



25th Annual Conference of the National HIV Nurses Association

Faith & HIV

Chair:

Liz Foote, *Sussex Community NHS Foundation Trust*

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Faith and HIV

Liz Foote

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Conflict of Interest

In relation to this presentation I declare that I have no conflict of interest

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Introduction

What is Faith ?

complete trust or confidence in someone or something

strong belief in the doctrines of a religion, based on spiritual conviction rather than proof

The word *religion* is sometimes used interchangeably with the words "faith" or "belief system", but religion differs from private belief in that it has a public aspect



Faith is personal

- The importance of having an awareness and understanding of peoples personal experiences
- Faith helps and strengthens many people
- Faith/religion has hurt many people and caused much damage
- Respect for one another



Diversity of Faith Groups

- According to estimates, there are over [4,000 religions](#), faiths groups, and denominations that exist around the world today. Researchers and academics generally categorize the world's religions into five major groups: Christianity, Islam, Buddhism, Hinduism, and Judaism (Visual capitalist 2022)



Faith/Religion and impact on adherence



- Faith can impact on a person's response to medication and treatment.
- Alio et al (2019) carried out an exploration of religious leaders and their role in the lives of people living with HIV. The overarching theme was 'to love the sinner but hate the sin', and to help people with HIV renounce 'inappropriate' behaviours, potentially causing those with HIV to feel unaccepted and undeserving
- Barnes and Meyer (2012) investigated the relationship between exposure to non-affirming religious environments and internalised homophobia in a sample of people from the LGBTQ community in New York City. They concluded that exposure to non-affirming religious settings led to higher internalised homophobia, more depressive symptoms, and less psychological wellbeing, low self-worth, low self-care and in turn this can impact on adherence.

Faith and Religion can offer support and comfort

- However, It is equally important to note that religious groups can provide valuable support networks to people from the LGBTQ community and those with HIV (Weber and Pargament, 2014).
- Many people find that having a religion or spiritual belief helps them to cope with a variety of life events such as illness, loss and general stress.
- In addition, religion and spirituality may help to improve wellbeing, hope, optimism, meaning and purpose, and inner peace

