

Interfaith Spiritual Care from a Hindu Perspective

Sharda S. Nandram · Puneet K. Bindlish · Ankur Joshi

Chapter 6 in Interfaith Spiritual Care: Theory and Case Studies

CENTRAL PROPOSITION

Understand suffering.
Open possibilities.

The H-framework links Hindu philosophical resources with client-centred spiritual care.



Read the research

01 Background and question

Interfaith care requires sensitivity to a client’s beliefs, life stage and relationships. This chapter explores how Hindu concepts and practices can complement generic spiritual care in the Dutch context, illustrated through a prison-care case [1,2].

RESEARCH QUESTION

How can Hindu philosophical concepts inform spiritual care for a person whose life spans different faith traditions?

02 Conceptual framework

Worldview

Dharma, karma and interconnectedness

Care relationship

Client-centred reflection and contextual practice

Inspired by Patañjali’s Yoga Sūtras, the H-framework links symptoms, causes, imagination and realisation. Earlier steps are revisited as understanding deepens [1].

03 Evidence and method

The chapter combines philosophical interpretation, teaching experience and an anonymised practice case. The framework was used in Hindu care courses and chaplaincy training. The case illustrates an approach; it is not a controlled evaluation [1-3].

04 The original H-framework

The source’s four-part framework provides a structure for reflection rather than a fixed sequence of treatment [1].

Table 6.2: The H-Framework³³ for Hindu Spiritual Care

H1 – Symptoms Identify symptoms and explore the underlying problem, but also address the symptoms themselves.	H2 – Cause Identify the root cause of the underlying problem and eliminate the cause.
Our problems cannot be solved with the same level of thinking that created them. There is often limited openness to creativity, and people prefer known solutions. However, we must go beyond H1 and H2, embracing the unknown—spirituality.	
H3 – Imagination Reflect on “what if the problem didn’t exist”: requires imaginative power to awaken curiosity and explore new possibilities.	H4 – Realization Achieve imaginative power by pursuing new paths and shifting focus. Transform worry about directly solving the problem into curiosity to make the impossible possible.

Original Table 6.2, “The H-Framework for Hindu Spiritual Care”, reproduced from [1], p. 156.

Case: understanding distress

Grief, fear and passivity are considered alongside guilt.

Case: exploring purpose

Dharma provides a language for responsibility and life goals.

Case: supporting action

Conversation, narrative and practice inform the way forward.

05 Findings and contributions

A Connect generic and specific care

Individual conversations are combined with satsaṃga, kathā and yoga in response to the client’s needs [1].

B Use the H-framework iteratively

Attention moves from distress and underlying causes towards desired possibilities and meaningful action [1].

C Respect the interfaith context

The case follows a client from a Hindu-Christian family through grief, guilt and reflection on personal responsibility [1].

06 Discussion

The framework supports dialogue about suffering and meaning without assuming that one method fits every client. Traditions supply resources that caregivers can interpret with clients in their own circumstances [1,2].

07 Limitations and next steps

A single illustrative case cannot establish intervention effectiveness or generalisability. The chapter calls for further study of generic and Hindu-specific approaches in diverse care contexts [1].

CONCLUSION

Interfaith care can connect shared professional skills with tradition-specific resources through sustained attention to the client [1].

SELECTED REFERENCES

[1] Nandram, S. S., Bindlish, P. K., & Joshi, A. (2026). Interfaith Spiritual Care from a Hindu Perspective. In A. I. Liefbroer, H. Alma, & P. Coppens (Eds.), Interfaith Spiritual Care: Theory and Case Studies, Chapter 6.

[2] Chander, V., & Mosher, L. (2019). Hindu Approaches to Spiritual Care: Chaplaincy in Theory and Practice. Jessica Kingsley Publishers.

[3] Bhawuk, D. (2011). Spirituality and Indian Psychology: Lessons from the Bhagavad-Gita. Springer.