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## Uday Jani to Lead Finding Your Spiritual Path at Lewes Library Dec. 2

Integrated medicine physician Uday Jani will explain how to take the first steps on the lifetime journey of Finding Your Spiritual Path from 3 to 4:30 p.m., Wednesday, Dec. 2, at Lewes Public Library.

People looking to find the spiritual path may start by asking themselves who are the most important people in their life; what is their ideal job if the money didn’t matter; how can they avoid a stagnant life and whether they think things happen for a reason.

Thinking about these answers begins the journey, says Uday Jani, MD, a respected internist with a fellowship in integrated medicine. While spirituality is often thought of as synonymous with religion, he views it differently. “Spirituality is not about your connection with a particular religion, but rather what imbues your life with meaning…your passion for family, art, career,” he says.

“When you are able to identify your spiritual path, you’ll find it is interwoven into every aspect of your daily life. That is why it is part of the world’s great wisdom traditions - some of the most important aspects of spirituality lie in the sense of connection and inner strength, comfort, love and peace that individuals derive from their relationship with self, others, nature and the transcendent.”

As an integrated medicine specialist, Jani considers his patients’ spiritual health an important component of their overall care, and a critical part of the patient-physician interaction. In fact, research suggests that more than 75 percent of patients would like their doctors to discuss spiritual issues as part of their care, yet only 10 to 20 percent of physicians do so. Jani notes a welcome trend that is starting to move the needle.

“Interest in incorporating spirituality into the practice of medicine is growing rapidly,” he says. According to a 2014 report in Academic Medicine, more than 75 percent of U.S. medical schools have incorporated spirituality topics into the curricula versus a handful in 1993.

The emphasis on spirituality has always been one of integrative medicine’s greatest strengths, Jani says, connecting to the patient's social, cultural and psychological environment. While it may be difficult to fully comprehend or measure using traditional scientific methods, evidence continues to grow supporting its beneficial role in the practice of medicine.

**The medical case for spiritual well-being**

Recent medical studies indicate that people who describe themselves as spiritual exhibit fewer self-destructive behaviors such as smoking, drug and alcohol abuse, even suicide. They experience less stress and a greater satisfaction with life overall. In addition, the practice of spirituality has been shown to reduce depression, improve blood pressure and boost the immune system.

“More information about the links between spirituality and good health will emerge over time, but some interesting findings in the past decade already point to the synergies between the two,” says Jani.

Spirituality is also known as a powerful source of strength when dealing with chronic illness, suffering and loss. Religious outreach groups, improving coping skills through prayer and embracing a philosophy that all things have a purpose all provide a basis for support when facing life’s challenges. “Many families find their religious beliefs and practices can help them fight feelings of helplessness, regain a sense of control, and restore meaning and order to difficult life situations,” says Jani.

He believes that physicians need to be attentive to all that is part of their patient’s experience, not just the physical. Jani says, “Healing occurs when physicians truly listen to what their patients are saying, and develop therapeutic plans that reflect those individual’s hopes, fears and beliefs.” The event is free and has been put together by Beebe Integrative Health. To register, go to [tinyurl.com/ndnyqj8](http://tinyurl.com/ndnyqj8).