

8 MYTHS ABOUT SPIRITUAL CARE

Myth #1: Spiritual care is only for religious people.

Truth: Spiritual care is for everyone, including those who are atheist, agnostic, or spiritual-but-not-religious. It's about what gives your life meaning and purpose, whether that's family, nature, art, or faith.

Myth #2: If I'm not sure what I believe, spiritual care isn't for me.

Truth: That's actually when spiritual care can help most! Many people find comfort in exploring life's big questions—about purpose, legacy, and what matters most—with someone who will listen without judgment. Spiritual Care Counselors provide a safe, open space to reflect, whether you're grounded in a specific faith, questioning, or still discovering what you believe.

Myth #3: I already have a faith leader; I don't need spiritual care.

Truth: Spiritual Care Counselors specialize in helping patients and families navigate the emotional, existential, and practical aspects of death and dying. They work alongside faith leaders but provide expertise in coping with grief, legacy work, and the unique challenges of end-of-life care that clergy may not routinely address.

Myth #4: Spiritual care is only for people in crisis or at the very end of life.

Truth: Spiritual care can be meaningful at any stage of hospice or serious illness. It offers space to find meaning, strengthen connections, and experience comfort long before death is imminent.

Myth #5: Spiritual care only deals with prayer or religious rituals.

Truth: While prayer or rituals may be included, spiritual care is much broader. It includes active listening, storytelling, legacy work, music, and simple companionship—meeting people wherever they find meaning and peace.

Myth #6: Spiritual care is only for patients, not their families.

Truth: Spiritual care supports families as much as patients. Counselors help loved ones process anticipatory grief, explore identity beyond caregiving, and find peace and strength in shared rituals or reflections.

Myth #7: Spiritual care is only about discussing death.

Truth: While it may include conversations about mortality, spiritual care also celebrates life, exploring values, memories, and moments of connection that bring comfort and joy right now.

Myth #8: It's too late to start spiritual care if hospice has already begun.

Truth: Spiritual care is part of the 360-degree, wraparound support your hospice team provides. Patients and families can opt in at any point, and support is always tailored to their needs, readiness, and personal journey. Many families find it most helpful once the patient has reached acceptance and loved ones are processing their own emotions and loss.

HAVE MORE QUESTIONS ABOUT HOW SPIRITUAL CARE CAN HELP?

Call (607) 962-3100, email info@CareFirstNY.org, or talk to your assigned care team members today.