



Does Prayer at Work Relate to Employee Well Being?

By Kim Nimon, PhD, S. Kristine Farmer, MS, RP, PHR, and James Rogers, MS

"Facilitating prayer at work might be one of the tools employers can use to increase organizational health."

The study of the practice of prayer has spanned decades. Almost every religion engages in some form of prayer, and for Americans, the majority find that praying is beneficial (Levine, 2008). We pray for ourselves, our family members, friends, and others, and we believe prayer has a positive and powerful impact on our mental health and well-being (Maltby & Day, 2008). Indeed, empirical research supports the belief prayer is related to general and subjective well-being (e.g., Kraus & Haward, 2013; Schafer, 2013). And while such research is impactful for understanding the general population, it fails to consider the praying practices of employees at work and how such practices relate to employee well-being.

Employee well-being is a concern for contemporary employers as it has been linked to outcomes such as employee retention, employee endorsement, discretionary effort, and employee performance (Page & Vella-Brodrick, 2009; Zigarmi, Nimon, Houson, Witt, & Diehl, 2009). Yet, in the context of possible interventions, there is a paucity of research that indicates what strategies employers can implement in order to promote employee well-being.

We believe it worthy of research, therefore, to investigate the relationship between prayer at work and employee well-being and contribute to the body of research on workplace spirituality (e.g., Giacalone & Jurkiewicz, 2003). Facilitating prayer at work might be one of the tools employers can use to increase organizational health. As suggested by Maltby, Lewis, & Day (1999), the frequency of personal prayer influences psychological well-being. Because research has shown praying in private rather than in public leads to a greater relation of spiritual health (Baesler, Lindvall & Lauricella, 2011), employers may look to the establishment of workplace prayer rooms as an optional benefit to their employees.

In our study, we employ a Prayer Measure developed by Poloma & Pendleton (1991) to examine the frequency of prayer. Due to the lack of empirical evidence; however, we do not know with reasonable certainty whether or not facilitating prayer practices in the workplace would benefit employees and their organizations. Our study, therefore, serves to bridge a gap in the research by providing empirical evidence to answer the question of whether prayer at work relates to employee well-being.

We would like to engage *Annals* readers who are interested in contributing to our study to complete our Prayer in the Workplace survey, which can be found at profnimon.com/prayer. Because we would like to have a large and varied group of participants, we encourage you to share this survey link with your family, friends, co-workers, and colleagues. We look forward to your participation and will report on our results in a future issue.

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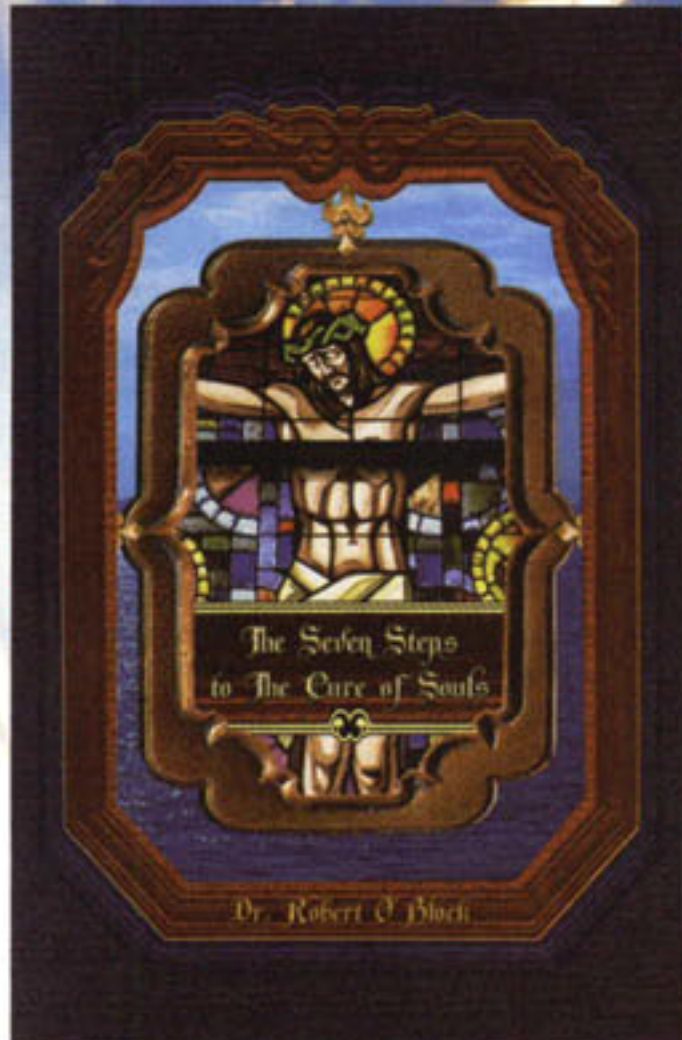


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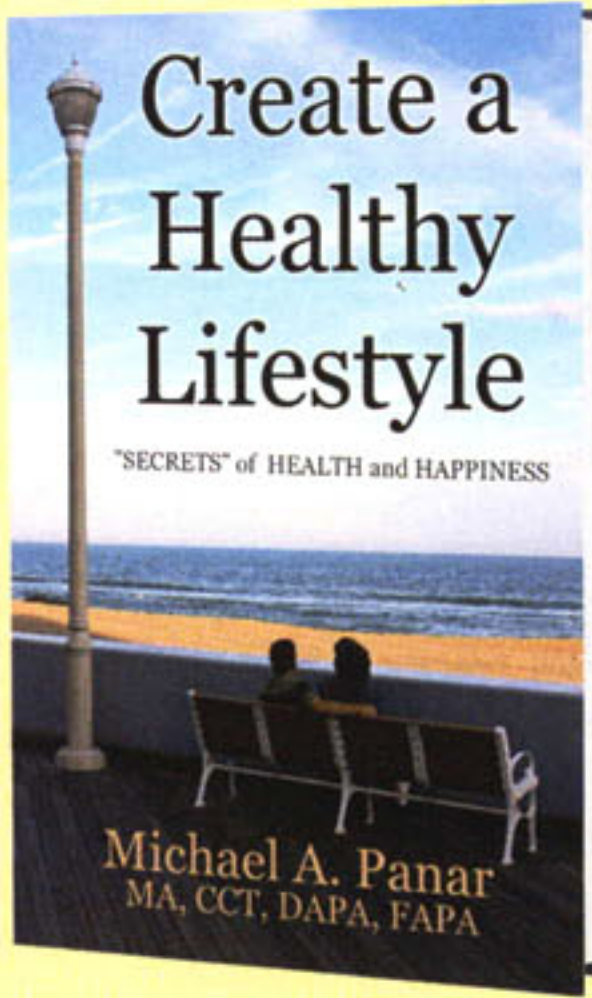


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