

Title	Student experience of learning about spirituality through the medium of art				
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EPICC Standard Competency	General Teaching & Learning	1 Intrapersonal Spirituality	2 Interpersonal Spirituality	3 Spiritual Care: Assessment and Planning	4 Spiritual Care: Intervention and Evaluation
Teaching Group	Nursing				
Year of Teaching	2				
Learning Objectives	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To use art as a method of teaching spirituality to undergraduate nursing students. 				
Strategy Description	<p>A visit to the Art Gallery was integrated into a module “Nursing and the Spirit” taught to second-year nursing students. In an attempt to move away from traditional didactic teaching methods, this project aimed to enable the students to explore the concept of spirituality through the medium of art. This involved a visit to the National Art Gallery of Ireland. This visit involved negotiations with the Educational Officer at the Gallery. Enthusiasm for this approach was evident at the outset, and although the Gallery often gave tours to second-level students, it was less common among third-level nursing students. The tour was prepared well in advance with extra staff on duty to accommodate the visit. A fee was charged for the service. The guides were extremely helpful and helped to build upon students’ own interpretations and provided a background discussion on each selected painting.</p> <p>Data collection took place after a visit to the Art Gallery, whereby the students in attendance on that day ($n = 100$) were broken into ten small groups and guided towards a selection of works of art. Students were asked to select one painting that they perceived to be spiritual in nature and asked to write their subjective impressions of that painting giving reasons for their choice. A list of themes related to spirituality was provided to the students as a prompt. Students later visited the paintings with both a Nurse Lecturer and a Gallery Guide and their chosen paintings were discussed as a group.</p>				
Educator’s Role	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The teachers organized the visit to the Art Gallery, and the educational tour. The teachers facilitated the focus groups after the visit. 				
Resources					
Learner Assessment	<p>Student’s views were captured during focus group interviews that aimed to ascertain the students’ views and experiences of this teaching method to learn about spirituality.</p> <p>The research question guiding the focus groups was:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> What are students’ experiences of learning spirituality through the medium of art? <p>Following the visit, 21 students partook in four recorded focus group interviews on the basis of their availability and willingness to attend two pre-set dates for focus group meetings. Two researchers conducted single focus group interviews, thus each held two meetings. Participants were briefed on what to expect, including the proposed questions, immediately prior to the group in order to lessen the participant’s dependence on the group leaders and lessen anxiety.</p>				

	<p>Five themes emerged from the data:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Recognizing spiritual dimensions of everyday life. 2. A snapshot of spirituality through others' impressions of art. 3. Developing a deeper awareness of the meaning of spirituality 4. Spirituality transcends traditional religions. 5. Spirituality enhancing the nurse's role. <p>Example of chosen work of art: The Fisherman's Mother by Helen Mabel Trevor, 1831-1900 (http://onlinecollection.nationalgallery.ie/objects/8941/the-fishermans-mother;jsessionid=5E002F47EC120170AE55FFE345F659FC?ctx=77ad8d28-d24d-44d0-9087-753caa90091b&idx=0).</p> <p><u>Associated quotations</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • "The woman looks very old and feeble and yet looks strong and content. She has rosary beads in her hand, she has strength from God. She's leaning on a walking stick, showing her physical weakness but she has an inner strength". • "I had an experience at work with a little old lady aged 93 ... she said '<i>I am miserable I want to die, God obviously doesn't want me</i>'. Because of the series of lectures I felt I should try and help this lady. So I put my arm around her and said '<i>God does want you, he's just not ready for you yet</i>'. I felt really stupid and wondered had I helped her, but she looked at me and gave me a big smile. We are often faced with those kind of comments. It's very difficult but you have to say something to comfort the person".
Additional Comments	
References	<p>Mooney, B., & Timmins, F. (2007). Spirituality as a Universal Concept: Student experience of learning about spirituality through the medium of art. <i>Nurse Education in Practice</i> 7, 275-284. doi: 10.1016/j.nepr.2006.09.001</p>