Purpose and Use of the Spiritual Fitness Assessment

As Christian fitness and health professionals we want our clients to be as healthy as possible. It is the concern for the well-being of our clients that leads us to offer a Spiritual Fitness Assessment for them to take and also to share our faith experiences with them.

The administration of this assessment will give the Christian health/fitness professional a "door-opener" to talk with clients about the relationship between faith and health. It can be used as a tool, in a fitness/health education setting, to capture the beliefs, attitudes, and certain spiritual practices/behaviors of a person. The areas addressed have been either shown by research to be associated with improved health or are believed to have a positive impact on one's health or in helping a person make health-related behavior changes.

Clinical studies have demonstrated the importance of spiritual health in physical well being. Research has shown faith benefits related to many areas such as cancer, hypertension, general health, heart disease, and other physical ailments as well as psychological, psychiatric and substance abuse problems. This research shows that the most important factor is religious practice and belief. People who don't just "talk the talk" but "walk the walk" demonstrate the most benefits.

In discussing the responses to the assessment with the client, the professional will be able to have a dialogue with the client about how to integrate the spirit component of fitness/health programming to impact on the client's health. Suggestions, in the form of "Spiritual Exercises" and based on Christian principles, would then be offered. The professional would share with the client about his/her personal experiences in incorporating these Spiritual Exercises in their life. Typically, the assessment would not be offered until there has been a degree of trust and respect built between the client and the professional.

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