



SAFE HAVENS

**Interfaith
Partnership
Against
Domestic
Violence**



PFJCI Chaplaincy Services: Spiritual Care and Faith Resources

Skills for the Desert Journey: Spiritual Care and Faith Resources



PFJCI Chaplaincy Services: Spiritual Care and Faith Resources

GOALS

Be fully present and welcoming

(Remember the empty bowl.)

Listen, listen, listen

(Remember two ears and one mouth.)

Hear and validate the story

Help clients connect to

their own spiritual resources

Validate the client's right to and need for safety

Refer to PFJCI resources

(Remember the coherent community response to domestic violence.)



PFJCI Chaplaincy Services: Spiritual Care and Faith Resources

Why Offer Spiritual Care?



PFJCI Chaplaincy Services: Spiritual Care and Faith Resources

Religion

Latin: Re-ligare

To re-tie, re-bind, re-connect



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In the midst of the
isolation that is a primary tool of
domestic violence,
religion, faith, or spirituality can help
victims and survivors to re-connect.



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Religion, spirituality, or faith
may connect victims and survivors

- ✿ To a community
- ✿ To a language
- ✿ To their history
- ✿ To their family
- ✿ To their country of origin
- ✿ To their memories
- ✿ To their culture
- ✿ To their Creator, God, or Great Spirit
- ✿ To themselves



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All this undermines the isolation that
strengthens domestic violence.



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Religion, faith, or spirituality may help
victims and survivors to
orient themselves
in time and space.



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Domestic violence is dizzying and disorienting.

Faith, religion, or spirituality may help victims and survivors to re-orient themselves, to find their bearings.



PFJCI Chaplaincy Services: Spiritual Care and Faith Resources

Domestic violence
takes many things away:
job, home, family, friends,
neighborhood, congregation.



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Faith, religion, or spirituality may be a resource that victims and survivors can carry within themselves that no one can take away.



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Because of shame, fear, isolation, and danger, it is extremely difficult for survivors of domestic violence to reach out for help.



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“Each year more abuse victims, perpetrators, and family members seek help from clergy and religious leaders than all other helping professionals combined.”

Horton, Anne L. and Judith A. Williamson, “Abuse and Religion: When Praying Isn’t Enough,” Lexington, MA: Lexington, 1998, Preface.



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We also know that “accessing formal help and maintaining safety and stability is best achieved by individuals who are supported in the context of informal, nonjudgmental, helping relationships.”

Massachusetts Department of Social Services, Domestic Violence Services, March 2, 2006, p. 13.



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Religious, faith-based, and spiritual communities often provide these informal, nonjudgmental, helping relationship that may help PFJCI clients access formal help and maintain safety and stability.



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Abusers need professional help from
certified batterers' intervention
specialists in order to change their
abusive behavior.



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“More perpetrators complete treatment programs when referred by their churches [mosques, temples, synagogues].”

Nason-Clark, Nancy, and Nancy Murphy, “Celebrating the Graduates: An Exploration in the Nature and Extent of Change in the Lives of Men Who Have Graduated from a Batterers Program,” Paper presented to Northwest Family Life Board of Directors, Seattle, WA: 2003, quoted in Murphy, Nancy A., God's Reconciling Love: A Pastor's Handbook on Domestic Violence, FaithTrust Institute, Seattle, WA, 2003, p. 22.



PFJCI Chaplaincy Services: Spiritual Care and Faith Resources

Why offer spiritual care?



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Because victims and survivors
of domestic violence
may desperately need
respectful spiritual care
to reconnect, to re-orient,
to heal, to access help.



PFJCI Chaplaincy Services: Spiritual Care and Faith Resources

PFJCI Chaplaincy Services volunteers may also serve many clients who claim no faith or religion, but who need to be heard and affirmed.

PFJCI Chaplaincy Services will serve all clients, regardless of whether they practice a faith.



PFJCI Chaplaincy Services: Spiritual Care and Faith Resources

“The role of the spiritual care provider is not to shelter people or to help them [avoid their problems], but to assist them in drawing upon their spiritual resources in the midst of their pain.”

Helping People Through Grief, Delores Kuenning



PFJCI Chaplaincy Services: Spiritual Care and Faith Resources

GOALS

Be fully present and welcoming

(Remember the empty bowl.)

Listen, listen, listen

(Remember two ears and one mouth.)

Hear and validate the story

**Help clients connect to
their own spiritual resources**

**Validate the client's right to
and need for safety**

Refer to PFJCI and community resources

(Remember the coherent community response to domestic violence.)



PFJCI Chaplaincy Services: Spiritual Care and Faith Resources

**Help Clients Connect
to Their Own Spiritual Resources**



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We are client-centered.

The client will set the spiritual agenda.



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What language and imagery is important to my client? I will be aware of and sensitive to that language and imagery.



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Where has my client turned in the past for solace
and support?

Which support networks, if any, can be accessed
safely?



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Which spiritual practices or disciplines have been important to my client in the past?

How can those be used now,
in the client's current situation?



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What is life-giving for my client now?



PFJCI Chaplaincy Services: Spiritual Care and Faith Resources

Where did my client find spiritual solace,
comfort, strength, and support before the
abuse started?

Which, if any, of those practices or traditions
may be reclaimed?



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These practices or traditions could include prayer, scripture, poetry, meditation, attending services or rituals, guided reading, singing hymns, journaling, contemplation, music, re-connecting with friends and family (if safe)



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Any inherently religious activities, such as prayer, worship, religious ceremonies, scripture study, or discussion of theological issues,
must occur at a time or in a place
that is separate from other PFJCI services,
and must only occur at the request of the client.



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How can I affirm the resources and strength present
in my client?

How can I give my client permission to take care of
herself?

How can I give my client permission to seek safety?



PFJCI Chaplaincy Services: Spiritual Care and Faith Resources

Affirmations

It took tremendous courage to come here today.

I applaud your courage.

Coming here today is an important first step.

This is not your fault.

You are not alone.

There are services here for you.

There is hope that you will find safety.

By reaching out for help you are doing the right thing.



PFJCI Chaplaincy Services: Spiritual Care and Faith Resources

A Word to the Wise

- ✿ Never speak in a disrespectful way about the client's partner.
- ✿ Remember, many victim/survivors and their children love the abuser deeply.
- ✿ Most victim/survivors don't want the relationship to end, they just want the abuse to stop.



PFJCI Chaplaincy Services: Spiritual Care and Faith Resources

Clients may be asking:

“Why me?”

“Am I being punished?”

“Is this disaster part of a plan for my life?”

“Why is this happening to me?”

“Why are innocent children hurt?”

“Why aren’t my prayers answered?”

“How do I make sense of all this?”



PFJCI Chaplaincy Services: Spiritual Care and Faith Resources

It is NOT necessary to have the answers.

It IS necessary to hear the questions.

Help the client hear his or her own questions,
and find his or her own answers.



PFJCI Chaplaincy Services: Spiritual Care and Faith Resources

By hearing and focusing on the questions,
we help the client find his or her own answers.



PFJCI Chaplaincy Services: Spiritual Care and Faith Resources

Clients may be experiencing:

A faith crisis

A search for meaning and justice

A need for reassurance

Feelings of being divinely punished

Questions about core values and assumptions

Questions about the value of prayer

Struggles with core faith traditions

Broken connections with friends, congregations, family



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**Validate the Client's
Right to and Need for Safety**



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What are some of the voices that your clients may be hearing?

Covenant and Divorce



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What are some of the voices that your clients may be hearing?

Forgiveness



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What are some of the voices that your clients may be hearing?

Suffering



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What are some of the voices that your clients may be hearing?

Shalom Bayit, Peace in the home



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What are some of the voices that your clients may be hearing?

Guilt



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What are some of the voices that your clients may be hearing?

Family honor



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What are some of the voices that your clients may be hearing?

Traditional family roles



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What are some of the voices that your clients may be hearing?

Self-sacrificial love



PFJCI Chaplaincy Services: Spiritual Care and Faith Resources

Within the context of a client's beliefs and traditions, gently and respectfully affirm and validate the victim's need for and right to safety.



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**Refer to PFJCI
And Community Resources**



PFJCI Chaplaincy Services: Spiritual Care and Faith Resources

The PFJCI Chaplaincy Service should never
be the end of the road!



PFJCI Chaplaincy Services: Spiritual Care for DV Survivors

Remember, as PFJCI Interfaith Chaplaincy volunteers we are not domestic violence experts.

Refer, refer, refer to the community service providers and law enforcement partners at the PFJCI.

Also, refer to local clergy from the victim's religious tradition who have been trained to respond safely and effectively to domestic violence.



PFJCI Chaplaincy Services: Spiritual Care for DV Survivors

As PFJCI Chaplaincy volunteers,
we are a critical part of the
“coherent, community response
to domestic violence.”



PFJCI Chaplaincy Services: Spiritual Care for DV Survivors

Questions and Discussion



PFJCI Chaplaincy Services: Spiritual Care for DV Survivors

This training is supported by Award No. 2004-WT-AX-K072, awarded by the Office on Violence Against Women, United States Department of Justice. The opinions, findings, conclusions, and recommendations expressed in this publication/program/exhibition are those of the author(s) and do not necessarily reflect the view of the Department of Justice, Office on Violence Against Women.