

Table 23-5: Psychosocial and Spiritual Assessment of the Patient with a Life-Threatening illness: Sample Screening Questions

Psychosocial Assessment Domain	Questions for Clinician to Ask the Patient
Meaning of illness	How have you made sense of why this is happening to you?
	What do you think is ahead?
Coping style	How have you coped with hard times in the past?
	What have been the major challenges you have confronted in your life?
Social support network	Who are the important people in your life now? On whom do you depend and in whom do you confide about your illness?
	How are the important people in your life coping with your illness?
Stressors	What are the biggest stressors you are dealing with now?
	Do you have concerns about pain or other kinds of physical suffering? Do you have concerns about your and your family's emotional coping?
Spiritual resources	What role does faith or spirituality play in your life? What role has it taken in facing difficult times in the past? Now?
Psychiatric vulnerability	Have you experienced periods of significant depression, anxiety, drug, or alcohol use or other difficulties in coping?
	What kinds of treatment have you had and which have you found helpful?
Economic circumstances	How much of a concern are financial issues for you?
Patient-physician relationship	How do you want me, as your physician, to help you in this situation? How can we best work together?

Source: Block SD. Psychological considerations, growth, and transcendence at the end of life. The art of the possible. *JAMA* 285:2898–905, 2001.