



ECO-SPIRITUAL CONSCIOUSNESS AS A FORM OF SELF-CARE FOR SOCIAL WORKERS IN THE FIELD OF LOSS AND TRAUMA

{Dr Sandra Ferreira}

This paper debates the importance of eco-spiritual consciousness for self-care as a precautionary measure against vicarious traumatising for social workers working in the field of loss and trauma. Social workers may easily become traumatised themselves when clients narrate their stories of pain, sorrow and despair. This results in dissociation between mind, body and spirit in the social worker. Becoming aware of the spiritual interconnectedness between human beings and the environment, also called one's eco-spiritual relationship, is referred to as accessing an eco-spiritual consciousness.

When eco-spiritual consciousness is embraced, it creates a space in which healing of the self, others and healing of the environment can flow. Being aware of and tending to one's eco-spiritual consciousness may be helpful and supportive for social workers in integrating mind, body and soul. The lived experiences of eco-spiritual consciousness include tending, dwelling, reverence, connectedness and sentience. Social workers may find that by taking self-care through eco-spiritual consciousness their capacity for social care-giving in situations of loss and trauma can be enhanced and sustained.

