

Religious Traditions and Genetic Counseling

This assignment is intended to increase your comfort with and knowledge of several religions from a spiritual and/or personal context.

Choose ONE assignment option:

1. Present a case which provides an example of the role religion played in the direction or dynamics of the session. You might consider one or more cases for which a genetic counselor facilitated client decision making in the context of the family's spiritual grounding. What was unique about this case? What assessment tools, questions and/or counseling skills were used? How was the family's spiritual grounding explored? If you choose this option, plan to address the following:

- What factors, circumstances or questions allowed the religious background/preference/practice of the client to emerge in the genetic counseling session?
- Are the client's practices the same/different than those of other family members/spouse?
- What attempts were made by members of the genetics team or other health care providers to understand the clients' religious/spiritual framework?
- What major areas/characteristics of the religious affiliation were relevant to this case? Use the Religious Traditions reference below as well as other references.
- Which elements of religious tradition were identifiable from the clients' interactions with his/her family, verbals, non-verbals, communication patterns, decisions, etc. Be as specific as possible. Feel free to use quotes.
- What questions/approaches to intake and/or genetic counseling would you use in a future case with similar characteristics, and why?

2. Share personal experiences or perspectives about living a particular religion. What are the common beliefs, values, practices that bind you to your religious community? You might choose to annotate the relevant entry in Anderson's notebook, or follow the same general structure and develop a new entry.

3. Read *When Bad Things Happen to Good People* or *Tuesdays with Morrie*. What insights into Judaism, spirituality and yourself did you achieve?

Each assignment option requires a paper (max of 4 pages) and students will be asked to present their assignment in class.

References:

Integrating Spirituality and Religion into Counseling: A Guide to Competent Practice. Craig S. Cashwell, Craig S and J. Scott Young. American Counseling Association, Alexandria, Virginia, 2005.

Religious Traditions and Prenatal Genetic Counseling. Rebecca Rae Anderson, University of Nebraska Medical Center, Omaha, Nebraska, 2002.