

Spirituality in Health: Interdisciplinary Dialogue and Practice



Date: 21-22 May 2026

Venue: Durham University – Mountjoy Centre Event Space and The Botanic Garden

This interdisciplinary event brings academics and practitioners together to examine how ‘spirituality’ can be broadly conceived.

Bringing together academics and practitioner-scholars from across disciplines, this symposium critically explores how ‘spirituality’ is encountered, understood, researched, and lived, particularly where it resists conventional disciplinary language. Through cross-disciplinary dialogue and embodied experiential workshops led by scholar-practitioners and invited external practitioners, participants will engage with both theoretical and practice-based perspectives.

The symposium aims to foster a shared, critically informed understanding of spirituality in health contexts that is meaningful across disciplines and religious traditions, as well as to explore possibilities for future research collaboration.



This event is funded by Flourish at Durham and is organised by the Spirituality, Health and Wellbeing research theme of the Institute for Medical Humanities.



Programme

Thursday 21 May

09.15–09.30 **Coffee**

09.30–09.40 **Welcome**

Dr Sitna Quiroz – Assistant Professor, Department of Theology and Religion, Durham University

09.40–10.40

Opening Lecture: Patient Centred Spirituality in Psychiatry

Professor Chris Cook – Emeritus Professor in the Department of Theology and Religion, Durham University

Chair: Dr Adam Powell

10.40–11.00 **BREAK**

11.00–11.45

Panel 1: Spirituality in Biomedical Contexts

Chair: Dr Adam Powell

Mindfulness in the Deep End

Jonathan Coates – GP and Associate Professor in Practice at the Institute for Medical Humanities

Professor Vincent Deary – Professor of applied health psychology, Northumbria University

Dr Michael Vine – Postdoctoral Research Associate, Durham University

Spirituality after a brush with death: How do the non-religious make sense of a near-death experience and how does this shape their wellbeing?

Dr Alex Fry – Senior Lecturer in Social Sciences, Bournemouth University

11.45–12.00 **BREAK**



Programme

Thursday 21 May

12.00–13.00

Panel 2: Embodiment, Healing and Spirituality

Chair: Dr Arya Thampuran

Examining the Body as Ancestral Shrine: Toward Healing through African Cosmivision

Mmabatho Montse – Independent Scholar-Practitioner

When Care Becomes Ritual: Embodied Spirituality in Hospice Aromatherapy Practice

Dr Andrea Lambell – Postdoctoral Fellow and Co-Director of the Wolfson Institute

Temazcal ceremony as a healing source in Mexico City

Andrea Olmos – PhD student in Sociology and Anthropology, Durham University

13.00–14.00 **LUNCH**

14.00–16.00

Experiential Session 1 | Venue: The Botanic Garden

Chair: Dr Sitna Quiroz

Forest bathing: A sensory Pathway to Health and Wellbeing

Rosalind Beaumont – Interdisciplinary Training Lead in the Institute of Advanced Study, Durham University

14.30–16.00

Experiential Session 2 | Venue: Mountjoy Event Space

Chair: Dr Fran Cettl

Architectures of Disconnection: Reclaiming Spirituality as the ‘Connective Tissue’ of Healthcare

Michael Atkinson – Senior Lecturer in Medical Education, University of Sunderland



Programme

Thursday 21 May

16.00–16.15 **BREAK**

16.15–17.00 **Panel 3: Reconfiguring Spiritual Traditions in Health Contexts**

Chair: Dr Fran Cettl

Go and Wash Your Bowl: ‘Constructive Living’ and Japanese Buddhist Spirituality

Alex Gooch – Assistant Professor (Education) & Foundation Programme Lead (Arts & Humanities) in the Durham Centre for Academic Development (DCAD)

What Does Tradition Look Like in Spiritual Health Practices? An Observation From Taiwan and Northeast England

Chung-Yen Cheng – PhD student in the Department of Geography, Durham University

18.30 **DINNER – The Cosy Club**



Programme

Friday 22 May

09.15–09.30 **Coffee**

09.30–11.00

Experiential Session 3 | Venue: Mountjoy Event Space

Chair: Dr Sitna Quiroz

Ancestors: Reaching out to a disembodied resource

Kathryn Edwards – Independent Practitioner

11.00–11.20 **BREAK**

11.20–13.00

Experiential Session 4 | Venue: Mountjoy Event Space

Chair: Dr Arya Thampuran

Transgenerational Trauma and Spirituality in Systemic Constellations

Dr Sitna Quiroz – Assistant Professor, Department of Theology and Religion,
Durham University

13.00–14.00 **LUNCH**



Programme

Friday 22 May

14.00–14.45 **Panel 4: Neurodiverse Spiritualities**

Chair: Dr Adam Powell

Spirituality begins with listening

Rie Sinclair – Independent composer/musician

Autism, Language and the Grammars of Theology

Professor Grant Macaskill – Lightfoot Professor of Divinity, Durham University

14.45–15.05 **BREAK**

15.05–15.35

Feedback Loop

Mary Robson – Senior Creative Facilitation Manager in the IMH, Durham University



List of Abstracts

Listed in order of presentation

Patient Centred Spirituality in Psychiatry

Professor Chris Cook

The Royal College of Psychiatrists advocates a person-centred holistic model of psychiatry in which the patient is treated as a whole person, body, mind and spirit. This involves taking into account the impact of culture, religion, and social systems. The concept of spirituality in relation to clinical practice will be explored by way of two, contrasting, case studies. In practice, spirituality is inextricably entangled with the psychological and good clinical care requires an understanding of both. This is not to say that the relationship between the two is uncontroversial and some of the professional concerns, around boundaries, epistemic injustice, and the complex relationship between spirituality and religion, will be considered.

Mindfulness in the Deep End

Jonathan Coates, Professor Vincent Deary & Dr Michael Vine

Patients living in deprived communities are more likely to come to harm from inappropriate medicalisation, in particular in the fields of mental health and persistent pain. Working in a GP Practice serving an area of high blanket deprivation (a 'Deep End' Practice), we find that evidence-based non-medical interventions such as Mindfulness-based Interventions (MBI) are neither accessible nor acceptable to patients, which increases medicalisation and its attendant iatrogenic harm.

We conducted ethnographic research on a GP-led MBI which was designed to overcome barriers to uptake: 1) Delivered in a local venue, by the patients' usual GP (JC) and a Psychologist (VD) 2) Broad inclusion criteria (many patients are excluded from MBI on the grounds of complexity or risk) 3) The courses were described in medical terms in an attempt to legitimise the intervention to patients with a medicalised interpretation of their distress.

We will describe our findings, which can be summarised as follows: 1) The coexistence of an instrumentalised view of the practice (framed as symptom control) and a more expansive 'spiritual' framing (touching on compassion, gratitude, grace). 2) The GP's reflections on having these more expansive, human discussions, in contrast to their usual interactions with patients. 3) Early findings from ethnographic and interview data about the experiences of patients.

Spirituality after a brush with death: How do the non-religious make sense of a near-death experience and how does this shape their wellbeing?

Dr Alex Fry

Near-death experiences (NDEs) are experiences associated with death or impending death. Those who have an NDE report substantial changes to how they experience life after a period of apparent disembodied consciousness during clinical death. They also report viewing the world in a radically different way post-NDE. Such a shift in worldview has profound implications for individuals' wellbeing—the equilibrium between challenging events and the ability to deal with them—often causing distress. Near-death survivors thus undergo meaning-making to understand their experience as meaning-making can be beneficial for their wellbeing.

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This involves drawing on different culturally-embedded belief systems and, in the Anglophone West, includes self-spirituality, an eclectic form of belief that draws on elements from a range of worldviews and incorporates them into a bespoke belief system. This paper therefore reports how NDEs come to shape the way non-religious near-death survivors formulate a new worldview and the impact that this has on their wellbeing. To do so, it will compare a thematic analysis of 17 semi-structured interviews with UK citizens and inhabitants, and 16 semi-structured interviews with US citizens and inhabitants, who have had a near-death experience.

Examining the Body as Ancestral Shrine: Toward Healing through African Cosmivision

Mmabatho Montse

This paper explores how spirituality emerges in healing practices grounded in African cosmivision, focusing on the Nguni concept of Umsamo—the ancestral shrine housed within the home as a site of communication between the living and the ancestors. In this work, Umsamo extends beyond the domestic shrine to encompass the body itself, understood as a living site of ancestral presence and relational memory. This orientation situates healing within the domain of biospirituality, where the nervous system, perception, spiritual life, and ecological relations are inseparable dimensions of human existence. Drawing on Africana Womanist autoethnography, the paper examines how disruptions in relational and ecological life become embodied across generations. Such disturbances manifest through epigenetic inheritance and metaphysical memory transmission, processes through which ancestral experiences shape bodily perception, emotional life, and meaning-making. Within this cosmology, the body functions as Umsamo, an archive through which ancestral memory, ecological disturbance, and possibilities for renewal are carried forward. Healing, therefore, entails restoring the right relation between body and ecology. By bringing African cosmological perspectives into interdisciplinary conversations on spirituality, health, and wellbeing, the paper expands understandings of healing, memory, and relational life lived through the body.

When Care Becomes Ritual: Embodied Spirituality in Hospice Aromatherapy Practice

Dr Andrea Lambell

This paper draws on my 14 years working as a hospice aromatherapist, where the heart of the work lay in small, attentive rituals of care. Blending oils, preparing the space, adjusting touch, and settling into a shared quiet often created a sense of safety that allowed people to express things they struggled to voice elsewhere. During massage and aromatherapy, clients spoke about fears, hopes, memories, and moments that felt deeply meaningful or “beyond language”. For those who had lost speech or found communication difficult, these feelings emerged instead through their bodies: a softened jaw, an easing breath, a hand finally releasing tension.

These rituals of care often carried a spiritual quality – not necessarily religious, but rooted in connection, awareness, and presence. They offered clients a way to feel recognised and held, and they offered me a way to meet them beyond clinical conversation. Although aromatherapy is sometimes labelled as “CAM”, in hospice practice it was complementary rather than alternative, a form of relational care sitting alongside mainstream treatments rather than replacing them.

What stayed with me were these quiet, embodied encounters where something shifted, however gently. They invite us to think about how simple, sensory, relational practices can support spiritual wellbeing in health settings.



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Temazcal ceremony as a healing source in Mexico City

Andrea Olmos

This project seeks to explore how narratives are shaped around the traditional Mesoamerican sweat lodge among practitioners in Mexico City. Grounded in a constructivist paradigm, it will examine how participants experience and interpret the practice. In contrast to hegemonic medical models, the temazcal reflects an Indigenous worldview where health depends on the connection between body, mind, spirit, community, and nature. Using qualitative methods such as participant observation and interviews, the research analyses how this practice is resignified, reinterpreted and negotiated in urban Mexico.

Forest bathing: A sensory Pathway to Health and Wellbeing

Rosalind Beaumont

Forest Bathing (*Shinrin-yoku*) is a well-evidenced, mindful sensory practice that involves immersing oneself in the forest atmosphere to improve health and wellbeing. Strong links exist between nature connection practices such as forest bathing and the development of more eco-centric mindsets and pro-environmental behaviours. Developing a sense of being in and of nature, with opportunities to experience awe, gratitude, and a sense of (inter) connection with 'the more than human', may enhance the spiritual dimension of health. This workshop will briefly introduce forest bathing before offering participants the opportunity to engage in slow, sensory-oriented invitations in an outdoor location.

Architectures of Disconnection: Reclaiming Spirituality as the 'Connective Tissue' of Healthcare

Michael Atkinson

In a modern healthcare landscape defined by rising disconnection, burnout, and moral injury, spiritual practices are frequently offered as individual palliatives rather than systemic solutions. One could argue that fragmentation within healthcare systems is not accidental, but a deliberate (if unconscious) design feature. This workshop reframes spirituality, moving it away from the purely personal realm and positioning it as the functional "connective tissue" required to hold a fractured system together. By shifting our gaze from the individual "body" to the "urban organism," we will address disconnection as a structural failure and explore "connection" as a Mandalic design principle. Participants will engage in creative design-thinking and mindfulness-based inquiry to envision new systems of healthcare that promote human and ecological flourishing.

Go and Wash Your Bowl: 'Constructive Living' and Japanese Buddhist Spirituality

Alex Gooch

This paper will discuss a therapeutic modality called 'Constructive Living' (CL), which was influential in past decades, primarily in the US, but which has more recently fallen from visibility. CL is explicitly rooted in Japanese Zen and Pure Land Buddhist spirituality. However, unlike many contemporary therapeutic modalities with Buddhist roots, CL derives its therapeutic strategies primarily from the ethical teachings and practices of the Buddhist traditions, rather than foregrounding meditation or 'mindfulness' as we commonly understand it.

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The paper will introduce the core tenets and practices of CL as presented by its founder, David K. Reynolds; it will also consider the influences on CL of Reynolds' acknowledged Japanese sources, Zen-oriented psychologist Morita Shoma and Jodo Shinshu priest Yoshimoto Ishin, and of the Buddhist traditions that these two individuals represent. The paper will then consider the particular value of CL's rather challenging Buddhist ethical orientation in the contemporary cultural context. It will also take the example of CL as a starting point for consideration of the broader relationship between spirituality and ethics, and of the value of maintaining this ethical orientation when spiritual practices are brought into medical and therapeutic contexts.

What Does Tradition Look Like in Spiritual Health Practices? An Observation From Taiwan and Northeast England

Chung-Yen Cheng

This paper argues that traditions of spiritual health practices are formed through bodily encounters in the here and now as well as through engagement with classical texts and the 'masters' in their discipline. I draw my findings from fieldwork on qi-based treatments in Taiwan and Northeast England, such as Reiki, Tai Chi, and Chinese massage, which, I argue, are spiritual because qi is an ethereal life force. I find that practitioners' understanding of qi and its related health practices is syncretic. Practitioners may have studied under masters, but that gradually becomes a device they use to claim authority while they come up with their own interpretations or take inspiration from fragmented online sources. From the perspective of users or patients, their experience is even less influenced by established traditions. Instead, their understandings are based on bodily encounters with their peers or practitioners. The ordinariness and spontaneity of these embodied experiences contrast with literature that views such experience as inscriptions of texts and 'cultures' (Hsu, 2008). In the end, I will discuss whether the seeming lack of tradition in these spiritual health practices makes them susceptible to co-optation by people with an agenda, such as conspiracy theorists.

Ancestors: Reaching out to a disembodied resource

Kathryn Edwards

Social pressures to avoid public expressions of grief often leave individuals to contend with this rollercoaster alone; our fear of its powerful actual or imagined manifestations can lead to repression. Having noted 'modern' people's burdens of unexpressed grief, the indigenous African teacher, Dr Malidoma Somé, devised a Grief Ritual as a vehicle for our communal catharsis. The ritual accommodates any/all faith stances, since its structural elements may be viewed as metaphors. From an indigenous or animist perspective, the human context of such an event is two enmeshed communities: participants and the Ancestors. Modern Western cultures do not display dynamic engagement with Ancestors, yet when encouraged to do so, we note that ritual participants often step into a meaningful encounter. This workshop offers the opportunity to co-construct and contemplate a modern Ancestors' altar to explore what might arise.

In preparation for this workshop, participants are invited to bring photos of their ancestors (NB: photos should not include any still-living people), and/or small mementoes or items inherited from them. Additionally, if participants are moved to do so, they are invited to bring red cloths (such as scarves and shawls), preferably made of natural materials.



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Transgenerational Trauma and Spirituality in Systemic Constellations

Dr Sitna Quiroz

This session will introduce participants to Family or Systemic Constellations, a therapeutic modality rooted in Zulu cosmology and Western psychotherapy that addresses what practitioners call 'hidden' relational patterns or dynamics, including transgenerational trauma. Having remained on the periphery of psychotherapeutic practice for many years, this modality has recently gained increasing popularity worldwide, including in the UK. Although it is not formally conceived as a spiritual practice, clients and practitioners in the UK alike often describe their experience of it as having a spiritual quality. This workshop aims to encourage participants to reflect on which elements of this practice might illuminate our understanding of the 'spiritual' in therapeutic contexts, with a specific focus on the role of embodiment and the senses.

Spirituality begins with listening

Rie Sinclair

Music and sound have always offered a path toward something deeper. Long before we had language for it, the sounds of the living world around us stirred something within: that quiet sense that everything is connected, across time as much as space. Listening is perhaps the first act of spirituality we are capable of, even before we take our first breath.

This artist-led paper will reflect upon Pond Life, curated encounters with life in one of nature's most overlooked sanctuaries: the pond. Pond Life is a collection of recordings that capture the sub-surface sounds of freshwater pools in urban areas, sounds that are typically unheard by human ears but that can be accessed through careful use of technology. The use of such technology can never be mechanical, however, because the technology itself does not discern the relationships between things, the differences and the connections, the resonances and the dissonance. That requires true listening. These recordings are presently available to stream online, but they are intended to form a key part of a collaborative, immersive exhibition bringing together sound recordists, biologists, entomologists, artists, and designers. Through listening stations filled with collected soundscapes, scaled-up wonderlands for children to explore, and thoughtful displays of sustainable materials, Pond Life invites us to reconnect with the natural world, with each other, and with ourselves.

Autism, Language and the Grammars of Theology

Professor Grant Macaskill

This paper will introduce the core themes of my emergent work on autism/neurodiversity and theolinguistics. Recognizing the need to move beyond the limitations of the "social model" of autism by considering a more thoroughly "cultural" model, this work will explore the constitutive significance of religion and language for autistic ontologies. This exploration lays the groundwork for a more extensive reflection on how the grammars of theology relate to autism. Those grammars—those orderings of words and concepts—can participate in the normalcies that critical neurodiversity studies recognizes and challenges, projecting neurotypicality onto the ideal of God or of the faithful community and using language in a way that corresponds to this. But they can also contribute to the destabilising of those very normalcies—affirming the otherness of the true God, and the strangeness of the community that participates in the divine life—by acts of language that resist expectation. The project will be particularly attentive to those features of the New Testament, part of the sacred scriptures of the Christian community, that articulate such grammatical creativity, and will reflect on how these theolinguistics might speak to the bigger task of the medical humanities.



Speaker bios

Listed in order of presentation

Christopher Cook is Emeritus Professor in the Institute for Medical Humanities at Durham University, and Honorary Chaplain for Tees, Esk & Wear Valleys NHS Foundation Trust. From 1997 to 2003 he was Professor of the Psychiatry of Alcohol Misuse at the University of Kent. He was ordained as an Anglican priest in 2001. Chris was Professor of Spirituality, Theology & Health in the Department of Theology & Religion, and Director of the Centre for Spirituality, Theology & Health, at Durham University from 2012-2022. He has served two terms as Chair of the Spirituality & Psychiatry Special Interest Group at the Royal College of Psychiatrists and was Co-Chair of the Section on Religion & Spirituality at the World Psychiatric Association from 2022-2023. His book publications include: *Hearing Voices, Demonic and Divine* (2018), and *Christians Hearing Voices* (2020). He was lead editor of *Spirituality and Psychiatry*, second edition (2023).

Jonathan Coates is a GP in Newcastle, an Associate Professor in Practice at the IMH and a mindfulness teacher. He is interested in health inequalities, persistent physical symptoms, and the ways in which biomedicine responds to psychosocial distress.

Vincent Deary is Professor of applied health psychology at Northumbria University Newcastle, where his research focuses on the development of new psychosocial interventions for people with a variety of health complaints, including long-term conditions, cancer survivors and fear of falling in older adults. As a clinician, he worked for 10 years in the UK's first trans-diagnostic fatigue clinic and continues to supervise clinical practice in this area. His current research focus is on rest and restoration. He is the author of *How We Are* and *How We Break* (the first two books in the *How to Live* trilogy, published by Penguin Allen Lane). He is now working on the final volume called *How We Mend*.

Michael Vine is a Postdoctoral Researcher in Health Inequalities at Durham University's Institute for Medical Humanities. He is interested in the primary care clinic as a space of social and ethical negotiation and in supporting new conversations between anthropology and medicine.

Alex Fry is a Senior Lecturer in Social Sciences at Bournemouth University, where his work focuses on the intersections between belief systems (whether religious or otherwise) and health and wellbeing. He was funded via the Explaining Atheism project to explore the relationship between near-death experiences, worldview and wellbeing amongst the non-religious. He is currently developing this work as a Visiting Fellow at the Institute for Medical Humanities.



Speaker bios

Mmabatho Montse is an Africana Womanist scholar-practitioner, social entrepreneur, and initiate of the Nguni traditions of Ubungoma. She holds a Master's degree in Governance and Public Policy from the Wits School of Governance. Her academic and transdisciplinary work explores the intersections of decoloniality, African Indigenous Knowledge Systems (IKS), and Africana metaphysics, with a particular focus on ancestral healing, metaphysical repair, and relational ethics. Her work addresses the psycho-spiritual consequences of colonialism, racial capitalism, and systemic dispossession. Mmabatho is the founder and host of Conscious Conversations, a transdisciplinary educational platform and podcast that convenes scholars, practitioners, and community leaders across the globe to engage themes of education, spirituality, and social justice.

Andrea Lambell is a postdoctoral fellow and Co-Director of the Wolfson Institute. She was born and bred in County Durham. She came to Durham University in 2018 after previous careers in the North-East as a regional journalist and as a member of an interdisciplinary clinical team, providing complementary therapies in palliative care. While she worked for the hospice, she completed an interdisciplinary Open University BSc (Hons) degree. At Durham, she gained an MA in Research Methods (Anthropology) and a PhD in Medical Anthropology, investigating the effects of PPE and distancing on health and social care communication during the Covid-19 pandemic and the consequences for those affected.

Andrea Olmos is a second-year PhD student in Sociology and Anthropology, specialising in the study of traditional medicine and spiritual healing practices in contemporary contexts such as Mexico City.

Rosalind Beaumont is an Interdisciplinary Training Lead in the Institute of Advanced Study at Durham University. With extensive expertise in postgraduate researcher development and academic practice, her work focuses on the intersection of wellbeing, professional identity, and holistic growth within higher education. Alongside her role in supporting interdisciplinary doctoral students and supervisory teams, Rosalind is undertaking a part-time MSc in Sustainability and Behaviour Change. Combining these areas together with her work as a yoga teacher and nature connection facilitator, she is now exploring the intersection of nature, health & wellbeing, and pro-environmental behaviours.

Michael Atkinson is a Senior Lecturer in Medical Education at the University of Sunderland's School of Medicine, a British Association for Mindfulness-Based Approaches (BAMBA)-registered mindfulness teacher, as well as a podcaster and writer. With over 25 years of experience as a meditation practitioner, his work brings together secular mindfulness, contemplative wisdom, and philosophy. In his university role, Michael chairs the School of Medicine's Annual Medical Education Conference, helps lead the Master of Medical Education programme, and lectures on mindfulness to both undergraduate and postgraduate students. He serves as Co-Chair of the Mindfulness in Medical Education (MiME) Special Interest Group for the Association for the Study of Medical Education (ASME), and sits on BAMBA's Professional Standards Advisory Board (PSAB). His scholarly work focuses on teacher education, mindfulness pedagogy, medical education, well-being, and medical ethics.



Speaker bios

Alex Gooch has been teaching at Durham University for many years; he's currently Lead for Arts and Humanities on the pre-undergraduate Foundation Programme. He's also Assistant Chaplain at St Mary's College, and a certified Philosophical Counsellor in private practice.

Chung-Yen Cheng is a Human Geography PhD student, developing research on people's experience with qi-based holistic medicine in Northeast England and Taiwan, where he is from. Some qi-based holistic practices explored include Tai Chi, Yin Yoga, and massage. One fun fact about him – though he wants to know what qi feels like in the context of holistic therapies, he has not felt its existence so far, nor has he identified his feelings during therapies as a spiritual experience.

Kathryn Edwards has combined a career in storytelling – eliciting and editing intellectual capital in professional services businesses – with work as a ritualist. She has been involved in funerals for three decades, deepening her academic perspective via an MSc (2008) at Bath University's Centre for Death & Society. In a life-changing encounter with Dr Malidoma Somé and the indigenous wisdom of Africa, she learned experientially how ritual and community are interconnected. She studied the theory and practice of radical ritual with Malidoma for over 20 years and went to weep at his funeral in Burkina Faso, West Africa, in 2022.

Sitna Quiroz is an Assistant Professor in the Study of Religion and a social anthropologist whose research and teaching examine the intersections of Indigenous spiritual traditions and Christianity in Postcolonial Contexts with a focus on Africa and Latin America. Her current research interests focus on emerging spiritualities and the colonial cosmological entanglements within secular therapeutic spaces in the UK. Aside from her academic work, she has trained as a somatic coach and a Systemic Constellations practitioner. She is currently completing advanced-level training in Systemic Constellations.

Rie Sinclair is an Emmy-nominated songwriter and producer, whose work features on shows like *Ghost Whisperer*, *The Vampire Diaries*, *Californication* and *Dirt*. She runs the independent label, I Miss You Records, which hosts her own releases and her educational projects, such as The Wonder Club and the Pond Life project.

Grant Macaskill is the Lightfoot Professor of Divinity at Durham University. He previously taught at the University of Aberdeen, where he co-founded the Centre for Autism and Theology. He is the author of *The New Testament and Intellectual Humility* (Oxford University Press, 2018) and *Autism and the Church: Bible, Theology and Community* (Baylor University Press, 2019).



About the organisers

Spirituality in Health: Interdisciplinary Dialogue and Practice is funded by Flourish at Durham and is organised by the Spirituality, Health and Wellbeing research theme of the Institute for Medical Humanities. The event has been organised by Sitna Quiroz, Fran Cettl, Adam Powell, Arya Thampuran, and Loretta Lou.

The **Spirituality, Health and Wellbeing research theme** is led by Sitna Quiroz (Theology and Religion), Arya Thampuran (English Studies), Adam Powell (Theology and Religion), Loretta Lou (Anthropology) and Fran Cettl (Durham Centre for Academic Development). The research in this strand engages critically with contemporary understandings of spirituality and its links with health and well-being across different religious traditions and historical contexts. It examines emerging and existing practices that turn towards the 'spiritual', including those drawing on non-Western and Indigenous traditions, to ask how and whether they challenge dominant health paradigms. It also questions and unsettles assumptions that health is a personal responsibility to restore productivity within a capitalist system.

tinyurl.com/spirituality-health-wellbeing

The Institute for Medical Humanities (IMH) at Durham University coordinates and supports research on the lived experience of health and illness, with a focus on what we call 'hidden experience'. Through interdisciplinary investigations spanning three university faculties and drawing in colleagues from English Studies, Theology, History, Geography, Anthropology, Sociology, Sport and Exercise Science and Psychology, among others, we are developing and expanding research projects on topics including trauma, post-natal depression, addiction, deafness, dreams, hallucinations, touch, memory, weather, menopause, and anxiety.

IMH are also responsible for the delivery of the Discovery Research Platform for Medical Humanities, funded by Wellcome, which brings together humanities and social sciences researchers, people with lived experience and people working in different sectors to co-develop new and experimental approaches to tackling health challenges.

tinyurl.com/institute-medical-humanities

Flourish at Durham seeks to make research fun, fulfilling and fruitful for our communities. It was initiated with the aim of ensuring the best environment possible for all those involved in research at Durham to develop and thrive. We aim to support our community of researchers, technicians and those who lead, manage and administer research to thrive and develop flourishing careers.

tinyurl.com/flourish-at-durham