18.8: XVIII Glossary

**Chaplains:** Trained professionals in hospitals, nursing homes, assisted living facilities, and hospices that assist with the spiritual, religious, and emotional needs of patients, families, and staff. Chaplains support and encourage people of all religious faiths and cultures and customize their approach to each individual’s background, age, and medical condition.

**Holism:** The concept that a human is composed of a mind, body, and soul integrated into an inseparable whole.

**Religion:** A unified system of beliefs, values, and practices that a person holds sacred or considers to be spiritually significant. Spiritual practices often unite a moral community called a church. Some people associate religion with a place of worship (e.g., a synagogue or church), a practice (e.g., attending religious services, receiving communion, or going to confession), or a concept that guides one’s daily life (e.g., sin or karma).

**Spiritual distress:** A state of suffering related to the impaired ability to experience meaning in life through connections with self, others, the world, or a superior being.

**Spirituality:** A dynamic and intrinsic aspect of humanity through which persons seek ultimate meaning, purpose, and transcendence and experience relationships to self, family, others, community, society, nature, and the significant or sacred. Spirituality is expressed through beliefs, values, traditions, and practice.

**Spiritual well-being:** A pattern of experiencing and integrating meaning and purpose in life through connectedness with self, others, art, music, literature, nature, and/or a power greater than oneself.

**Transcendence:** An understanding of being part of a greater picture or of something greater than oneself, such as the awe one can experience when walking in nature. It can also be expressed as a search for the sacred through subjective feelings, thoughts, and behaviors.