.

Topics and themes that will be explored throughout this course are the spiritual nature of care, the dual nature of man, loneliness, loss, suffering, sin, *teshuva*/repentance, and man's search for meaning. Sub-topics will include providing service to diverse members of the Jewish community, such as the convert, *baal teshuva*, atheist, agnostic, and immigrant populations who may approach the end of their lives with differing needs and cultural perspectives.

**COURSE COMPETENCY OUTCOMES**

**Competency 1 – Demonstrate Ethical and Professional Behavior**

Social workers understand the value base of the profession and its ethical standards, as well as relevant laws and regulations that may impact practice at the micro, mezzo, and macro levels. Social workers understand frameworks of ethical decision-making and how to apply principles of critical thinking to those frameworks in practice, research, and policy arenas. Social workers recognize

personal values and the distinction between personal and professional values. They also understand how their personal experiences and affective reactions influence their professional judgment and behavior. Social workers understand the profession's history, its mission, and the roles and responsibilities of the profession. Social Workers also understand the role of other professions when engaged in inter-professional teams. Social workers recognize the importance of life-long learning and are committed to continually updating their skills to ensure they are relevant and effective. Social workers also understand emerging forms of technology and the ethical use of technology in social work practice. Social workers:

- make ethical decisions by applying the standards of the NASW Code of Ethics, relevant laws and regulations, models for ethical decision-making, ethical conduct of research, and additional codes of ethics as appropriate to context;

- use reflection and self-regulation to manage personal values and maintain professionalism in practice situations;
- demonstrate professional demeanor in behavior; appearance; and oral, written, and electronic communication;
- use technology ethically and appropriately to facilitate practice outcomes; and
- use supervision and consultation to guide professional judgment and behavior.

**Measure 1A** – Practice personal reflection and self-correction to assure continual professional development

**Measure 1B** – Attend to professional roles and boundaries

## **Competency 2 - Engage Diversity and Difference in Practice**

Social workers understand how diversity and difference characterize and shape the human experience and are critical to the formation of identity. The dimensions of diversity are understood as the intersectionality of multiple factors including but not limited to age, class, color, culture, disability and ability, ethnicity, gender, gender identity and expression, immigration status, marital status, political ideology, race, religion/spirituality, sex, sexual orientation, and tribal sovereign status. Social workers understand that, as a consequence of difference, a person's life experiences may include oppression, poverty, marginalization, and alienation as well as privilege, power, and acclaim. Social workers also understand the forms and mechanisms of oppression and discrimination and recognize the extent to which a culture's structures and values, including social, economic, political, and cultural exclusions, may oppress, marginalize, alienate, or create privilege and power. Social workers:

- apply and communicate understanding of the importance of diversity and difference in shaping life experiences in practice at the micro, mezzo, and macro levels;
- present themselves as learners and engage clients and constituencies as experts of their own experiences; and

- apply self-awareness and self-regulation to manage the influence of personal biases and values in working with diverse clients and constituencies.

**Measure 2A** – Gain sufficient self-awareness to eliminate the influence of personal biases and values in working with diverse groups

## **II. INSTRUCTIONAL METHODS**

Students in this course will follow the course curriculum as it is provided in the Canvas modules.

**Required Readings** are mandatory for assignments and may be accessed through EReserves or through an attached PDF file whenever possible.

**Suggested Readings** are provided for the benefit of the student and it is expected that students who wish to amplify their learning on a specific topic will utilize these readings at their leisure.

## **III. WHAT IS EReserve?**

EReserve (Electronic Reserve) is Yeshiva University's on-line web based system used to provide access to journal articles, book excerpts, and other course materials. Most articles listed in each syllabus are available on eReserve. You can access full text articles from your home or from a university computer.

### **HOW DO I USE EReserve?**

1. Click on "Online library resources and e-reserves" on the course Canvas page.
2. If you must access e-reserves from the library home page (<https://library.yu.edu/home>) you will need a password. Please use "wurzweiler" (all lower case) This will go into effect Spring 2019 for all Wurzweiler courses, both traditional and online.
3. If you are off-campus, at this point you will be prompted for your [Off Campus Access Service](#) login and password
4. In the 'search for Courses' box, type in the name of your course.
5. Click on the link to your course.
6. When the article text or book record appears on the screen, you can print, email, or save it to disk.
7. If you have any problems, please contact - [ereserves@yu.edu](mailto:ereserves@yu.edu).

#### **IV. COURSE EXPECTATIONS AND GRADING**

Any student enrolled in this course encountering specific challenges with the course material, assignments or exercises are required to speak directly with the professor. All grades will be pass/fail unless the professor is otherwise informed by the enrolled student that a grade is essential for the purposes of transferring to the MSW program.

All discussions and reflective assignments will be online and due dates will be flexible, but the date for the end of the course will be respected.

#### **V. HIPAA ALERT**

In line with the new HIPAA regulations concerning protected health information, it is important that you understand that any case information you present from your work will need to be de-identified. What this means is that any information that would allow another to identify the person needs to be changed or eliminated. This includes obvious things like names and birth dates but may also contain other information that is so unique to the person that it will allow for identification, including diagnosis, race/ethnicity, or gender. If diagnosis, race/ethnicity, gender is directly related to the case presentation it can be included if it will not allow for identification.

#### **MODULE I:**

Introduction to the Role of Spirituality and Social Work

Learning Themes:

The role and efficacy of spirituality in the helping process,  
Differentiating between a religious and a spiritual perspective

#### **Readings:**

\*Canda, E.R., Nakashima, M. & Furman, L. (2004). Ethical considerations about spirituality and social work: Insights from a national qualitative study. *Families in society*,85,(1),27-35, Eres

\*Canda, E. R. (1988). Spirituality, religious diversity, and social work practice. *Social Casework, Eres*

\*Gotterer, R. (Mar/Apr 2001). The spiritual dimension in clinical social work practice: A client's perspective. *Families in Society* 82:2, 187-193.Eres

\*Sermabeikian, P. (1994). Our clients, ourselves: The spiritual perspective and social work practice. *Social Work* 39 (2), 178-183. Eres

### **Suggested Readings:**

Green, G. & Nguyen, T.D. (Mar, 2012). The role of connectedness in relation to spirituality and religion in a Twelve-Step model. *Review of European Studies* 4:1, 177-187. Eres

Haller, D.J. (1998). Alcoholics Anonymous and spirituality. *Social Work and Christianity* 25 (2), 101-114.

\*Joseph, M.V. (1988). Religion and social work practice. *Social Casework*, 69 (7), 443-52. Eres.

King, S. (Jan/1Feb 2007). Religion, spirituality and the workplace: Challenges for public administrators. *Public Administration Review* 67:1, 103-114.

Pitchon, E. (1998). Psychotherapy and the spiritual quest. *European Judaism*, 31,2 (6), 110-123.

Seinfeld, J. (June 2012). Spirituality in social work practice. *Clinical Social Work Journal* 40, (2), 240-244.

## **MODULE II**

### **Learning Themes:**

The creation story in Genesis and implications for understanding human nature

The human being in dynamic interaction

The individual as a spiritual being

### **Readings:**

\*Becker, E. (1985). *The denial of death*. Chapter 1. New York, Free Press, ERes

Heschel, A. J. (1972). The sacred image of man., Chapter 10, p 150-167  
In Heschel, A.J. *The insecurity of freedom*. New York: Schocken.

\*Soloveitchik, J. B. (1992). *The lonely man of faith*. New York: Doubleday, 11-23. Eres

### **Suggested Reading:**

LaPierre, D.P. (1994). A model for describing spirituality. *Journal of Religion and Health* 33 (2), 153-162.

Ziegler, R. (2012). *Majesty and Humility: The thought of Rabbi Joseph B. Soloveitchik*. Brookline, MA: The Maimonides School, Chapter 11.

### **MODULE III**

Learning Themes:

Man's relationship with God

Man's quest for meaning

Existentialism

The role of creativity and productivity

#### **Readings:**

\*Buber, M. (1961). Life as Dialogue, in Bergman, S.H. *Faith and reason: An Introduction to modern Jewish thought*. Washington, DC: B'nai B'rith Hillel Foundation, 81-97. Eres

Green, G. & Nguyen, T. (2012). The role of connectedness in Relation to Spirituality and Religion in a Twelve-Step Model, *Review of European Studies* 4.1 (2012): 177-187.

Ivtzan, I., Chan, C. P., L., Gardner, H. E., & Prashar, K. (2013). Linking religion and spirituality with psychological well-being: Examining self-actualisation, meaning in life, and personal growth initiative. *Journal of Religion and Health*, 52(3). Eres

### **MODULE IV**

Learning Themes:

Gender Roles: Feminism to LGBTQ

#### **Readings:**

Freedberg, S. (1993). The feminist ethic of care and the professionalization of social work. *Social Work*, 38 (5), 535-40. Eres

\*Gilligan, C. (1992). Woman's place in man's life cycle. In *a Different Voice: Psychological Theory and Women's Development*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press. Eres

Harding, R.Ph.D., Epiphaniou, E., Ph.D., and Chidgey-Clark, J.Ph.D. (2012). Needs, Experiences, and Preferences of Sexual Minorities for End-of-Life Care and Palliative Care: A Systematic Review, *Journal of palliative medicine*, (15)me 15, 602-611.

### **Suggested Readings:**

## **MODULE V**

Learning Theme:

Distinguishing between Time and Space in the Helping Process

The role of suffering and pain as a human condition

How religion responds to illness and human suffering

Man's Search for Meaning

### **Readings:**

Foley, D.P. (1988). Eleven interpretations of personal suffering. *Journal of religion and health*, 27 (4), 321-328.

Frankl, V. (1956). *Man's Search for Meaning, Part II – Logotherapy in a Nutshell*. ERes.

Heschel, A. J. (1998). *The Sabbath*. Chapter 1. New York: Farrar, Strauss. Eres

Sacks, O. *The Sabbath*, The New York Times Eres

\*Taft, J. (1949). Time as the medium of the helping process. *Jewish social service quarterly*, 36 (2), 189-198 Eres

### **Suggested Readings:**

\*Glasser, P. (1984). Being honest with ourselves: What happens when our values conflict with those of our clients? *Practice Digest*, 6 (4), 6-10.Eres

Hackbarth, M., Pavkov, T., Wetchler, J., & Flannery, M. (2012). Natural disasters: An assessment of family resiliency following Hurricane Katrina. *Journal of Marital and Family Therapy*, 38(2), 340-51. Eres

Scott, M. (1996). The morality of theodicies. *Religious Studies*, 32 (1), 1-13.

Ziegler, R. (2012). *Majesty and humility: The thought of Rabbi Joseph B. Soloveitchik*. Brookline, MA: The Maimonides School, Chapter 23. Eres

## **MODULE VI**

Learning Themes:

The Psychology of Behavior Change

The impact of "sinful" behavior on the personality

The clinician's observation of clients' behaviors.

Repentance and the process of behavioral change

### **Readings:**

Friedman, M. & Yehuda, R. (2002-2003) Psychotherapy and teshuvah: Parallel and overlapping systems for change. *Torah u-madda journal*, 11, 238-253. Eres

\*Mendelssohn, F. (2008). Transgenerational transmission of trauma: Guilt, shame, and the "Heroic Dilemma". *International journal of group psychotherapy*, 58, (3) 389-401. Eres

\*Rosenbloom, M. (1983). Implications of the holocaust for social work. *Social Casework*, 65(4), 205-213. Eres

\*Wheelis, A. (1969). How people change. *Commentary*, 47\_(5), 56-66. Eres\*

### **Suggested Readings:**

\*Linzer, N. (1978). *The nature of man in Judaism and social work*. Chapter 4 & 5. Eres

Peli, P.H. (1996) *On repentance: The thought and oral discourses of Rabbi Joseph B. Soloveitchik*. Chapter 1. NJ: Jason Aronson.

\*Ziegler, R. (2012). *Majesty and humility: The thought of Rabbi Joseph B. Soloveitchik*. Brookline, MA: The Maimonides School, 234-258.

\*Zilberfein, F. (1996). Children of Holocaust survivors: separation obstacles, attachments, and anxiety. *Social work in health care*, 23 (3), 35-55.

## **MODULE VII**

Learning Themes:

Challenges in the Aging Process  
The efficacy of spirituality at the end of life  
A just death

**Readings:**

Lerner, M.J. (1997) What Does the Belief in a Just World Protect Us From: The Dread of Death or the Fear of Understanding Suffering?, *Psychological Inquiry*, 8:1, 29-32,

Manning, L. K. (2014). Enduring as lived experience: Exploring the essence of spiritual resilience for women in late life. *Journal of Religion and Health*, 53(2), 352-62.

Moschelle, V.D., Pressman, K.R., & Weissman, D.E. (1997). The problem of theodicy and the religious response to cancer. *Journal of religion and health*, 36\_(1), 17-20.

Zilberfein, F. (1993). Helping Holocaust survivors with the impact of illness and hospitalization: Social work role. *Social work in health care*, 18 (1) 59-70.

**MODULE VIII:**

Learning Themes:

Individuals Facing End of Life

How diverse groups approach death

Working with family members

The role of the clergy in end of life decision making

Where is God?

**Readings:**

DiBlasio, F. A. (1993). The role of social workers' religious beliefs in helping family members forgive. *Families in society*, 74 (3), 163-170

Bowland, S., Edmond, T., & Fallot, R. D. (2012). Evaluation of a spiritually focused intervention with older trauma survivors. *Social Work*, 57(1), 73-82.

\*Kolitz, Z. (1995). *Yosel Rakover's appeal to God. Out of the Whirlwind*. New York: Schocken Books.

Eres

Puchalski, C. et al. (2009). Improving the quality of spiritual care as a dimension of palliative care: The report of the Consensus Conference, *Journal of palliative medicine*. 2(10), 1-20.

Safford, F. (1995). Aging stressors for Holocaust survivors

**Suggested Readings:**

Krenawi, A. & Graham, J.R. (Feb 2000) Culturally sensitive social work practice with Arab clients in mental health settings. *Health and Social Work* 25, 9-22..