



Editorial

This special issue Simon Dein

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Welcome to this edition of the World Cultural Psychiatry Research Review.

Research on religion and spirituality burgeoned in the last two decades. Although much of this research derives from the USA, the focus has now expanded to include other countries. On balance, it suggests that being religious in a number of ways does improve mental health status. Alongside this literature is a growing literature on religious coping. Positive religious coping, close supportive relationships with God help people deal in a positive way with life events. In contrast, negative religious coping or religious struggles can impact negatively on mental health. Finally, there is some work on particular religious experiences such as prayer and hearing God's voice. In this issue we present a number of papers examining the themes above.

These papers derive from a workshop held in March 2012 at St Paul's Cathedral, London. The focus of the workshop was on spirituality and mental health. We start with a paper by myself, which is overview of the contemporary literary on religion and mental health. There follows discussion of spirituality and psychopathology amongst people with intellectual disability by Jean O'Hara. Armando Favazza discusses the divine placebo – is the thesis that religion has a direct psychological benefits completely true. Goffredo Bartocci in his paper Culture and the Sacred Dimension examines whether genes and memes produce God. Finally, there is a case report by Ascoli, Polinski, Abdul-Hamid and Dein looking at the Cultural Consultation for Jinn and Spiritual Possession in Muslim Psychiatric Patients. We hope you enjoy this issue.

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