Gubi P M: A qualitative exploration into how the use of prayer in counselling and psychotherapy might be ethically problematic. Counselling and Psychotherapy Research 9(2) - Routledge: 115-121, 2009.

Abstract: Aim: This research article contributes to the debate on the value and limitation of the use of spiritual strategies, like prayer, in counselling (Foskett & Lynch, 2001) by disseminating the insights that were gained from a qualitative study of mainstream counsellors whose work includes prayer. Method: Participants were 19 British Association for Counselling and Psychotherapy (BACP)-accredited and Churches Ministerial Counselling Service (CMCS)-approved counsellors who use prayer in their practice. They were interviewed, and the data were analysed using Interpretative Phenomenological Analysis. Results: The data reveal that counsellors who use prayer are aware that ethical problems may be encountered: if prayer changes the way that the counsellor is perceived; when using prayer with issues of psychopathology; if the counsellor uses prayer to impose faith on a client; when being professionally held to account; if prayer is used for avoidance or as a defence; if prayer is used to enhance the counsellor's power; if prayer is not part of the client's agenda; if prayer is used routinely; if prayer cannot be challenged; if there is a cultural pressure to pray; and if the prayer method is not matched to the client - but that their concern over potential ethical issues is not of sufficient strength to override their therapeutic use of prayer if facilitated with due care.