



## Thomas C. Barrett, Ph.D.

### Educational Seminars

*Find Your Identity,  
Find Your Meaning and Purpose,  
Then You Will Have Discovered Your Motivation And Strength.*

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## Mission

The statistics are simply staggering. The past few decades have seen a gut-wrenching escalation in depression, anxiety, suicide, and addiction. One recent survey even suggested that young adults in America feel so stressed most days, they don't feel they can function. How did we become so demoralized? What happened to our motivation and resilience?

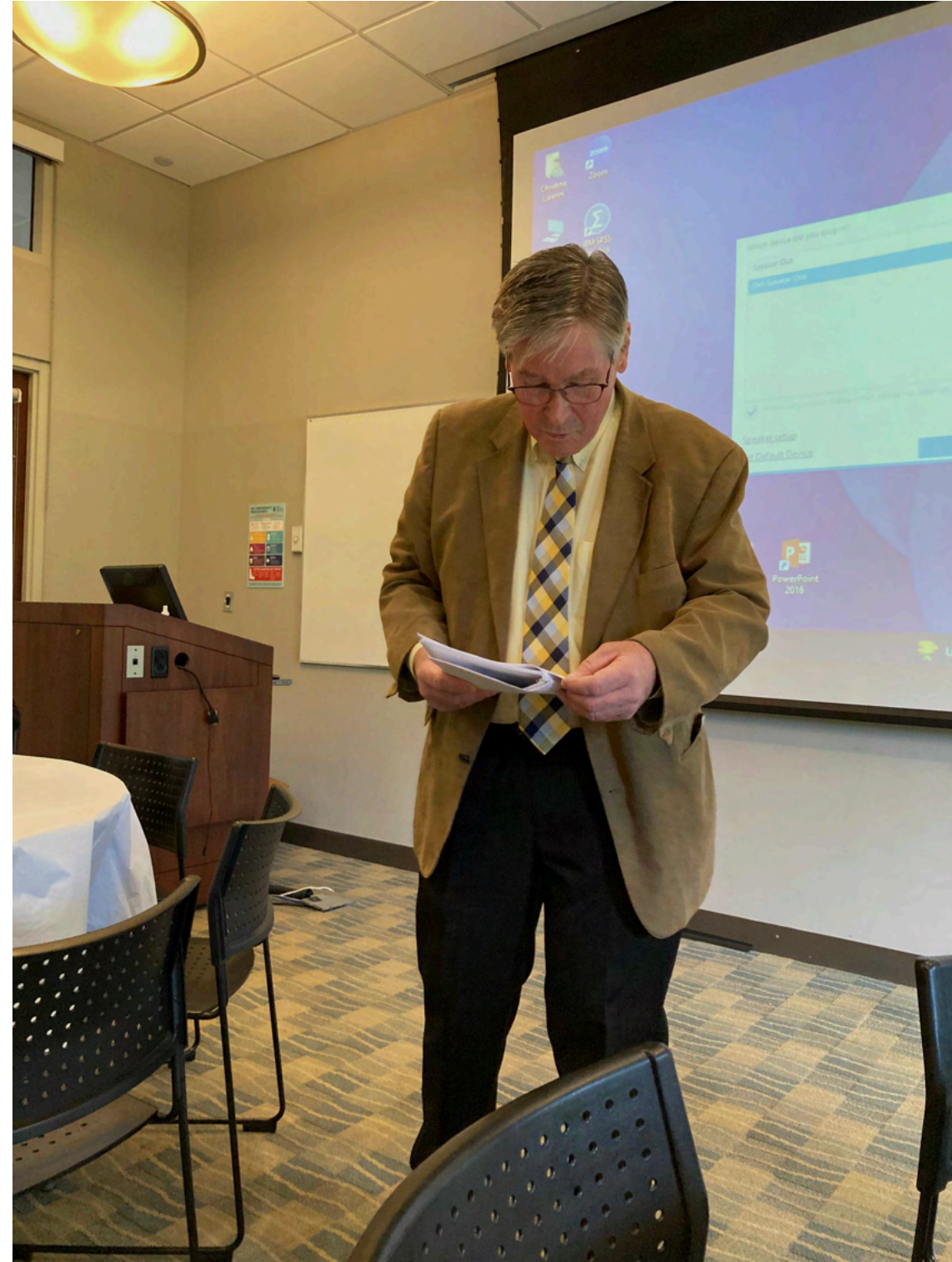
As a retired Professor Emeritus of Psychology and a former therapist with over forty years of clinical experience, I have struggled with these issues in teaching graduate and undergraduate classes and in working with patients in treatment. My teaching and writing have brought me to a clear awareness of perhaps the most significant scientific discovery of the past fifty years, a breakthrough which will undoubtedly impact our health, our emotional well-being, and our very longevity. My mission is to share this scientific discovery with you to empower you in the pursuit of your individual life goals and community priorities.

On this site, I offer educational seminars and other informational resources focusing on the core source of motivation, resilience, and healing rooted in our inherent capacities as human beings. This is not a rendition of superficial affirmations to make one feel better. Rather, it is a grasping of the powerful, soul-stirring reality of self-transcendence. Please explore the site and feel free to contact me to discuss your thoughts or to arrange for a seminar at your educational, religious, or business setting.

## Seminars

My mission has led to my developing a program of educational seminars on the psychospiritual field. These seminars can easily be tailored to the specific needs and interests of your group. I am available as a guest lecturer or speaker, for keynote addresses, and in-service training.

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## About

In general, I have spent most of the past 50 years learning about, treating, and teaching classes dealing with the core issues in mental illness and emotional dysfunction. Key to that journey has been my growing realization that the spiritual nature of man is vitally important as a source of guidance and strength as individuals face the defining crises of their lives.

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By Thomas C. Barrett - August 10, 2024

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# About Thomas C. Barrett

## Biography



Thomas C. Barrett

I am a retired Professor Emeritus of Psychology at Saint Elizabeth University in Morristown, NJ. While actively teaching, I was the Founding Director of the University's doctoral program in counseling psychology. I have taught doctoral, masters, and undergraduate courses in personality theory, psychopathology, counseling and psychotherapy, and spirituality and counseling. At the same time, after earning a Ph.D. in counseling psychology from Southern Illinois University at Carbondale in 1976, I originally became a licensed psychologist in Pennsylvania in 1978, and I have over 40 years of clinical experience. I continue to be actively licensed as a psychologist in New Jersey and Pennsylvania, although my focus is now solely on teaching and writing. In general, I have spent most of the past 50 years learning about, treating, and teaching classes dealing with the core issues in mental illness and emotional dysfunction. Key to that journey has been my growing realization that the spiritual nature of man is vitally important as a source of guidance and strength as individuals face the defining crises of their lives. I have written articles about this psychospiritual resilience perspective and I have given presentations in academic and non-academic settings. My students and presentation participants have overwhelmingly expressed an intuitive appreciation for the validity of this approach and its importance as an integrated theme in psychotherapy. Spiritual identity, meaning, and purpose are readily perceived as the bedrock of emotional well-being, and there is a universal hunger for this soul-stirring dialogue. In this regard, I am currently writing a book based on these spiritual dimensions and I'll be posting more information about that book as it nears publication. Please scroll through my curriculum vitae for a more detailed look into my education, training, and experience.

## Curriculum Vitae

### Education

1976	PhD	Counseling Psychology (APA-accredited)	Southern Illinois University, Carbondale, IL
1974	MA	Psychology	Southern Illinois University, Carbondale, IL
1970	BA	Psychology	Canisius College, Buffalo, NY

### Licenses

1991	Licensed Psychologist, New Jersey State Board of Psychological Examiners, (License Number 35SI00286400).
1978	Licensed Psychologist, Pennsylvania Board of Psychologist Examiners, (License Number PS002671L).

### Affiliations

Listed in the National Register of Health Service Psychologists (Credential #17680)

Life Status Member, American Psychological Association, Divisions 17, 32 and 41

Senior Member, New Jersey Psychological Association

Member, Pennsylvania Psychological Association

### Professional Experience

#### Academic Administrative Responsibilities

January, 2020 – May, 2021

Chair, Psychology Department, Saint Elizabeth University (formerly known as the College of Saint Elizabeth), Morristown, NJ. The Psychology Department had degree programs leading to the BA, MA, and Psy.D. degrees. Retired as Professor Emeritus in May, 2021. Taught in the Psychology Department as Adjunct Instructor in 2022-2023 academic year.

July, 2017 – December, 2019

Associate Director for Clinical Training, Doctor of Psychology (Psy.D.) in Counseling Psychology program, Psychology Department, College of Saint Elizabeth, Morristown, NJ.

August, 2013 – July, 2017

Founding Director, Doctor of Psychology (Psy.D.) in Counseling Psychology program, Psychology Program, College of Saint Elizabeth, Morristown, NJ.

August, 2012-August, 2013

Coordinator, Graduate Programs in Psychology, Psychology Program, College of Saint Elizabeth, Morristown, NJ. Served as Coordinator, MA in Counseling Psychology and MA in Forensic Psychology and Counseling programs.

August, 2010-August, 2012

Program Chair for Psychology, Psychology Program, College of Saint Elizabeth, Morristown, NJ.

#### Teaching Responsibilities

August, 2007- May, 2021

Professor of Psychology (Professor rank effective AY 2014-2015), Psychology Department, Saint Elizabeth University, Morristown, NJ. Taught undergraduate courses such as: Introduction to Psychology, Social Psychology, Developmental Psychology: The Human Life Span, Personality Theory, Introduction to Counseling, Orientation to the Psychology Major, Psychological Tests and Measurements, and Addictions: Twinkies to Tweeter (co-taught with Dr. Paul LaChance).

In addition, taught courses in the MA in Counseling Psychology and MA in Forensic Psychology and Counseling programs, including: Ethical and Legal Standards in Counseling, Counseling Theories and Methods III-Practicum, Psychopathology and Diagnosis, Counseling Theories and Methods IV & V (Field Experience), Special Topic: Social and Cultural Issues and Applications in International Counseling, Counseling and Spirituality, and Introduction to Forensic Psychology. Finally, taught courses in the doctoral program, including: Recent and Advanced Theories of Personality, Advanced Adult Psychopathology, Techniques in Counseling and Psychotherapy, Doctoral Practicum I, and Doctoral Practicum IV.

1999-August, 2007

Adjunct Faculty, Department of Psychology, College of Saint Elizabeth, Morristown, NJ. Taught three courses in the Graduate Program in Counseling Psychology: Psychological Applications of Ethical Issues, Psychological Issues in Human Services Leadership, and Psychological Applications of Social Issues.

1980-1985

Adjunct Faculty, Department of Behavioral and Professional Sciences, Bucks County Community College, Newtown, PA. Taught courses in developmental psychology, introductory psychology, and psychology for law enforcement officers.

#### Clinical Experience

1985-2022

Private practice performing individual and marital therapy with adults and adolescents. Experienced in the treatment of anxiety, depression, bereavement, eating disorders, substance abuse, chronic pain, and stress-related conditions. Also experienced in career counseling, life-goals planning, and motivational issues. Clinical interests included integrating spirituality in psychotherapy, as well as self-concept change and its subsequent effect on perseverance, optimism, resilience, and sense of purpose. Closed New Jersey private practice office in 2022.

1979-1985

Executive Director, Court Psychological Services, Inc., P.C., Doylestown, PA. Clinical and administrative responsibility for both a forensic psychology program at the Bucks County Prison and a family counseling service accepting voluntary referrals from the Bucks County Common Pleas Court. Duties included supervision of a multi-disciplinary professional staff and program planning for two government funded contracts (As of January, 1982, voluntarily chose not to renew the prison program contract with the County of Bucks in order to devote more time to private practice, teaching and family referrals).

1976-1978

Staff Psychologist, Outpatient Department, Delaware Valley Mental Health Foundation, Doylestown, PA (Part-time Position).

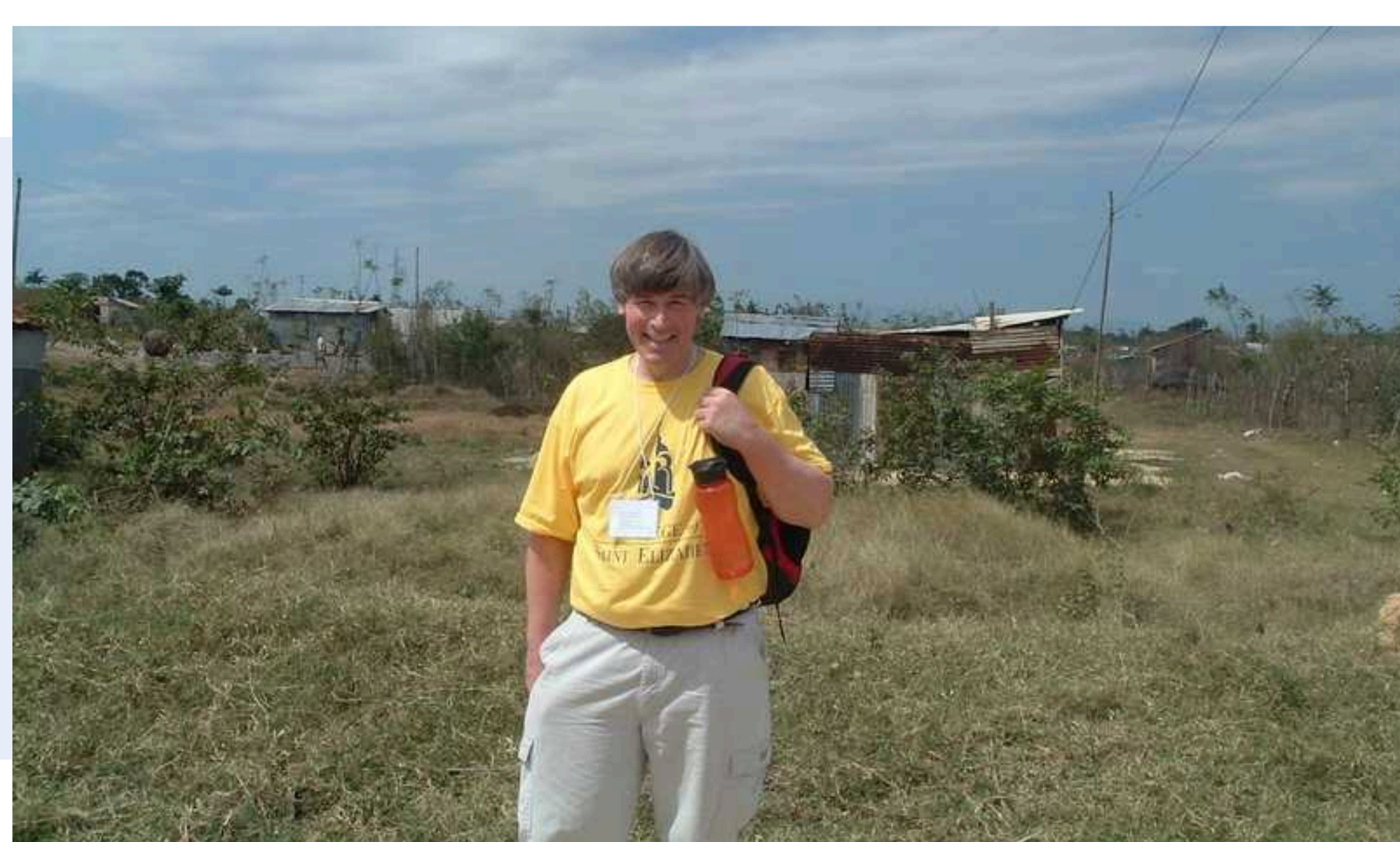
Staff Psychologist and Assistant Director, Court Diagnostic and Treatment Service, Bucks County Prison (Part-time Position).

1975-1976

Clinical Internship, Outpatient Department, Delaware Valley Mental Health Foundation.

#### Honors

2021	Professor Emeritus, Saint Elizabeth University
1974	Phi Kappa Phi Honor Society, Southern Illinois University Chapter
1972	Graduate Fellowship, Southern Illinois University
1970	Magna Cum Laude, Canisius College



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# Points to Ponder

Sometimes people develop a greater awareness of the deeper aspects of their lives by taking a little time to slow down their hectic pace and thinking about what's really important. If it feels comfortable to you, here are a few questions to consider. There are no right or wrong answers. Whatever answers you have are the right answers for you.

Everyone's life reflects a past consisting of where they've come from and what they've experienced. At the same time, we are also aware of our goals for the future, our hopes and dreams, our calling, our destiny. In looking at your life, what seems more true for you. Are you more a product of your past, or are you more a wellspring of what you are striving for and want to accomplish in your future?

Think for a moment about someone who you truly love, maybe a spouse, a parent, or a child. In your mind, is that person's life an evolutionary accident, the result of a random biological process over the millenia? Or was that person placed here at a specific time for a particular reason, to fulfill a distinct purpose?

Can you recall a time in your life when you were at your worst, when life seemed almost unbearable even though you were eventually able to pull yourself up somehow? During that time of crisis, from what source did you draw your strength? What enabled you to persevere? Where did you find the motivation to overcome your adversity?

If you knew for certain that you only had five more years to live, would you want to change your life in any way? Are there any goals you would feel compelled to achieve in your remaining time? Are there any people you would want to see? Are there any places you would need to visit?

Briefly recall for a moment one of the most difficult experiences in your life, possibly a medical crisis or a financial problem. How has that experience made you a better, more fulfilled person today? That is, how has it contributed to your confidence, strength, wisdom, and well-being?

The famous archeologist Teilhard de Chardin once said to the effect that we are not human beings having a spiritual experience but spiritual beings having a human experience. If you knew for certain this was true for you, what would it mean for your life?

The famous archeologist Teilhard de Chardin once said to the effect that we are not human beings having a spiritual experience but spiritual beings having a human experience.

~ Teilhard de Chardin

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# Writing

## Book In Progress

I'm currently writing a book exploring the electrifying role of spirituality in creating resilience, motivation, and the capacity for growth and change, even during the most difficult periods of our lives. The book reviews the empirical evidence associating spiritual identity, meaning, and purpose with health, longevity, and well-being. It also discusses these foundational spiritual dimensions in regard to emotional dysfunction, suicide, and addiction, and it suggests steps the reader can take to develop a stronger spiritual core. In sum, the book is squarely aimed at helping religious and non-religious readers alike develop deep-seated confidence, strength, and motivation as they encounter significant challenges in their lives. I'll post updates about the book's progress and, as it nears publication, information on how to order copies.

## Published Works

Barrett, T.C. (2017). The use of meaning in treating adults. *New Jersey Psychologist*, 67(1), 26-28.

Barrett, T.C. (2010a). Introduction. In T. Barrett (Guest Ed.) & H. Huber (Liaison Ed.). Spirituality and Psychotherapy [Special section]. *New Jersey Psychologist*, 60(3), 20.

Barrett, T.C. (2010b). Theoretical and ethical considerations. In T. Barrett (Guest Ed.) & H. Huber (Liaison Ed.). Spirituality and Psychotherapy [Special section]. *New Jersey Psychologist*, 60(3), 24-26.

Barrett, T.C. (2010c). Psychospiritual stress management, *Human Development*, 31(1), 5-11.

Barrett, T.C. (2009). Spirituality and psychotherapy. *Human Development*, 30(2), 5-11.

Barrett, T.C., & Harren, V.A. (1979). Perspectives on self-theory: A comment on Loevinger and Kegan. *The Counseling Psychologist*, 8, 34-39.

Barrett, T.C., & Tinsley, H.E. (1977a). Vocational self-concept crystallization and vocational indecision. *Journal of Counseling Psychology*, 24, 301-307.

Barrett, T.C., & Tinsley, H.E. (1977b). Measuring vocational self-concept crystallization. *Journal of Vocational Behavior*, 11, 305-313.

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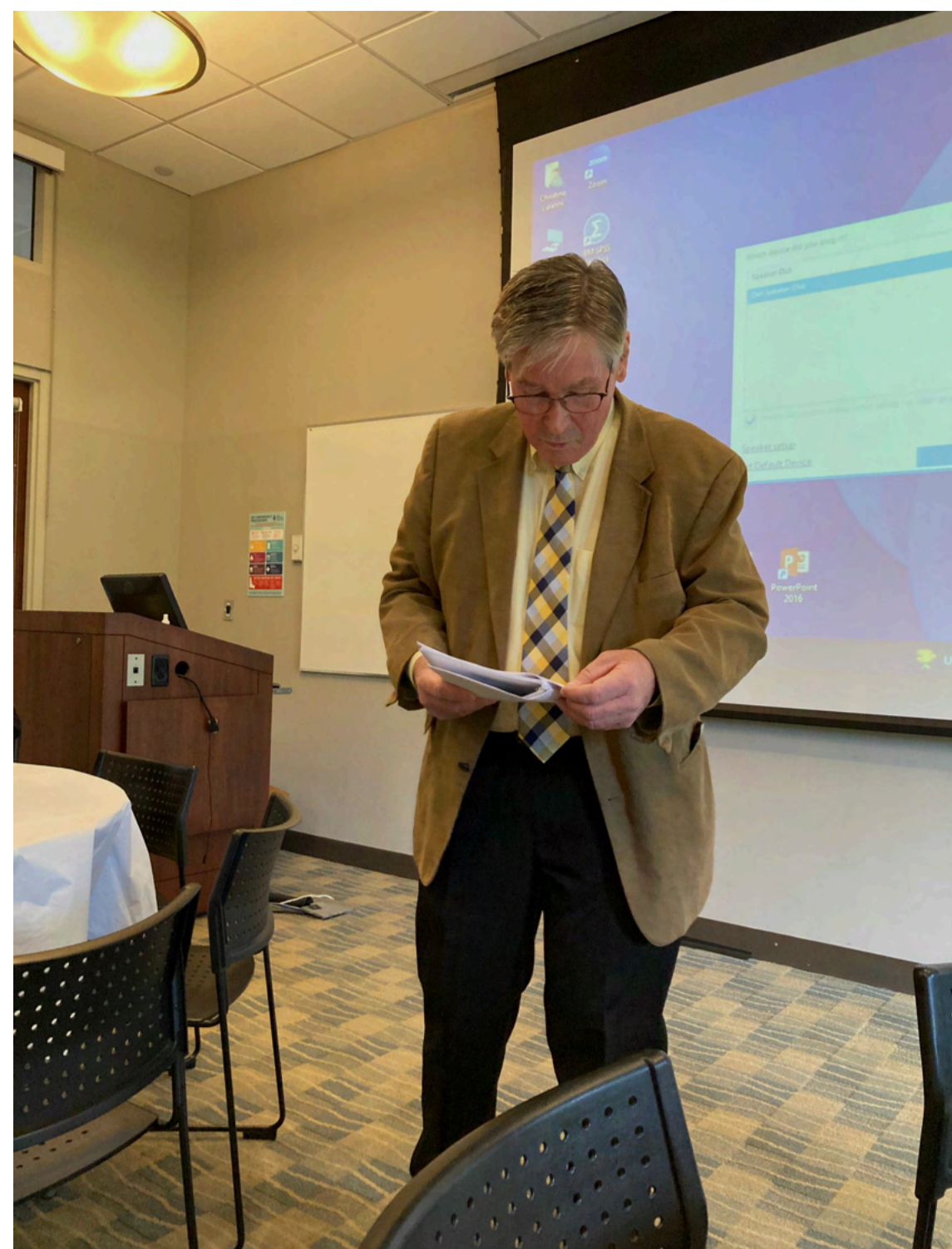
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# Seminars



My mission is to share a vitally important scientific discovery with you to empower you as you encounter the critical challenges of your life. That mission has led to my developing a program of educational seminars which can easily be tailored to the specific needs and interests of your group. Typically, I give presentations lasting one, two, or three hours. These durations are ideal for a single class conveying a general overview of the psychospiritual field (e.g. as a guest lecturer or speaker) or for a more in-depth discussion (e.g. a keynote address or an in-service training).

The focus of each seminar can also be modified to fit the specific interests of a given audience. Generally, my seminars cover the following five themes, with the depth of coverage adjusted for the duration of the presentation and the interests of the audience.

## Theme 1

The dramatic increase in suicide, addiction, depression, and anxiety in American society is discussed as a reflection of what Viktor Frankl described as an “existential vacuum” associated with a relative absence of meaning and purpose. As the traditional social supports of organized religion and patriotism wane, and as our universities teach a nihilistic belief that life is random and meaningless, our younger adults are left with an inner void and a sense of growing despair. Hence, a recent survey suggested that some 47% of adults 18 to 37 years of age felt they were so stressed most days they couldn’t function and 50% reported having a mental health diagnosis.

## Theme 2

The empirical evidence over the past fifty years of research has overwhelmingly demonstrated how spirituality is associated with longevity and emotional well-being, and this research is presented in some detail. Several studies have reported an approximate 25% reduction in all-cause mortality associated with regular religious service attendance. At the same time, numerous studies have demonstrated that spirituality buffers against depression, suicide, addiction, and anxiety.

## Theme 3

The integrative biopsychosocial-spiritual model of personality and psychopathology is presented as a way of understanding spirituality as a vitally important dimension of human functioning not better accounted for by biological, psychological, or social processes. In this sense, spirituality is discussed as a genetically-influenced human capacity, associated with neurological substrate in the brain, which helps us function more effectively in facing life’s challenges.

## Theme 4

Our spiritual core – our spiritual identity, meaning, and life purpose – enables us to adaptively experience failure, loss, illness, despair, and even the prospect of our own mortality with dignity and grace as we pursue our life goals. Our spiritual worldview is discussed as engendering powerful motivation to transcend pain and suffering for the sake of a purpose or meaning beyond ourselves, perhaps our children, our social justice commitments, or our growth toward God. This spiritual model of transformational change is applied to the issues of depression, anxiety, suicide, and addiction.

## Theme 5

Research and theory have suggested four steps we can all take to nurture and develop our spiritual core in order to enhance our motivation and strength in facing life challenges. These steps are discussed with the caveat that they don’t require we adopt any particular set of religious beliefs. Rather, they require that we take an active role in crystallizing our spiritual identity and in understanding how that identity impacts, and is impacted by, our interactions with the universe and with each other.

Again, while these five themes are usually touched upon in my seminars, specific audiences may be more interested in certain topics and each seminar can readily be tailored to a given group’s needs.

If you would like to discuss planning a seminar for your class, organization, or congregation, please contact me using the website’s [Contact page](#). I would be happy to help you plan an engaging and rewarding presentation for your group, and to review fee arrangements.



## Selected Presentations

9/30/2023

Presentation entitled “The History of Our Psy.D. Program” delivered at the 10<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Celebration of Saint Elizabeth University’s Counseling Psychology Psy.D. Program, Saint Elizabeth University, Morristown, NJ.

5/1/2017

Workshop presentation entitled “Integrating Spirituality into Clinical Practice: A Social Work Cultural Imperative”. National Association of Social Workers – New Jersey Annual Conference, Borgata Hotel & Casino, Atlantic City, NJ. Workshop co-presented with Ann Russell Carr, LCSW.

3/28/2014

Workshop presentation entitled “Collaboration in International Service Learning Experiences in the Dominican Republic”. New Jersey League for Nursing Convention, Tropicana Casino & Resort, Atlantic City, NJ. Workshop co-presented with Eileen Specchio, Ph.D., RN, Lynne McEnroe, MSN, RN, and Josephine Sanchez, MSN, RN.

4/21/2012

Workshop presentation entitled “The Unconscious God and Spiritual Autobiography”. Workshop part of CSE Center for Ministry and Spirituality’s Spirituality Convocation, College of Saint Elizabeth, Morristown, NJ.

9/23/2011

Workshop presentation entitled “Conflict Management: Challenges and Strategies for Health Care Environments”. Workshop part of Atlantic Health System Physician Leadership Program. Program took place at the College of Saint Elizabeth, Morristown, NJ.

7/16/2011

Participated in a Round Table Discussion on “Spirituality in Teaching, Scholarship and Service” moderated by Paul LaChance, Ph.D. Round Table took place at the College of Saint Elizabeth, Morristown, NJ.

4/18/2009

Presentation entitled “Men and the Junkyard Dog: Managing Stress” given at the Presbyterian Church of Morristown, Morristown, NJ.

11/7/2008

Workshop presentation entitled “Spirituality in Psychotherapy”. Workshop part of CSE Center for Theological and Spiritual Development’s Pastoral Conference, College of Saint Elizabeth, Morristown, NJ.

4/12/2008

Workshop presentation entitled “Steps Toward Forgiveness”. Workshop part of CSE Center for Theological and Spiritual Development’s Spirituality Convocation. Workshop co-presented with Paul LaChance, Ph.D., College of Saint Elizabeth, Morristown, NJ.

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By Thomas C. Barrett - August 10, 2024

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- Points to Ponder
- Writing
- Seminars
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