



Making Meaning: Conceptual Frameworks For Responding To Illness And Suffering

Please be aware of and support participant diversity

Christian:	The fundamentalist message – suffering as a punishment from God for a sin
New Age:	Suffering is a lesson. You have brought suffering into your life to learn what you need to know to continue your evolution
Medical:	Suffering based on illness is a biophysical disorder based on biophysical factors.
Karmic:	Nonvirtuous past actions have brought on this suffering as a purgation
Psychological:	Repressed emotions cause illness – Covid’s lethality as a death wish
Gnostic:	Suffering is illusion; Spirit and union with the One is the only reality
Existential:	Suffering is without meaning. I am solely responsible for the meaning I choose to give it
Holistic:	Illness is a product of Physical, Psychological, Mental and Emotional factors combined; none can be regarded in isolation.
Magical:	Suffering is retribution, “I deserve this for wishing bad things on people”
Buddhist:	Suffering is an inescapable part of the manifest world. To ask, “Why suffer?” is to ask, “Why air?”
Scientific:	Illness and suffering has a specific cause, or cluster of causes; some determined, others random.