



# Instructions to use the Spiritual Needs Questionnaire (SpNQ) as an assessment tool in clinical routine processes

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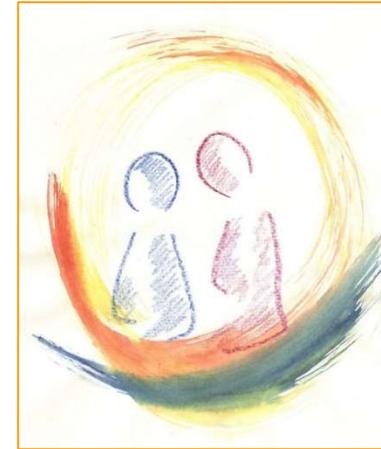
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# What is needed in our health care systems ...



- Compassion as an intention
- Spiritual care competences that can be trained
- Structured assessment of spiritual needs
- Competent HCP who will respond to patients' needs and struggles

➤ Necessary time frames to provide the best care possible

**Spiritual Care Competence Questionnaire (SCCQ):**  
*Conversation, Documentation, Perception of spiritual needs, Empowerment, Spiritual self-awareness*  
[www.spiritual-competence.net](http://www.spiritual-competence.net)

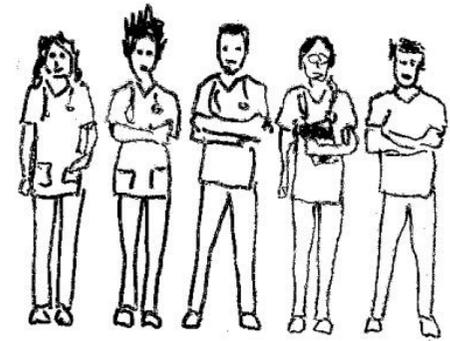
**Spiritual Needs Questionnaire (SpNQ):**  
*Religious, Existential, Inner Peace, Generativity, (Family)*  
[www.spiritualneeds.net](http://www.spiritualneeds.net)

Health care professionals are the first who **recognize** patients' existential and spiritual needs and their struggles – and who **respond** to them

HCP are the first Instance of Perception

→ **Assessment** and **Documentation** of these needs is essential for interdisciplinary exchange and **multi-professional support**

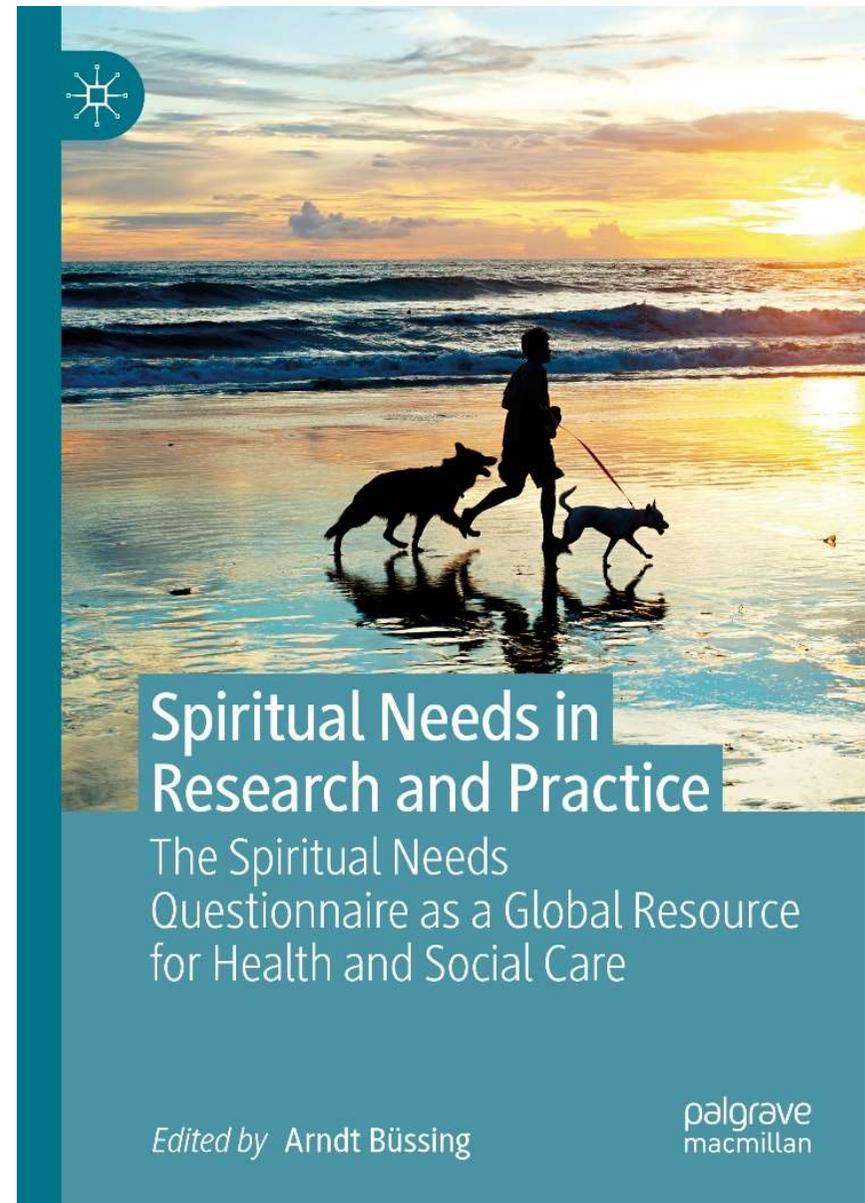
→ HCP may call for further experts, either psychologists or pastoral care provider / chaplains



Spiritual needs can be assessed in a standardized, easy to apply way: The *Spiritual Needs Questionnaire (SpNQ)*

- 1) 20-item SpNQ (with 8 optional items) to **quantify the strength** of unmet needs → reason to **start a conversation / intervention**
- 2) 10-item SpNQ Screener → **rapid orienting assessment** in palliative care settings (have to be further explored)

Available in various languages → [www.spiritualneeds.net](http://www.spiritualneeds.net)



Below are statements about specific needs as expressed by other people. Please check to what extent these apply to you in your current situation and how strong they are in your case. This information is important for the team accompanying you in order to be able to plan support needs and better respond to you and your needs. - If you don't want to answer these questions at all, you are of course free to do so. You will still be treated and accompanied as well as we can.

| During the last time, did you have had the needs ...                   |  | No | If YES, how strong is this need ? |        |             |
|--|--|----|-----------------------------------|--------|-------------|
|  |  |    | somewhat                          | strong | very strong |
| N2   | To talk with others about your fears and worries?  | 0  | 1                                 | 2      | 3           |
| N3 *   | That someone of your religious community (i.e. pastor) cares for you or come to see you? | 0  | 1                                 | 2      | 3           |
| N4   | To reflect back on your life?  | 0  | 1                                 | 2      | 3           |
| N5   | To dissolve / clarify open aspects of your life?   | 0  | 1                                 | 2      | 3           |
| N6   | To plunge into beauty of nature?   | 0  | 1                                 | 2      | 3           |
| N7   | To dwell at a place of quietness and peace?  | 0  | 1                                 | 2      | 3           |
| N8   | To find inner peace?   | 0  | 1                                 | 2      | 3           |
| N10  | To find meaning in illness and/or suffering?   | 0  | 1                                 | 2      | 3           |
| N11  | To talk with someone about the question of meaning in life?                              | 0  | 1                                 | 2      | 3           |
| N12  | To talk with someone about the possibility of life after death?                          | 0  | 1                                 | 2      | 3           |
| N13  | To turn to someone in a loving attitude?   | 0  | 1                                 | 2      | 3           |
| N14  | To give away something from yourself?  | 0  | 1                                 | 2      | 3           |
| N15  | To give solace to someone?   | 0  | 1                                 | 2      | 3           |
| N16  | To forgive someone from a distinct period of your life?                                  | 0  | 1                                 | 2      | 3           |
| N17  | To be forgiven?  | 0  | 1                                 | 2      | 3           |
| N18  | To pray with someone?  | 0  | 1                                 | 2      | 3           |
| N19  | That someone prays for you?  | 0  | 1                                 | 2      | 3           |
| N20  | To pray for yourself?  | 0  | 1                                 | 2      | 3           |
| N21  | To participate at a religious ceremony (i.e. Sunday service)?                            | 0  | 1                                 | 2      | 3           |
| N22  | To read religious / spiritual books?   | 0  | 1                                 | 2      | 3           |
| N23  | To turn to a higher presence (i.e., God, Allah)?   | 0  | 1                                 | 2      | 3           |
| N25*   | To feel connected with family?   | 0  | 1                                 | 2      | 3           |
| N26  | To pass own life experiences to others?  | 0  | 1                                 | 2      | 3           |
| N27  | To be assured that your life was meaningful and of value?                                | 0  | 1                                 | 2      | 3           |
| N28*   | To be re-involved by your family in their life concerns?                                 | 0  | 1                                 | 2      | 3           |
| N29*   | To be invited by friends?  | 0  | 1                                 | 2      | 3           |
| N30*   | To receive more support from your family?  | 0  | 1                                 | 2      | 3           |
| In case you have further specific needs you would like to let us know: |  |    |                                   |        |             |
| X1   |  |    | 1                                 | 2      | 3           |
| X2   |  |    | 1                                 | 2      | 3           |
| X3   |  |    | 1                                 | 2      | 3           |

Knowledge of  
specific needs

Reactions from  
the team based  
on specific need

Wellbeing of  
patients may  
improve

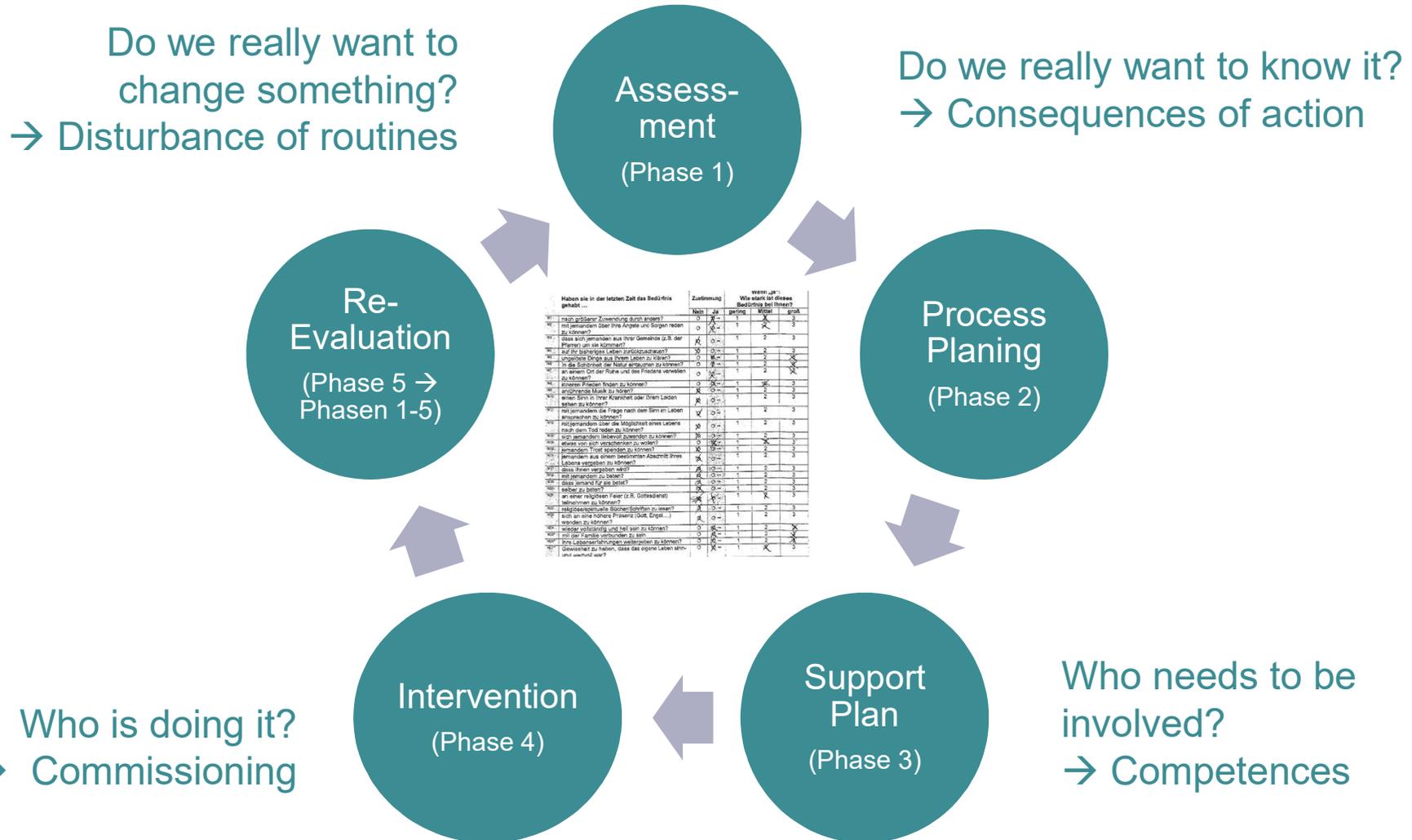
Easy handling →  
structured recording of  
the "importance" of  
respective needs

Easy-to-use tool  
even for non-religious  
employees

Spirituality recognized  
and valued as an  
independent resource  
of relevance

# Supporting Spiritual Needs

## Schematic process for developing a Support Plan



| Haben sie in der letzten Zeit das Bedürfnis gehabt ...                           | Zustimmung                          |                                     | wenn „ja“: |                                     |                                     |
|--|-------------------------------------|-------------------------------------|------------|-------------------------------------|-------------------------------------|
|  | Nein                                | ja                                  | gering     | Mittel                              | groß                                |
| 101 mein größter Zerstörer durch etwas?  | <input type="checkbox"/>            | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | 1          | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | 3                                   |
| 102 mit jemandem über Ihre Ängste und Sorgen reden zu können?                    | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/>            | 1          | 2                                   | 3                                   |
| 103 dass sich jemanden aus Ihrer Gemeinde (z.B. der Pfarrer) um sie kümmert?     | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/>            | 1          | 2                                   | 3                                   |
| 104 auf ihr bisheriges Leben zurückzublicken?                                    | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/>            | 1          | 2                                   | 3                                   |
| 105 wichtige Dinge aus einem Leben zu können?                                    | <input type="checkbox"/>            | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | 1          | 2                                   | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> |
| 106 in die Schönheit der Natur getaucht zu können?                               | <input type="checkbox"/>            | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | 1          | 2                                   | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> |
| 107 an einen Ort der Ruhe und des Friedens verwandeln zu können?                 | <input type="checkbox"/>            | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | 1          | 2                                   | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> |
| 108 einen Frieden finden zu können?  | <input type="checkbox"/>            | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | 1          | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | 3                                   |
| 109 einsehende Musik zu hören?   | <input type="checkbox"/>            | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | 1          | 2                                   | 3                                   |
| 110 wenn sich in ihre Krankheit oder ihrem Leben sehen zu können?                | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/>            | 1          | 2                                   | 3                                   |
| 111 mit jemandem die Frage nach dem Sinn im Leben anzugehen zu können?           | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/>            | 1          | 2                                   | 3                                   |
| 112 mit jemandem über die Möglichkeit eines Lebens nach dem Tod reden zu können? | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/>            | 1          | 2                                   | 3                                   |
| 113 sich jemandem (einer) zuwenden zu können?                                    | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/>            | 1          | 2                                   | 3                                   |
| 114 etwas von sich verschreiben zu wollen?                                       | <input type="checkbox"/>            | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | 1          | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | 3                                   |
| 115 jemandem "für jemanden zu können?"   | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/>            | 1          | 2                                   | 3                                   |
| 116 jemanden aus einem bestimmten Abschnitt ihres Lebens aussparen zu können?    | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/>            | 1          | 2                                   | 3                                   |
| 117 dass ihnen vergeben wird?  | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/>            | 1          | 2                                   | 3                                   |
| 118 sich jemandem zu bedanken?   | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/>            | 1          | 2                                   | 3                                   |
| 119 dass jemand für sie bittet?  | <input type="checkbox"/>            | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | 1          | 2                                   | 3                                   |
| 120 selbst zu bittet?  | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/>            | 1          | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | 3                                   |
| 121 an einer ruhigen Feier (z.B. Gottesdienst) teilnehmen zu können?             | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/>            | 1          | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | 3                                   |
| 122 religiöses/ethisches Bekenntnis zu machen?                                   | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/>            | 1          | 2                                   | 3                                   |
| 123 sich an eine religiöse Praxis (z.B. Engel) zu wenden zu können?              | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/>            | 1          | 2                                   | 3                                   |
| 124 wieder vollwertig und bei sich zu können?                                    | <input type="checkbox"/>            | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | 1          | 2                                   | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> |
| 125 mit der Familie verbunden zu sein?   | <input type="checkbox"/>            | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | 1          | 2                                   | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> |
| 126 sich Lebensmittelpunkte außerhalb zu öffnen?                                 | <input type="checkbox"/>            | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | 1          | 2                                   | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> |
| 127 Distanzierer zu haben, dass das eigene Leben nicht unendlich war?            | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/>            | 1          | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | 3                                   |

according to Büssing: *Spiritual Needs in Research and Practice* (2021)

# The SpNQ as an opportunity for concrete talks about unmet needs

- Patients **decide** to fill out the questionnaire (indicating which of the variety of needs are important to them) and to return it → **signaling an openness** and that they want to **receive support**
  - It is not applicable to all patients similarly (i.e., people with severe dementia, physically weak and dying people)
  - In some cases, an assisted answering is helpful, which often results in intensive talks → requires time
- Responses of the team should be based on the intensity of specific spiritual needs and **consented** with patients.
  - There is no claim to satisfy all needs → The fact that these needs are recognized at all is significant for many people.