

---

**EDITORIAL****The biopsychosocial-spiritual model: A holistic approach to health and well-being***G. Himashree**Editor-in-chief, Journal of Krishna Institute of Medical Sciences University,  
Krishna Vishwa Vidyapeeth (Deemed to be University), Malkapur, Karad-415339 (Maharashtra) India*

---

In today's world almost every patient is at a crossroads deciding which system of healing is going to be best suited to him for the disorder. In the utopian world, this quandary and conundrum should not exist and each patient should be provided with holistic healing solutions incorporating the best of all the systems to ensure his journey to good health and wellbeing. It is to be noted that good health and wellbeing are neither synonymous nor full subsets of each other. Wellbeing is a multidimensional entity that cannot be addressed with incisive solutions instead we have to adopt the inclusive approach.

The holistic approach to wellbeing is very well modelled in the biopsychosocial-spiritual model of health. This model does justice to the complex nature of human health. Indian Systems of Medicine particularly Ayurveda has always included this dimension in providing personalised health care. As research into holistic health continues to evolve, it has become increasingly clear that human wellbeing cannot be fully understood or addressed by biology alone. The biopsychosocial-spiritual model of health offers a more comprehensive framework, one that recognizes the interconnectedness of biological, psychological, social, and spiritual factors in shaping our health and healing processes.

In the contemporary era of health care, the roots of this more inclusive approach to health can be traced back to George L. Engel, a psychiatrist who,

in 1977, introduced the biopsychosocial model [1]. Engel's revolutionary idea rejected the reductionist approach of the traditional biomedical model, which focused solely on the biological causes of disease. Instead, Engel proposed that health and illness are the result of a complex interaction between biological, psychological, and social factors. This was a significant departure from the previous model, which often overlooked the emotional, mental, and social aspects of a person's experience. In view of this the health care paradigms were also revised to include more than just the patient and his symptoms. The immediate social milieu and its impact on the individuals' psyche are also considered to be important factors that would contribute to healing, health and wellbeing. Engel's model laid the groundwork for the biopsychosocial-spiritual model, which further extends the understanding of health by incorporating a spiritual dimension.

In recent decades, the profound effects that spirituality and religious beliefs can have on physical and mental well-being is being understood. Evidence based research is picking up to generate evidence with the available technology. Harold G. Koenig, a leading researcher in the field of spirituality and health, has shown that spiritual practices, religious involvement, and a sense of life's purpose can lead to better health outcomes, reduce stress, and improve emotional resilience [2].

The evolution of the biopsychosocial-spiritual model is an anticipated and much needed paradigm shift which acknowledges that health is not only influenced by biological, psychological, and social factors but also by a person's spiritual beliefs and experiences. Spirituality, in this context, is not necessarily tied to religious practice but as a person's sense of meaning, purpose, and connection to something greater than themselves. This model of health views a person as an interconnected whole, rather than simply a body to be fixed or a set of symptoms to be treated. This model ensures personalised delivery of healthcare and may foster stronger doctor patient bonds which will further enhance the healing.

While the biopsychosocial-spiritual model offers many advantages it will be challenging to train

medical professionals to become proficient in this dimension of health care even after they accept this model. However, as more research emerges on the positive impact of spirituality on health, it is becoming increasingly clear that this dimension cannot be ignored.

As healthcare systems evolve, it is essential to continue advocating for the integration of the biopsychosocial-spiritual model into clinical practice. Training medical professionals to consider the emotional, social, and spiritual dimensions of health will help create a healthcare environment that truly cares for the whole person. In doing so, we can improve not only the quality of care but also the overall well-being of individuals in our society.

### References

1. Engel GL. The need for a new medical model: a challenge for biomedicine. *Science* 1977;196(4286): 129-36.
2. KoenigHG. Integrating spirituality into patient care from a multicultural perspective. In Tinaz, N., Ayten, A., Zengin, M., Eksi, H. (eds), *Spiritual Counseling and Care in Healthcare and Prison Services (Second International Congress)*. Istanbul, Turkey: Ensar Publishing, 2021: pp 9-24 (1<sup>st</sup> chapter).

#### \*Author for Correspondence:

Dr. (Brig) G. Himashree, Editor-in-chief, *Journal of Krishna Institute of Medical Sciences, Krishna Vishwa Vidyapeeth (Deemed to be University), Karad-415339, Maharashtra, India*  
Email: editorinchief@jkimsu.com Cell: 9465184159

#### How to cite this article:

G. Himashree. The biopsychosocial-spiritual model: A holistic approach to health and well-being. *J Krishna Inst Med Sci Univ* 2025; 14(1):1-2.