

Scholars Luncheon: The Spiritist View of Mental Disorders
by Dr. Alexander Moreira-Almeida

Dr. Moreira-Almeida presented a talk along with PowerPoint illustrations about the work of Allan Kardec in developing Spiritism and the Spiritist view of mental disorders. Kardec (1804-1869) was a French scholar and a major pioneer of his time in using the scientific approach to study spiritual experiences. He created the word Spiritism for this study and its consequent philosophy. Spiritism supports an interactionist dualist model of the mind-body relationship as well as the survival of consciousness after death with an exchange of knowledge between the incarnated and disincarnated minds. Spiritism advocates a model of spiritual etiology without rejecting the biological, psychological, and social causes of mental disorders. In addition to conventional medical and psychological therapeutics, spiritist séances for “disobsession” are recommended, as well as ‘passes’, prayers and efforts to live according to ethical principles. A more in depth discussion about this subject appears in “Spiritist Views of Mental Disorders in Brazil” written by the author and Francisco Lotufo Neto, published in *Transcultural Psychiatry*. Vol. 42(4), 570-595, 2005. (Author’s summary).

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