



# Counseling Troubled Older Adults: A Handbook for Pastors and Religious Caregivers

*Harold G. Koenig*

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"*Counseling Troubled Older Adults* is designed to be a pastoral care text for those in training for pastoral ministry as well as a useful resource casebook for those engaged in pastoral work with older persons. The book addresses mental health problems commonly found among elderly people. Part 2 is presented in case vignette format in much the same style used to train mental health professionals. The case vignettes employ a multidisciplinary approach, integrating current clinical knowledge in psychology, psychiatry, medicine, pastoral care, family therapy, and social work with the latest advances in research on how individuals utilize religion to help them cope with emotional distress in later life. This book is written for persons of all faiths, with a sensitivity to the multicultural reality of North America. The authors are both committed Christians who work as specialists in mental health. Dr. Koenig is a geriatric psychiatrist and researcher in religion and mental health. Dr. Weaver is a clinical psychologist and ordained United Methodist minister who has served rural and urban parishes."

"This book is designed so that the reader may quickly and easily locate information about different mental and emotional conditions for which older persons and their families seek help. It is a practical guide on how to assess problems and what to do about them..." (excerpts from the authors' "How to Use This Book")

"One of the many institutions being called upon to help care for the nation's elderly is the religious establishment. That there are dynamic and intricate relationships between aging, religion, and health can no longer be denied or overlooked. Indeed, much contemporary research demonstrates overwhelmingly that religion and aging are for many American citizens interwoven realities, often of life-and-death proportion. Standing at the interface of religion and aging is a cadre of caregivers--physicians, specialists in geriatrics, nurses, psychologists, psychiatrists, social workers, professional counselors, clergy, and mental health specialists of many kinds."

"The particular focus of this volume is on pastors and other religious caregivers and the roles they might play in this 'new business' of a nation of older persons, many of whom find this developmental phase of life difficult to negotiate. Their difficulties, as the authors show, take sundry forms--depression, anxiety, substance dependency, psychoses, abuse, and so on. And, sooner or later, all must deal with what some existentialist philosophers and psychologists claim to be the base of most, if not all, of our human dilemmas--death and dying." (excerpts from the Preface by Orlo C. Strunk, Jr.)

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