



CSCW 2024 Panel

# **(Un)Designing AI** *for Mental and Spiritual Wellbeing*

**Moderator:** Jingjin Li

**Panelists:** Munmun De Choudhury, Diana Freed, Rev. George Handzo, C. Estelle Smith

**Co-authors:** Alemitu Bezabih, Brett A. Halperin, Sara Wolf, Caroline Claisse, Michael J Hoefer

# Intro: Panel Moderator

Dr. Jingjin Li  
Research Fellow  
[Almpower.org](https://Almpower.org)



# CSCW 2024 Panel:

## (Un)Designing AI for Mental & Spiritual Wellbeing

Panelist Bios & Notes: [bit.ly/CSCW2024-AI](https://bit.ly/CSCW2024-AI)



**Munmun De Choudhury, PhD**  
Associate Professor,  
School of Interactive Computing,  
Georgia Institute of Technology



**Diana Freed, PhD**  
Assistant Professor,  
Computer Science,  
Brown University



**Rev. George Handzo, BCC**  
Director of Health Services  
Research and Quality,  
HealthCare Chaplaincy Network



**C. Estelle Smith, PhD**  
Assistant Professor,  
Computer Science,  
Colorado School of Mines

# Content Warning

Panelists and slides may discuss sensitive issues and challenging life experiences related to mental illness, spiritual crisis, or death and dying.



# Collaborative **Note-Taking** & Q&A

- **Panelist bios** listed at top
- Drop Qs into the **QUESTIONS section**
- Take notes in the **NOTES section** at bottom

**Save the link** for later!

- We may write a blog post after the conference 📝
- List your email somewhere in the notes if you'd like to be involved!

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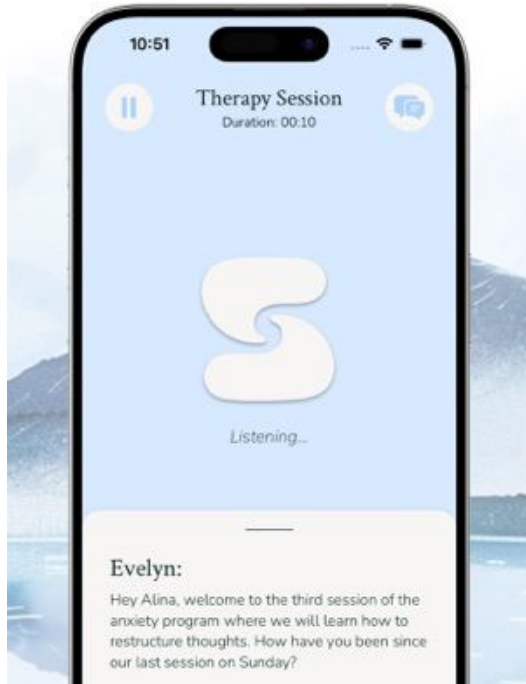


# Headlines & Public Discourse to Stoke Reflection



# Immediate Support

Try Short Advice or  
Emotional Relief  
Sessions



## Sonia's AI chatbot steps in for therapists

\*The designers didn't have mental health expertise!



# The New York Times

THE SHIFT

## *Can A.I. Be Blamed for a Teen's Suicide?*

The mother of a 14-year-old Florida boy says he became obsessed with a chatbot on Character.AI before his death.

<https://www.nytimes.com/2024/10/23/technology/characterai-lawsuit-teen-suicide/>



# YOUR END-OF-LIFE DECISIONS, PREDICTED BY AI



Illustration by Mary Delaney

**The story:** A new AI tool is being developed to make end-of-life decisions easier for family members: the personalized patient preference predictor (P4).

- So far, the system is more of a theory than a concrete product. The researchers are working out how to build the machine learning algorithms they need to make it a reality.
- The P4 works like a “digital psychological twin” predicting the decision the patient would most likely want if they could speak for themselves.
- It would be built from the patient’s personal data like medical records, text messages, and social media posts, to best predict how a person thinks and how their beliefs are formed.



July 22, 2024

## Can Artificial Intelligence Speak for Incapacitated Patients at the End of Life?

# “Unmaking” in HCI

- **Opposite of Making:** Dismantling, decomposing, or taking things apart, challenging the focus on final artifacts
- **Continuous Process:** Exists alongside making, as infrastructures and designs are constantly remade and unmade
- **Critical of Technological Progress:** Challenges the uncritical advancement of technologies and interactive artifacts

**The panel aims to collectively question and discuss what it might mean to *design, redesign, and not design* AI for mental and spiritual wellbeing.**



# **Definitions:**

## Mental Health v.s. Spiritual Care

# Mental Healthcare

v.s.

# Spiritual Care

- **Titles/credentials:** Psychiatrist, Neurologist, Psychologist, Therapist, Licensed Mental Health Counselor, Licensed Social Worker (LSW), Master of Social Work (MSW), etc.
- **Training:** Medical school, psychiatry, neurology, grad school, psychology, social work, etc.
- **Approach:** Fix, cure, prevent problems through pharmacological, behavioral, cognitive, or social interventions

- **Titles/credentials:** Board-certified chaplain (BCC), spiritual counselors or directors, palliative care, hospice nurses, etc.
- **Training:** Accredited Chaplaincy Training Programs, (Sometimes) Religious/Spiritual Faith Leadership, Masters of Divinity (M.Div), ongoing clinical education credits
- **Approach:** Non-prescriptive. (Nothing needs to change; often can't be fixed or cured.) Address basic needs for meaning and purpose; belonging and connection; loving and being loved.

# Mental Health: Psychological assessment tools

## E.g., Patient Health Questionnaire (PHQ-9) for depression

Over the <u>last 2 weeks</u> , how often have you been bothered by any of the following problems? (Use "✓" to indicate your answer)	Not at all	Several days	More than half the days	Nearly every day
1. Little interest or pleasure in doing things	0	1	2	3
2. Feeling down, depressed, or hopeless	0	1	2	3
3. Trouble falling or staying asleep, or sleeping too much	0	1	2	3
4. Feeling tired or having little energy	0	1	2	3
5. Poor appetite or overeating	0	1	2	3

(4 more rows for 9 total questions)

<https://www.apa.org/depression-guideline/patient-health-questionnaire.pdf>

# Spiritual Care: Assessment tools for spiritual needs

E.g. FICA (Faith or beliefs, Importance or Influence, Community, Address)

## Specific questions you can use to discuss these issues are:

### **F: What is your faith or belief?**

- Do you consider yourself spiritual or religious?
- What things do you believe in that give meaning to your life?

### **I: Is it important in your life?**

- What influence does it have on how you take care of yourself?
- How have your beliefs influenced your behavior during this illness?
- What role do your beliefs play in regaining your health?

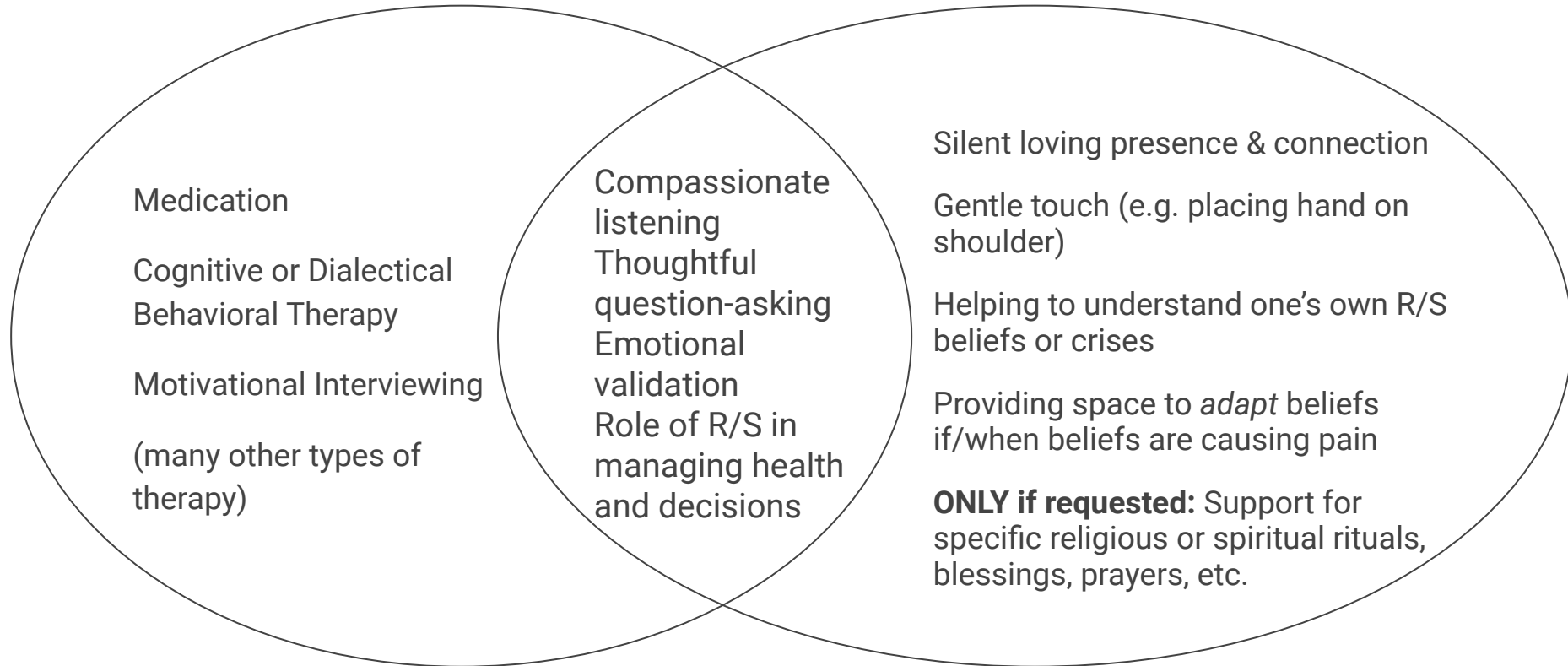
### **C: Are you part of a spiritual or religious community?**

- Is this of support to you and how?
- Is there a person or group of people you really love or who are really important to you?

### **A: How would you like me, your healthcare provider, to address these issues in your healthcare?**

# Mental Healthcare v.s. Spiritual Care

## *Example Interventions, Strategies, Techniques*



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# Topics

- Distinctions between Mental and Spiritual Healthcare
- AI Use in Clinical Decision-Making and Referral Systems
- AI in Mental & Spiritual Health Outside of Clinics (“Self-Guided” tools/apps)
- AI in Online Support Communities
- AI Predictions for Health Status in Social Media
- AI in Sensitive Communications
- AI in Spiritual Practice and Communities
- Risks, Benefits and Opportunities

**Suggest more here:**

[bit.ly/CSCW2024-AI](https://bit.ly/CSCW2024-AI)



# Shameless Plug:

Reach out to us at the SPIRITED Collective if you're interested in technology + design + religion/spirituality!

[spirited.hci@gmail.com](mailto:spirited.hci@gmail.com)

<https://spiritedhci.org>