



christian psychology around the world

THE EMCAPP JOURNAL

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The Main Articles

Brett Vaden (USA):
The True Self and False Self

Daniel Eytan (Israel) speaks with
Brett Vaden about his article

An Interview with a Christian Psychologist:
Olena Yaremko (Ukraine/Germany)

Editorial

After nearly 10 years we now again present a new vision for this eJournal.

From 2012-2016 we created issues with authors from a focus country: Poland, Germany, Russia, Switzerland, USA, Finland, Canada and South Africa.

Then we changed to focus topics: "Therapy Goals", "Conscience", "Who is leading me during practicing Christian Psychology?", "Christian identity", "Body Aspects in Christian Psychology, Psychotherapy and Counseling", "Coping with Stress in Theory and Practice of Christian Psychology" and "Basic trust and secure attachment - Christian anthropological, educational and psychotherapeutic aspects."

And now?

We have made a shorter version and a more concentrated one to explain and demonstrate what Christian psychology could mean.

Like over the years, you will find comments and we present art works of one artist.

And we remain thankful for all the contacts and cooperations world wide.

We understand this eJournal as an invitation for personal contact and to encourage one another in our responsibility for and in this world.

Yours, Werner May
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Why do we have a bilingual journal?

In our movement for Christian Psychology, we meet as Christians with very different backgrounds: different churches, different cultures, different professional trainings...

There is a common desire for the movement, but highly “multi-lingual” ideas of its realization! Therefore, a bilingual journal is just a small reference to our multilingual voices to remind us:

- Languages are an expression of cultures, countries and of their people. By writing in two languages, we want to show our respect to the authors of the articles, to their origin and heritage, and at the same time symbolically show respect to all the readers in other foreign countries.
- There are many foreign languages that we do not understand. Within our own language, we intend to understand one another, but we fail to do so quite often. To really understand one another is a great challenge, and we also want to point to this challenge by offering a bilingual journal.
- “When languages die, knowledge about life gets lost.” (Suzanne Romaine, 2011)
- Finally, there is a pragmatic reason: As we want to have authors from one special country to write the main articles of every journal, it will be easier for them to distribute the journal in their own country, when it also is in their own language.

Note: By clicking the desired contribution in this Contents list, you immediately reach the relevant page.

about the artist

Exploring spiritual, religious and cultural issues, especially in the midst of Indonesian society, overcoming the challenge of building „Harmony & Diversity“ as the subject of creating paintings by developing iconography.

Wisnu Sasongko was born in Jakarta, March 12, 1975, currently living in Kab. Bogor. Learning art linearly, starting from SMSR Yogyakarta in 1995, then continuing to the Faculty of Fine Arts, ISI Yogyakarta, until graduating in 2001. Finally, he completed his religious-cultural studies at IRB Univ. Sanata Dharma in 2010. Since the visual arts vocational school and lectures, he has been active in creating and exhibiting fine arts.

Wisnu Sasongko had several solo exhibitions and participated in groups in various cities in Jogjakarta, Jakarta, Tangerang, Bali from 2000 to the present. Including experience in international exhibitions in Aachen-Germany, Canada, Iowa, New Haven, Boston, New York in the US, Basel-Switzerland, Kuala Lumpur-Malaysia in 2003 to 2012. Currently, apart from performing arts, Wisnu S also teaches as a guest lecturer at SOD UPH Karawaci and art and culture teacher at the high school level. Wisnu Sasongko won the painting competition TOTAL ART FINA E & F with YSRI in 2001, and at the local event PEKSIMINAS Jogjakarta in 2001. Experience as a judge for mural competitions and as a speaker on art-religion-iconography. Since 2013, the Christian art community has been organizing with various visual arts activities.



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the good shepherd



Part One

the

main

articles



brett vaden

Brett Vaden (USA) is the Associate Pastor of The Journey West County in St. Louis, MO. Brett trained at Moody Bible Institute (B.A., Biblical Languages) and The Southern Baptist Theological Seminary (M.Div., Ph.D.). Brett has a passion for helping people seek to know God as he is revealed in his Son Jesus Christ and to follow him. Brett is married to Rachael, and they have three children: Story (12), Arrow (10), and Harmony (9).

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A Christian Perspective on the True Self and False Self

My wife and I were on vacation in Colorado. One morning, we drove out for a day-excursion with our three young kids. Earlier as I was packing up the van, she had asked me to grab the camera charger (this was before the days of high-quality smartphone cameras). But as we drove down the highway, an hour into our trip, she asked me where the charger was so she could plug the camera into the van's charging port. I realized then that I had forgotten to grab it; probably, in the bustle of packing, something else had pushed her request out of my thoughts. As this realization dawned on me, she asked, "You remembered to pack it, right?"

"Oh no, I guess I forgot it. Whoops!" I replied nonchalantly. I was trying to make light of it. After all, it was just a mistake, and a very natural one considering all the other things I had my mind on. We'd be fine, making memories without having to stop and take pictures of them. No big deal. Or so I assumed.

My wife, Rachael, did not share my framing of the situation. While I automatically shrugged off my mistake as a mere accident—something I didn't mean to do—she considered it part and parcel of a bigger

story in our marriage.

"I'm not okay with this! I asked you to grab the camera charger, and you told me you would, but you didn't."

"Look, I'm sorry! I just forgot. There was a lot happening and it just slipped my mind."

"This isn't about the camera. It's you. When I ask you for something that I care about, you don't treat it like it's important to you. You just shrug it off."

"Look, I'm not meaning to hurt your feelings. I just forget..."

And, so on, for a couple of hours. At one point in the conversation, however, I finally realized what Rachael was getting at, and it hit me like a ton of bricks:

"It's like you're asking me to change who I am. I'm a laid-back person. If I forget to do things, or others forget to do things, it's not a big deal to me. Forgive and forget. But you're wanting me to become a radically different person. It's like you're asking me to change my personality. It's like you're asking me to die."

"Yes, that's what I'm asking you to do."

"Oh."

I don't remember exactly how our conversation ended, but I know that by the end, I had come to a profound recognition: some of the most basic ways I had seen myself up to that point—aspects of myself that I would have taken for granted as just "me"

and “my personality”—were hurting my wife, threatening our oneness in marriage, and, though I hated to admit it, were not natural or good but a product of my fallen state as a sinner before God.

At the same time in my life, my friend Eric Johnson was pointing me to the writings of Thomas Merton, particularly his book *New Seeds of Contemplation*.

In light of what was happening in my marriage, the following quote hit home deeply: “We are not very good at recognizing illusions, least of all the ones we cherish about ourselves ... For most of the people in the world, there is no greater subjective reality than this false self of theirs ... A life devoted to the cult of this shadow is what is called a life of sin” (Merton 2003).

This thing that Merton called the “false self” was what my wife had identified as the part of me that needed to die. I could not deny it. Pretty soon, I was seeing this phenomenon everywhere: in my life, others’ lives, the teaching of Scripture, the writings of other Christians, and secular psychology. But why had I not seen this before? Why had my years growing up in church and my training in seminary not already exposed this reality? I could not lay the blame at any particular person, group, or institution. There were many factors.

For one, most of the teaching I had received about the Bible and following Jesus was heavily influenced by modernism and its naïve assumption of the unbiased objectivity of the observer; granted I was given the right tools and the right method for observation, interpretation, and application, then surely I could make the necessary adjustments of thinking and behavior to live rightly, or so I had thought.

Another factor was less philosophical but no less consequential: the ideals of perfectionism, ever-increasing holiness/sanctification, and an “everything’s fine” attitude

that peers and superiors implicitly expected in themselves and others, with a strong resistance towards admitting specific weaknesses, faults, sins, or even negative emotions, which were usually equated with sin or at least caused by it.

Along with these ideals came the most powerful factor, shame. I was ashamed to be less than perfect, less than holy, or less than joyful. I would not have put it like that; rather, I would have said that I was ashamed of my sin. If pressed, however, I would not have been able to say very much about my sin. I might have said that I wished I was bolder in presenting the gospel, more knowledgeable in Greek and Hebrew, more skilled or diligent in certain areas of life or ministry. I could not have begun to see or admit how much of my life was actually driven by motives of self-protection, self-advancement, and self-righteousness, all of which was cloaked in self-deception.

Thankfully, God did not leave me to myself but confronted me through people like my wife, Eric Johnson, and others, leading me into a journey of self-examination and discovery. It also led to me write a dissertation and forthcoming book, *The True Self and False Self: A Christian Perspective*.

In the book, my aim is to provide a Christian understanding of the true self and false self, based on insights from modern and historic sources. To do that, I go to several representatives from among the biblical authors, Christian psychologists, and secular psychologists, listening to how they answer (or how I imagine they would answer) four questions: (1) Why do people reflect on themselves?; (2) Why do they understand themselves wrongly (i.e., constructing a false self)?; (3) What does true self-understanding entail?; and (4) What interventions can foster true self-understanding? I’ll offer a brief report of what I found.

faces on impression



The Bible: Proverbs, Matthew, and Paul

In the Bible, self-reflection is a given. A biblical picture of the human person assumes our ability to self-examine, to take a look at the state of our heart, soul, mind, and strength (Deut. 6:6-9; Matt. 22:38). Jesus directs us to evaluate our own ethico-spiritual wellbeing before judging others: “first take the log out of your own eye” (Matt. 7:5). Self-reflection is a God-given power meant to help us see our true selves, so that we can make the changes necessary to become more like God.

Despite having this power, however, the Bible reveals that we are often very out of touch with our true selves, because we have lost touch with God. In our foolishness, humans have rejected “the fear of the Lord” (Prov. 1:7) deciding to evaluate what we see in ourselves not against God’s standards, but doing whatever we deem right “in our own eyes” (Prov. 12:5).

Further, the more we distance our self-evaluation from God’s standards, the less accurate our self-understanding becomes, to the point that what we consider our true self is actually a false self of our own imagining. We become hypocrites, who think they are one way—and who convincingly portray themselves as such to others—but who really another.

There is probably no better model for this kind of hypocrisy than the Pharisees that Jesus often encountered, who appeared to themselves and others as “beautiful on the outside” but were inwardly “full of dead people’s bones and uncleanness” (Matt. 23:27). Jesus teaches that merely aligning oneself with God and claiming to fear him is not enough to avoid foolishness or hypocrisy, since even people who claimed to do things in Jesus’ name fell into it (Matt. 7:21-23).

But how could this happen? Paul answers, “For by works of the law no human being

will be justified in his sight, since through the law comes knowledge of sin” (Rom 3:20). Aligning oneself with God’s law and ways is one thing, but Paul teaches it is not enough, because for the person whose “mind is set on the flesh”—that is, who is self-reliant—claiming to follow God is merely a smokescreen for sin. Religious people who pursue “works of the law” may appear righteous and spiritual, but they are actually just living “in the flesh,” which leads to the same end as the less disguised path of lawlessness.

Neither legalism nor antinomianism can solve the problem of sin, because the solution can never be attained through fleshly means but only through Christ in the Spirit (Phil. 3:3). To live as if this were not the case belies a false self-understanding.

On the other hand, the Bible clearly holds out the possibility for true self-understanding. Wisdom cries out, “... the complacency of fools destroys them; whoever listens to me will dwell secure and will be at ease, without dread of disaster” (Prov. 1:32-33). Although there is a way leading to self-delusion and death, there is another path leading to increasing self-understanding and life: “But the path of the righteous is like the light of dawn, which shines brighter and brighter until full day” (Prov. 4:18).

As the Bible’s revelation progresses from Old Testament to New, we see that the way of Yahweh is most fully revealed in Jesus, who is “the way, the truth, and the life” (John 14:6). The way of Jesus is the way to wholeness, in which the outside matches the inside (Matt. 12:33-35; 23:26).

The first step is to admit that we are not whole. We must be poor of spirit, mournful, meek, and desperately desirous of the righteousness we don’t yet fully possess (Matt. 5:3-6). In doing so, with the plank in our eye removed, we can see the truth about ourselves.

All this happens, of course, as we listen to Jesus, our teacher and healer, careful not to fall back into self-reliance, leading back to the false self.

We must remain poor of spirit, admitting our blindness, ready to reframe the stories we've told ourselves and to meekly receive the story God tells us: from the beginning, our *raison d'être* has been to be God's children (Rom. 8:19-23; Eph. 4:24), but falling short of our potential and becoming enslaved to delusion and sin (Rom. 1:23-31), we desperately need God's love for us in Christ, whose death for us despite our enmity (Rom. 5:8) radically reorients us, recentering our life in God (Rom. 6:4-11), empowering us to increase in wholeness and wellbeing (Rom. 1:16), until the day of our bodily resurrection (Rom 8:23), when we will "know fully" just as we have been "fully known" (1 Cor. 13:12).

Lastly, the Bible prescribes interventions for true self-understanding.

First, it is an intervention in itself, apart from what we do with it: the Bible, as God's Word, invites us into the truth, and it reveals the truth to us. As a "living and active" word (Heb. 4:12), the Bible disrupts our self-delusion.

In Proverbs, the reader is treated as a beloved son, with help and insight offered out of good-will (Prov. 1:8, 2:1, 3:1). Proverbs gently and subtly calls attention to the reader's own foolishness, providing a road map that, if read carefully, will lead to life. But readers must take responsibility for themselves (Prov. 23:19), for wisdom or folly is ultimately their choice to make (Prov. 9:12).

In the Gospels, Jesus the Sage follows Proverbs' teaching method, providing many of his own proverbs/parables to help people see the truth (Mark 4:13-25). In the Sermon on the Mount, he gives us what might be the most direct interventions against the false self that we have, specifically tea-

ching about self-examination and rooting out hypocrisy within us (Matthew 5-7).

But Christ provides us even greater hope for the true self by giving us the way, truth, and life—himself—in light of which we can reframe our lives. We not only needed to become better at constructively critiquing ourselves, but to have a new criterion for self-construction, and Jesus is the criterion we need. In Philippians 3, Paul models how to re-consider ourselves in light of Christ, and how to reframe our past, present, and future no longer from a fleshly perspective, but according to union with him who died, rose, and ascended.

Christian Psychologists: Augustine, Luther, Kierkegaard, Merton

Having discerned these insights in the Scriptures, I wanted to compare notes with other Christians who have thought along these lines.

As I looked to Augustine (2006), I saw him describing the same kind of phenomena in different terms: God created us with the ability to "turn inward" and to see ourselves, so that we would "turn upward" and see him.

Because we choose not to turn upward, however, we have become turned in on ourselves, and this state is what Augustine calls "living according to man" as opposed to "living according to God." Living this way, we are self-deceived:

"When, then, a man lives according to himself—that is, according to man, not according to God—assuredly he lives according to a lie" (Augustine, 1950).

Getting stuck in an inner turn that we never use to move upward correlates with false self-understanding. On the other hand, for Augustine, an inwardness that leads to a humble ascent to God correlates with true self-understanding.

Martin Luther follows Augustine's line of thinking, tying self-deception and sin close-

news



ly together. Rather than knowing ourselves as dependent beings, constituted by God, as sinners we see ourselves as not needing God for our wellbeing. In contrast, salvation is chiefly characterized by faith in Christ, which is the fight to believe the truth about oneself in union with him: that, on one hand, my sin goes so deep that I cannot plumb its depths, and that, on the other hand, my sin has been imputed to Christ and expiated in his death so that, in a “happy exchange,” my sin is transferred to Christ and Christ’s righteousness is imputed to me (Bayer 2008).

Luther pointed to four outward signs that help us see the gospel truth about ourselves: preaching, baptism, the Lord’s Supper, and absolution through confession. These signs/images of the gospel show us ourselves in relation to God, giving us true self-understanding.

Luther’s emphasis of “being in relation” was also an essential aspect of Søren Kierkegaard’s psychology. Our relationships, whether with God or others, provide a “criterion” or ideal to which we strive to attain. To the degree that people relate to God, they are more or less conscious of their highest criterion, who they truly are, and who they are meant to become (Kierkegaard 1983).

Because God gives us the freedom to choose whether or not we will relate ourselves to him as our criterion, it is possible to forfeit what God intends for us and to live in “despair.” This choice to enter the despair of our nothingness apart from him goes largely unconscious, and such a life is a great tragedy and waste: “there is so much talk about wasting a life, but only that person’s life was wasted who went on living so deceived by life’s joys or its sorrows that he never became decisively and eternally conscious of spirit . . . never became aware and in the deepest sense never gained

the impression that there is a God and that “he,” he himself, his self, exists before this God” (Kierkegaard 1983).

The opposite of this despairing life is faith, which Kierkegaard poignantly defined as “that the self in being itself and in willing to be itself rests transparently in God.” Faith means accepting who we truly are and consenting to become what God has made us to be.

True self-understanding and faith come from an encounter with God in Jesus Christ. Kierkegaard did not think any technique or method could be guaranteed to move a person to faith. Rather than trying to convince people or coerce them with shame or fear, he called them to consider themselves as individuals who exist before God and to meet him. Kierkegaard said he couldn’t make anyone trust in Christ, but he could compel them to become aware of Christ’s offer, and so “by compelling him to become aware I succeed in compelling him to judge” (Kierkegaard 2000).

Finally, Thomas Merton contributes to this rich dialogue mostly by keeping the conversation going. At a time in the 20th century when the Christian psychology of Augustine, Luther, and Kierkegaard was being forgotten by many pastors and substituted with current ideas from the new wave of modern secular psychology, Merton (2007) spoke with the same theological depth as his Christian forbears while using contemporary language:

“To say I was born in sin is to say I came into the world with a false self. I was born in a mask. I came into existence under a sign of contradiction, being someone that I was never intended to be and therefore a denial of what I am supposed to be.”

Merton was thankful for Freud’s exploration of the unconscious, but inasmuch as Merton opposed Freud’s atheism, he rejected the idea that neuroses, psychoses, and

complexes derived from physiological and environmental factors were the most important aspects of the unconscious.

In Christian prayer and contemplation, in contrast to Freudian psychoanalysis, the greatest illusion being confronted is a spiritual one: the false assumption that people exist in themselves (i.e., apart from God). In contemplative prayer, people are forced to encounter the existential dread of their autonomy, which they have tried to avoid by means of their false self.

Also, unlike many modern psychological therapies, contemplative prayer happens in the midst of daily mundane activities; for Merton (1969), prayer occurs in the liturgy sung in choir, at chores, and on the porch listening to the wind in the trees. Prayer is of “the heart,” meaning that a person prays out of “the deepest psychological ground of one’s personality.” The true self is discovered through prayer not by focusing on myself, but on Christ, allowing Jesus’ name to occupy my heart. By focusing on Jesus, we gradually learn to discard the false selves of our own making and come to live out our true selves.

Secular Psychologists: Winnicott and Harter

Donald W. Winnicott was the first modern psychologist to extensively discuss the true self and false self in those terms. He was part of the “British school” of object relations theory, which traced its heritage to Freud and psychoanalytic psychology but set itself apart from other schools by concentrating on the first few years of life.

Winnicott’s view of healthy self-development starts very early in life between infant and mother when the infant’s “core self” or ego begins to thrive. Essential to normal human development and mental health is gaining a certain kind of self-awareness, which Winnicott (1986) described as a confidence in one’s “aliveness,” “feeling real,”

and “going-on-being.” Given an environment of “good-enough mothering,” an infant with normal physical and neurological health will be able to relate to the external world as an autonomous self who can act spontaneously, without coercion, and yet who can also live well with others.

Winnicott used the term false self to describe what results when the infant’s needs are repeatedly not met, forcing the infant to react to caregiver coercion. If care is not sufficient and forces the infant to comply and adapt to the parent, the infant’s self is essentially being rejected. In place of the (true) self and in its defense, a false self emerges that complies with the environment to make peace, but at the cost of the infant’s sense of having an authentic self. To the degree that compliance is necessary the true self will be more or less hidden by the false self in succeeding years after infancy.

Whereas the false self results from disconnection or splitting within a person, the true self results from one’s integration. In psychological health, self-consciousness is not a function of some localized part of the body (e.g., brain) but of the “psyche-soma,” the integrated mind and body (Winnicott 1975). Where there is a split between mind and body, however, there is also a split between true self and false self.

Also, whereas the false self is characterized by compliance and defensiveness, the true self is marked by independence and spontaneity. The goal of therapy, then, is essentially to foster the patient’s true self, wean the patient from the false self, and facilitate the patient’s growth towards independence so that he or she can relate authentically and competently with the world.

Susan Harter was a developmental psychologist who focused her research on the cognitive and social construction of the self. In her magnum opus, *The Construction of the*

Self (2012), she expresses one of her central concerns: “how the authenticity of the self, the ability to act in accord with one’s true inner self, can become compromised over the course of development.”

The self is both a cognitive and social construction, in which the picture people form of themselves is a product of their own thinking and others’ influence. On the one hand, forming a self-theory requires certain cognitive capabilities or I-self processes that develop with age, and these “cognitive-developmental antecedents” of the self make it possible for one to form self-representations and attain an overall conceptualization of the self. On the other hand, how one describes and evaluates oneself is also a product of “socialization experiences” that “influence the particular content and valence of one’s self-representations.”

The normative or ideal impact of socialization experiences would be to support the self-representations that a child or adolescent feels truly define him or her.

Harter’s work elucidates the differences in self-representations that occur as people develop through various life stages. Every stage can be understood as a cognitive advance upon those before because of an increasing ability to generalize or abstract out from previous self-descriptions and self-evaluations.

Ideally these advances, aided by social experiences that support an authentic sense of self, will result in firmer self-coherence and more accurate self-descriptions and self-evaluations, enabling psychological health and well-being. However, if our influential figures (e.g., parents) refuse to affirm the self we think we are, we will attempt to reconstrue the self into a form that does win affirmation, but at the cost of our sense of authenticity.

In the course of psychological development, both the motive for false self behavior and

the skills necessary to accomplish it advance in strength and efficacy. Developing and maintaining false self behavior is maladaptive in the long run, promoting narcissism, and anxiety and unhappiness will plague individuals who eschew authenticity for the sake of covering their deficiencies.

On the other hand, if parents (and others) accurately mirror their child’s experience and support their authentic self-representations throughout the life stages, then the true self will be confirmed and strengthened, resulting in a firm sense of authenticity, optimal self-esteem (based on reality not illusion), the pursuit of self-determined goals, genuineness and honesty in close relationships, and happiness.

Therapy that promotes the true self will meet patients at their developmental stage. For example, for very young children, since their perceptions (however inaccurate) are true for them, parents should validate and respect the child’s experience as he or she perceives it rather than trying to reject or replace it. Parents should afford children a central participatory role in telling about their experience and using their voice, so as to promote their becoming “instrumental authors of their own true life stories” (Harter 2002).

In order to have confidence in their true self and to cement their authenticity, children and adolescents need their parents to validate them through listening, allowing their children to use and strengthen their own “voice.” At the same time, caregivers shouldn’t merely allow children to do or believe whatever they please. For adolescents who have the ability to accurately compare their performance with objective standards, caregivers should corroborate the accurate self-assessments teenagers make, rather than piling on praise to build up inflated self-esteem.

For adults, Harter warns against a preoc-

happiness



cupation with enhancing self-esteem, and instead she recommends attending to outward experiences and fulfilling one's aims in life, striving to meet self-determined goals; it's good to pursue behaviors and virtues that do not yet feel authentic to one-self, so long as the desire to change in these ways is authentic.

Lastly, Harter (2012) recommends mindfulness, which she describes as "living in the moment" but not "for the moment," attending to the world you live in so that you can make the most out of the present moment instead of being pent up in the past or future.

There's a lot to like and appreciate about what Winnicott and Harter say. Their research contributes valuable insight into the false self and true self, particularly in terms of human development.

However, neither Winnicott nor Harter included God or the spiritual realm in their thinking about these things, except to speak dismissively. One's biology, psychology, social life, and even morality are important, but not any supposedly divine source behind our existence. For Winnicott (1986), God is merely a projection of our innate moral sense. And while Harter (2012) approvingly quotes Buddhist scholars, recommending meditation and mindfulness, she admits these practices can be stripped of their "religious trappings" without losing their effectiveness.

That Winnicott and Harter exclude God and the spiritual realm from their discourse is not only impermissible in a Christian perspective but crippling to their theory of health. While they rightly discern the importance of the psychosocial order, by making it primary they end up missing the real problem and its solution.

False self-understanding is due to humanity's fallen condition, which is fundamentally a moral and spiritual issue. The

remediation of the false self and the discovery of the true self are, likewise, brought about ultimately through divine grace, though God does work within the psychosocial order.

Another serious flaw that stems from ejecting God is that the secular perspective purports that the final goals of true self-understanding are to enjoy experiences of self, other, and engaging in culture. But these are subordinate goals in a Christian perspective, where these goals are a means of growing more aware of God and receptive of his love.

In my book, I offer several more examples of how the secular perspective falls short, but despite the significant lacuna in their theories about the ethical and spiritual orders of life, their attention to the developmental and social aspects of the self has yielded important insights that a substantial psychology of the self should not omit.

A Christian Perspective: The Self, False Self, True Self, and Interventions

Harter, Winnicott, Merton, Kierkegaard, Luther, and Augustine agree that self-reflection is not only an essential aspect of our life as human beings, but one that can make or break us. Self-consciousness enables us to know ourselves, to know ourselves in relation to others, and to be shaped by that knowledge, for either good or bad.

No one shows that more perceptively than psychologists like Winnicott and Harter—when it comes to the developmental, psychological, and sociological levels. But as Scripture reveals, there is a deeper spiritual level that is more fundamental and significant. The ability to know ourselves, or self-consciousness, is primarily given to us so that we can know ourselves in relation to God. The self is not merely an individual or social construct, but a gift from God to enable relationship with God.

God made us capable for self-understan-

ding so we might fully depend on him, trusting him as our perfectly loving and understanding Father, realizing our identity as his children. This is a process, beginning with parents and other caregivers who establish a solid base of support and build up a sense of competence, enabling us to successfully discover more about the world and ourselves, and continuing through every stage of development as we construct an increasingly vivid and accurate understanding of reality and our place in it.

In God's good creation, before sin entered, we were intended to grow to recognize ourselves as the people God always meant us to be, that is, as selves constructed not merely through our own self-representations and the support of others, but as selves created by God.

However, we have distorted our self-understanding into a false self, in order to hide from sublime and paradoxical dynamics in our hearts: the innate desire for wellbeing and the unavoidable despair over weakness and sin. People no longer naturally grow to depend upon God as their Father, because their self-understanding is rendered false either by their enslavement to moral and epistemological self-sufficiency—variously referred to in Scripture as “foolishness,” “hypocrisy,” and “confidence in the flesh”—or by psychological damage they have suffered.

People use the false self to conceal and protect themselves, but in two distinct ways that must be recognized: on the one hand, in innocence we may use the false self to defend ourselves from real or perceived danger from other people (as a case in point, children who have not attained the capacity to willfully account for their actions are not morally responsible for having a false self-understanding that others have coerced upon them), and, on the other hand, in sinfulness we may use the false self to hide from God and the truth.

For people who have become willfully moral agents and can consent to the false self, the driving force motivating them to false self-understanding is no longer just protection from other people (as in the above example with children), but from the shame of falling short of our created purpose, choosing instead to live without God in pride, self-deception, and despair.

Uncovering the true self is about people coming closer to the perfect knowledge that God has about them. While a daunting task for fallen human beings, it is possible through God's grace. The true self is a mental construct representing who people actually are, and it is based on knowledge gained from self-reflection, experience, and outside authorities.

The true self is reflected completely only in God's omniscient comprehension, and so, it is not merely who people perceive themselves to be—which constitutes the false self—but who they actually are in God's understanding.

To foster true self-understanding in ourselves and others, we need to focus primarily on what God says about us, filtering every self- and other- description or evaluation through God's meta-perspective. Of particular importance are the following ethico-spiritual truths revealed about the true self in the gospel: that one is created by God for sonship, fallen from glory, loved by God in Christ, and incomplete.

As the true self is revealed, people experience greater authenticity, enhanced fellowship with other human beings and the restoration of communion with God. The true self is ultimately a gift of God, revealed to his children for their benefit.

Fostering the true self is fundamentally a task of forming and reforming individuals' values and beliefs. The values and beliefs that effectively promote true self-understanding are those that direct people toward what they truly need: life and

wellbeing in God. To delight in the Lord for satisfaction is a value that is intrinsic to human nature, as basic to being human as breathing or eating (see Ps 37:4).

Thus, promoting individuals' true self-understanding requires drawing them back to a creational value system. In children and the young especially, it entails instilling the value of "delighting in the Lord" early in their development and teaching them how God is the loving Father and gracious giver of all good things. In those who have become moral agents, and thus sinners, it especially entails deconstructing old sinful values and beliefs that contravene dependence on God.

Fostering the true self can occur through several different modes of interventions, but in order to be effective they must always be aimed at conforming individuals' values and beliefs to those that God designed for humans to possess, that is, to those that reflect the intrinsic value of depending on God. Since this value has been obscured by sin and false self-understanding, a criterion for interventions that promote this value must be relied upon in addition to human reasoning and experience, so that interventions and their progress can be objectively evaluated; that criterion is God's revelation in Scripture, specifically the message of the gospel, which communicates God's grace in the most concentrated and effulgent form (i.e., the cross).

Interventions must be "gospel interventions" that expose the false self, with its faulty system of sinful values and beliefs, and that internalize gospel values and beliefs.

In my book, I suggest several strategies for both individuals and those attempting to help them (e.g., counselors).

For example, a strategy for individuals is to do good deeds in secret, which helps individuals internalize the value of seeking delight or "reward" in God rather than other sources (Matt 6:1-18). Thus, when giving,

individuals should give secretly; when praying, they should pray in a room with closed doors; and when fasting, they should hide the signs of fasting by anointing their head and washing their face. By practicing righteousness before God (and him alone), individuals conform their values and beliefs to the truth that behaving in the ways that God esteems (and not merely other people) brings delight.

Another strategy that could be used by counselors and other caregivers is in the relational modality. Relational therapy works to re-form the representations of self and other that people have previously formed, and in this way it can help them experience a right and true relationship with God. Safety, support, genuine care, and confidentiality are requisite qualities of the relational counselor. The relational modality can help validate individuals' authentic need for communion with God and dependence on him, as Johnson (2007) puts it: "The development of a healthy human relationship with a mature, loving soul caregiver can be a catalyst for a breakthrough in one's relationship with God, as one experiences—perhaps for the first time—a concrete, healing exemplification of God's love and holiness."

Ultimately, God is the final cause of successful interventions, because he utilizes his powers to support the work from all sides: equipping the individual from within, sending other people to help them from without, and providing his Word as a "living and active" revealer of people's hearts and as the criterion for progress.

In conclusion, we should always hold a healthy degree of suspicion about our self-understanding, knowing that only in resurrected bodies can we know ourselves fully, even as God knows us (1 Cor 13:12). While self-reflection and the counsel of others can be helpful, we should remember that true self-understanding is God's gift. While

it is good to seek true self-understanding, we should take care not to gaze most on ourselves, but on Jesus. We are not able to search out ourselves by ourselves, nor can we fully trust our own searching, but we can trust God's searching of us as we open ourselves more and more to him.

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daniel eytan

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Former contributions in our eJournal by Daniel available here:

<https://emcapp.ignis.de/15/#p=126>

<https://emcapp.ignis.de/14/#p=46>

<https://emcapp.ignis.de/13/#p=94>

Daniel Eytan (Israel) speaks with Brett Vaden about his article

Daniel: „At one point in the conversation, however, I finally realized what Rachael getting at“. What caused this understanding for you, after two hours?

Brett: I could see that Rachael wanted something different from me, but at first I thought just in terms of different behaviors, e.g., remembering things she'd asked me to do, being more thoughtful about her wants. If she was asking me to remember more of what she said, well, I could try to do that. If she was asking me to do more things that made her happy, then, yes, I could put more of her wants on my "to do" list. But that's not what she was asking for. She was identifying a bigger part of me than my incidental behaviors, a part of me that was more like a disposition or way of seeing. Let's give this part of me a name: „Easy-Going Brett.“

This self-description was not one I created by myself, but one I saw through the mirror of others in my life who said things like, „Brett, you're so easy-going,“ „You're so laid-back,“ and, „Brett, nothing ever seems

to bother you.“ I received these comments about me as compliments, coming from adults I respected and from whom I sought approval: family members, school teachers, people at church, and neighbors. I imagine that, in making these statements, they were saying them in response to seeing how I was handling some difficulty or hurt. For example, in school I was a hard worker who rarely complained. Noticing this behavior, teachers singled me out with praise, which encouraged me to continue it. What adults like these did not see, or chose to ignore, was that though I didn't express it, I often felt the same negative emotions as any child at school does now and then: boredom, ambivalence, frustration, annoyance. And so in other areas of my life, my outward „easy-going“ demeanor was fortified more and more, while my inner feelings and desires went unseen, and thus I assigned them a lesser value, if not outright liability.

Thus, because „Easy-Going Brett“ was something other people liked, it became a part of me that I liked and was proud of. To be „laid back“ was a virtue. Moreover, I not only expected extreme patience and flexibility in myself but also in others. Inner feelings of frustration, anger, and the desire for retribution or justice, on the other

hand, were liabilities if felt and verged on vices if expressed. This was my disposition towards unpleasantness in life, and it was the way I expected other people to see things, too. Inconveniences, disappointments, and even lost hopes should be to me (and others), as one aphorism I'd learned in school said, „like water off a duck's back.“

At the beginning of my conversation/fight with Rachael as we drove through Colorado, I was operating purely out of „Easy-Going Brett.“ Rachael's frustration with me for forgetting the camera charger was, surely, an inconvenience. It was even, I admitted, a fault on my part. After saying I was sorry, however, she should simply let it roll off, so we could get back to enjoying the vacation. She would not have it, thankfully. Instead of playing into my imbalanced view of life that dismissed grievances as liabilities, she called „Easy-Going Brett“ to stand trial. She exposed my disregard for her deep wants and feelings. Instead of downplaying her own inner experience, she expressed it with raw unfiltered emotion and voice. So, I had a choice to make: would I try to preserve „Easy-Going Brett“ and neglect true Rachael, or would I try dying to this (false) self in me so that true Rachael and (also true Brett) might live and thrive?

Daniel: How can defense mechanisms and/or awareness play for or against reaching this understanding?

And all this reminds me of G-d's question to Adam after they ate the forbidden fruit: He asked הכיָא (the similarity with your - ours reaction/s was amazing for me) - „ayeka“ means : “Where are you?”

„... and it hit me like a ton of bricks: “It's like you're asking me to change who I am..“

But more than a specific place – we remember that G-d knows everything, he also knows that he personally put them in Eden. So, הכיָא means something about

the self – about the disobedience and the knowledge about sin against G-d. And to make it happen, we have to die for ourselves...

Brett: Yes, I think my experience was very much like Adam in the Garden. I was hiding in a false self, „Easy-Going Brett,“ as Adam was hiding from God. This was a defensive move, made out of distrust and fear. As Adam distrusted and feared what God might do, so did I. As a boy, I learned to hide from negative emotions in myself and others. The way I hid was by becoming „Easy-Going Brett.“ However, I think God wanted more for me; he desires me to feel and express myself deeply, even when it's painful, and he desires me to make space for others in my life to do that. So, he had mercy on me and gave me Rachael's unfiltered emotions and heartfelt voice that day, asking me, „Where are you, Brett?“

Daniel: How is possible to identify our own „bricks“ and give them up?

Brett: In my book, one of the four major questions I ask is, „What interventions can foster the true self?“ There are many different kinds of interventions and tools, many of which are modern therapeutic modalities; out of those, I'm personally attracted to the relational and group modalities, and I apply them frequently in ministry. Of course, many of these modern modalities have ancient forms. The character modality, for example, in which people intentionally submit themselves to regular practices in order to shape their thoughts and attitudes, has been used by Jews and Christians for as long as the Shema has been prayed or the Lord's Supper been celebrated. All of these tools can be used to deconstruct the false self and build up the true self. However, according to Christianity-the worldview I submit to--none of these modalities can do lasting good apart from

faith in Jesus Christ. As I say in the second to last paragraph of the article, „Fostering the true self is fundamentally a task of forming and reforming individuals’ values and beliefs. The values and beliefs that effectively promote true self-understanding are those that direct people toward what they truly need: life and wellbeing in God. To delight in the Lord for satisfaction is a value that is intrinsic to human nature, as basic to being human as breathing or eating (see Ps 37:4) ... Fostering the true self can occur through several different modes of interventions, but in order to be effective they must always be aimed at conforming individuals’ values and beliefs to those that God designed for humans to possess, that is, to those that reflect the intrinsic value of depending on God.“ The question then becomes, „How do we depend on God?“. We can answer that only by following Jesus, the Son of God, who did not live in the shadows of the false self, but who walked with God in utter trust and dependence. Jesus alone shows us what it means to „fear the Lord“ and to „love the Lord with all your heart, soul, mind, and strength.“ If we follow him very long, he’ll eventually force us to decide: will we continue trying to save our own lives by hiding in our false selves, or will we take up our cross and follow him?

Daniel: How is narcissism related to the false self?

Brett: I am not an expert on narcissism, nor have I studied it in any depth. However, I would say that narcissism cannot thrive without a very strong false self-understanding. For someone with narcissistic personality disorder, the false self would be so ingrained as to be all but invisible to him or her.

I talked with a friend of mine who has studied both narcissism and the false self, asking her about how the two relate. She made some good points that express my thoughts as well, although neither of us are experts: „Someone who thinks only of themselves cannot empathize with the pain of others, especially if it means they may look bad. They tend to have certain behaviors they exhibit where they react in this narcissistic triad--sometimes showing up as Perpetrator, other times Rescuer, and then other times the Victim. As far as it relates to the false self, I would suggest all narcissists are living lives completely devoted to the false self. Sometimes narcissists can change, but the humility it takes to change often is not something true narcissists are even capable of.“ (Sharla Goings, Regional Coordinator for The Cross Ministry Group, personal correspondence, 08/23/21.)

The article by Brett Vaden in the light of former contributions of Christian Psychology Around The World

Please click on it

E. Janet Warren
Relational Theology and Relational Therapy



Werner May (Germany): Christian identity today - More than a modern and postmodern understanding of identity / Christliche Identität heute - Mehr als ein modernes und postmodernes Identitätsverständnis



Roland Mahler talking with Werner May
An ethic of the special – not only in addiction therapy / Ethik des Besonderen – nicht nur in der Suchttherapie



Keith A. Houde (USA)
The Mystery of Persons:
Catholic Foundations for a Psychology of Persons
Within the Thought of Karol Wojtyła/Pope John Paul II





Romuald Jaworski (Poland) : Religious identity, when compared to other identities / Religijna tożsamość na tle innych tożsamości



Andrey Lorgus (Russia)
The concept of a person according to Orthodoxy / ЛИЧНОСТЬ В ХРИСТИАНСКОЙ ПСИХОЛОГИИ: ПРАВОСЛАВНЫЙ ВЗГЛЯД.

A few sayings on pride / Несколько слов о гордости

The Courage to be a Person / Мужество быть личностью



Elena Strigo (Russia)
The Moral Word in Reconstruction of Person in Christian Psychotherapy



Gladys K. Mwiti (Kenya)
What is a Person? An African Perspective



Daniël J. Louw
'Psyche' or 'soul'? Towards a Christian Approach to Anthropology in Pastoral Caregiving and Spiritual Healing

peace among us





olena yaremko

Olena Yaremko, clinical psychologist, trainer, provides mutual support groups and personal development groups; psychotherapist; specializing in integrative psychotherapy in line with the Christian approach and in psychological online counseling. Author of methods of religiosity studies adapted to the Ukrainian language. Active member of the Association of German Professional Psychologists (BDP) and the International Association for the Psychology of Religion (IAPR). Since 2001 working at the Ukrainian Catholic University. From 2007 to 2010 member of the Association of Christian Psychologists, Poland (SPCh). In 2011, she defended her doctorate in psychology of religion and social psychology at the John Paul II Catholic University of Lublin (KUL). Active participant in the European Movement for Christian Anthropology, Psychology and Psychotherapy (EMCAPP).

Олена Яремко – клінічний психолог, тренер, ведуча груп взаємопідтримки та груп особистісного розвитку, психотерапевтка, спеціалізується в інтегративній психотерапії згідно християнського підходу та психологічному онлайн консультуванню. Авторка адаптованих на українську мову методик дослідження релігійності. Дійсний член німецької спілки психологів (BDP) та International Association for the Psychology of Religion (IAPP). З 2001 працює в Українському Католицькому Університеті. 2007- 2010роки – член Польської спілки християнських психологів (SPCh). В 2011 році захистила докторат з психології релігії та соціальної психології в Люблінському Католицькому Університеті ім. Івана Павла II. Активна учасниця Європейського руху християнської антропології, психології та психотерапії (EMCAPP).

An Interview with a Christian Psychologist: Olena Yaremko (Ukraine/Germany)

Werner May: Olena, you studied psychology at the State University in Lviv/Ukraine from 1999-2004, and then obtained your PhD in Psychology of Religion and Social Psychology at the John Paul II Catholic University of Lublin in Poland. For several years you now have been living in Germany together with your family. You are mother of four children and work as a clinical psychologist and psychotherapist, specializing in integrative Christian Psychotherapy.

Інтерв'ю з християнською психологинею Оленою Яремко (Україна/Німеччина)

Вернер Мей: Олена, ти вивчала психологію з 1999 до 2004 року в Львівському національному університеті, згодом захистила докторську дисертацію з соціальної психології та психології релігії у Люблінському католицькому університеті ім. Івана Павла II у Польщі. Ти маєш чотирьох дітей, останні декілька років живеш із родиною у Німеччині, працюєш як клінічний психолог і психотерапевт в напрямку інтегративної християнської психотерапії. Дозволь

May I first ask how it came about that you studied psychology?

My interest in psychology began in my school years, when I entered the Junior Academy of Sciences (a program for graduating students, within which I had the opportunity to listen to the lectures on psychology at the University, once a week in the evening). When I was 16, I conducted my first research (survey), and wrote and defended a paper on issues of child aggression, which opened the University doors for me. My passion for psychology was growing, and I couldn't imagine myself doing anything else.

What was the focus of your dissertation and what kind of empirical research did you do? Did you get any results which you would especially like to emphasize?

Some people have good relationship with God and good interpersonal relationships. Other people have both religious and interpersonal negative relationships. There are also people who have a good relationship with God, but negative interpersonal ones, and vice versa. Within my doctorate, I studied the role of personality traits in the interconnection of religious and interpersonal relationships. It turned out that in fact the personality plays a modifying role. I managed to adapt three psychological methods of the psychology of religion to the Ukrainian language: Jarosz's Relations to God Scale, Hutsebaut's Lived Relations to God Scale and Prężyna's Centrality of the Religious Attitude Scale, which can be used for further research in Ukraine.

Why would you call yourself a Christian psychologist?

I became a Christian psychologist in the course of encounters. The first significant

спочатку запитати тебе, чому ти взагалі розпочала навчання з психології?

Моє зацікавлення психологією розпочалося ще під час навчання у школі, коли я потрапила до Малої Академії Наук (програма для школярів випускних класів, в рамках котрої раз на тиждень ввечері я мала можливість в приміщенні Університету слухати лекції з психології). Маючи 16 років я вперше провела дослідження -опитування та написала і захистила наукову роботу проблематики дитячої агресивності, таким чином відкривши собі двері до Університету. Захоплення психологією лише розвивалося, і я не уявляла собі що можу займатися чимось іншим.

Яким було головне питання твоєї докторської дисертації? Які емпіричні дослідження було здійснено? Чи є якісь особливо важливі висновки?

Є люди котрі мають добрі стосунки з Богом та добрі стосунки з іншими людьми. Є люди, котрі мають негативні релігійні та міжособистісні стосунки. Є також такі, у котрих добрі стосунки з Богом, однак негативні інтерперсональні, та навпаки. В рамках докторату я досліджувала яку роль відіграють риси особистості у взаємозв'язках релігійних та міжособистісних стосунків. Виявилося, що справді особистість відіграє модифікуючу роль. В рамках роботи мені вдалося здійснити адаптацію трьох психологічних методик з психології релігії («Опитувальник стосунків з Богом М.Яроша», «Опитувальник релігійних стосунків Д.Гютсебаута» та «Шкала релігійності» В. Пренжини), котрі можуть бути у подальшому використані у дослідженнях в Україні.

Чому ти вважаєш себе саме християнською психологинєю?

Те, що я стала християнською

encounter was with my spiritual father, Fr. Stefan Batruch, who played an important role in my spiritual formation. The second encounter – with Professor Fr. Władysław Prężyna from KUL (The John Paul II Catholic University of Lublin – opened the door to the world of methodology of modern scientific research in the psychology of religion. The third encounter was with the Association of Christian Psychologists, Poland, particularly with Anna Ostaszewska, Fr. Romuald Jaworski and Fr. Stanisław Tokarski, who accepted me, the first one from Ukraine, onto the four-year Program of Integrative Psychotherapy with a Christian Approach. The fourth encounter was with the community of the Ukrainian Catholic University, where I began my work in psychological counseling and psychotherapy in 2003, and had the opportunity to acquire many years of practical experience. And my fifth significant encounter was with EMCAPP, thanks to which I identified myself with the movement of Christian psychologists and psychotherapists.

Currently, you are writing a book about religiosity in psychology and psychotherapy. Your text will include experiences of clients, one of which ten years after finishing the therapy. Can you please tell us a little bit about those experiences?

In the book I attempt to systematize materials from my own research conducted in 2003-2021 (the impact of parental images on the image of God, the specific features of the religiosity of the student youth, the attitude of patients towards a Christian psychotherapy). In 2021, a survey was conducted with participation of 250 adult Ukrainians from Ukraine and Ukrainians in the diaspora. It showed that 81.4% of respondents declare themselves to be religious. For 63.6% of respondents (14% male, 86% female) it is important whether a psycholo-

психологинею є завдяки зустрічам. Перша зустріч це із моїм духовником о. Стефаном Батрухом, котрий відіграв важливу роль у моїй духовній формації. Друга зустріч це із професором о. Владиславом Пренжиною з KUL, котрий відкрив мені двері у світ методології сучасних наукових досліджень із психології релігії. Третя зустріч із Асоціацією християнських психологів Польщі, зокрема із Анною Осташевською, о. Р. Яворським та о. С. Токарським, котрі прийняли мене, першу з України, на чотирирічну програму навчання інтегративної психотерапії згідно християнського підходу. Четверта зустріч – з спільнотою Українського Католицького Університету, де я у 2003 році розпочала свою роботу у психологічному консультуванні та психотерапії, і мала можливість отримати багаторічний практичний досвід роботи. П'ята зустріч, це із EMCAPP, адже завдяки вам я ідентифікувала себе з рухом християнських психологів і психотерапевтів.

Зараз ти пишеш книгу щодо релігійності в психології та психотерапії, у котрій подаєш приклади із клінічної практики. Зокрема описано також один приклад пацієнтки через десять років після закінчення своєї терапії. Будь-ласка поділися коротко цим досвідом.

У книжці я спробувала систематизувати матеріали з власних досліджень з 2003-2021 років (вплив образу батьків на образ Бога, особливості релігійності студентської молоді, ставлення пацієнтів до християнської психотерапії). У 2021 році було здійснено опитування, участь у котрому взяли 250 дорослих українців з України та українців в діаспорі. Виявилося що 81,4% досліджуваних декларують себе релігійними. Для 63,6% опитаних респондентів (14% чоловіків, 86% жінок) важливо, чи психолог/психотерапевт є християнином/християнкою, і вони

gist/psychotherapist is Christian, and they consider this factor when choosing their psychologist/psychotherapist. In the book, I present three interviews with nuns who describe how they got through a religious crisis and vocation crisis, as well as the case studies of four patients which draw attention to the fact that it was the Christian dimension during their psychotherapy that played one of the key roles in the process of their treatment. Building secure therapeutic relationships promoted personal and spiritual changes.

One client was Maria, 60 years old, with experience of hospitalizations in a mental hospital - schizoaffective personality disorder, diagnosed at the age of 20 years. Psychotherapy took place when she was about 50 years old, and was completed in 2010. Ten years after, I have asked Maria to write her feedback on the therapeutic experience obtained and briefly share her reflections on the outcomes of therapy in her nowadays life.

Maria wrote (a part of the text is quoted): "I went precisely to a Christian psychotherapist because I had problems in my relationship with God. I thought that God doesn't care for me, doesn't help me, and doesn't love me, that He only punishes me. And I've heard that God is loving... I've prayed little, because I thought – why should I appeal to God, who doesn't help me and doesn't love me? I've heard about God's love, but didn't feel it. I hoped that the Christian psychologist would help me feel God's love. I confessed regularly, once or twice per month, but the list of my sins remained the same. And I wanted to sin less... But I didn't know – how, and I thought that the Christian psychologist would help me become a saint! It was due to psychotherapy that I've learned to truly love myself. The periods of psy-

враховують цей чинник під час вибору психолога/психотерапевта. У книзі я подаю три інтерв'ю із сестрами монахинями, котрі описують особливості пережиття ними релігійної кризи та кризи покликання. А також історії від чотирьох пацієнтів, в котрих звертається увага на те, що саме християнський вимір під час психотерапії відіграв одну із важливих ролей у процесі їх лікування. Побудова безпечних терапевтичних стосунків допомогла особистісним та духовним змінам.

Марія, 60 років, досвід госпіталізацій у психіатричній лікарні, шизоафективний розлад особистості, діагностовано у віці 20 років. Психотерапія відбувалася, коли пацієнтці було приблизно 50 років із закінчилася у 2010 році. Через десять років після цього, я попросила Марію написати свій відгук про отриманий терапевтичний досвід та коротко поділитися своїми рефлексіями про результати терапії в її житті тепер.

Марія написала (подаю частину тексту): «Я звернулась саме до християнського психотерапевта, тому що мала проблеми у стосунках із Богом. Я вважала, що Бог про мене не дбає, мені не допомагає, мене не любить, а тільки карає. А я чула, що Бог люблячий... Я мало молилась, бо думала – навіщо звертатись до Бога, який мені не допомагає і мене не любить? Я чула, але не відчувала любові Бога. Я сподівалась, що християнський психолог допоможе мені відчувати любов Бога. Я регулярно сповідалась один чи два рази у місяць, але список гріхів був той самий. А я хотіла менше грішити. Я не знала, як, і думала, що християнський психолог допоможе мені стати святою!

meditate on pieta



choices made me evil, bad and aggressive, again and again. And this fact, that I became kind to myself and to others, and became kind to God – well, that was really amazing! I am so brave now – I can even talk to the president. My experience shows that a mutual support group for co-dependents is useless without a good psychotherapy... I'm very grateful. As the result of the therapy, all my dreams have come true, and now I will take care of my further health and development. I can play football with my grandson, grow flowers, be creative and talk calmly to my daughter and other people. I am glad that now I pass around the things I've learned during psychotherapy, and that a lot of my aspirations have come true!"

After all, what was one of the important therapeutic factors in this and other practical examples presented in the book? The first thing that is important to note is that the religiosity and spirituality of the patients was treated with respect, as a reality and an integral part of the patients' identity. The therapy was aimed at strengthening the healthy personality and spirituality. As a rule, the following steps were gradually taken in the therapeutic process:

- restoration of self-acceptance and self-confidence;
- working through the history of one's life; work with traumatic experiences from the past, life scenario, history of relationships „I-others-God“;
- awareness of and overcoming destructive beliefs;
- training of skills of emotional regulation, stress resilience;
- restoring inner freedom; acquiring the ability of independent decision-making and taking responsibility for one's own life;

Саме завдяки психотерапії я навчилася по-справжньому любити себе. Часи психозів робили мене знову і знову злою, поганою, агресивною. А те, що я стала добре ставитися до себе та інших, добре ставитися до Бога, це дійсно дивовижно! Я стала така смілива – можу і з президентом тепер спілкуватись. Мій досвід показує, що група взаємопідтримки для співузалежнених без доброї психотерапії нічого не дає... Я дуже вдячна. Завдяки терапії всі мрії збулись, а от про своє подальше здоров'я та розвиток я буду старатись. Я можу грати у футбол із своїм внуком, вирощувати квіти, творити та спокійно розмовляти з дочкою та іншими людьми. Я радію, що те, чого навчилась під час психотерапії, передаю іншим, і що дуже багато того, чого я прагнула, збулось!».

Що ж було одним із важливих терапевтичних чинників у цьому та інших поданих у книжці прикладах з практики? Перше, що важливо зазначити, це те, що релігійність і духовність пацієнток сприймалася з повагою, як дійсність та невід'ємна частина ідентичності. Терапія була спрямована на зміцнення здорової особистості та духовності. Поступово в терапевтичному процесі, як правило, проходилися такі кроки:

- відновлення самоприйняття, впевненості в собі;
- пропрацювання історії свого життя, робота із травматичними досвідами з минулого, життєвим сценарієм, історією стосунків «Я-інші-Бог»;
- усвідомлення та пропрацювання деструктивних переконань;
- навчання навичок емоційної регуляції, стресостійкості;

- strengthening personal positive relationships with God and people, finding resources for development and sources of support.

Thus, in the course of psychotherapy, the spiritual dimension of the personality is also taken into account, though it is not the main focus of the therapeutic request. The themes of religiosity, relationships with God, religious experiences were discussed during the sessions only if they were brought into the therapeutic space by the patients.

You are a member of EMCAPP. What do you like about this association?

To me, EMCAPP is first of all an opportunity for mutual learning, sharing experiences and feeling of joint efforts and dialogue. I highly appreciate the fact that one of the Symposiums in 2013 was in Lviv, Ukraine, and I am looking forward to our next meetings.

- відновлення внутрішньої свободи, навчання здатності самостійно приймати рішення та брати відповідальність за своє життя;
- зміцнення особистісних позитивних стосунків із Богом та людьми, пошук ресурсів для розвитку та джерел підтримки.

Таким чином, під час психотерапії духовний вимір особистості врахується, хоч і не є безпосередньо основним предметом терапевтичного запиту. Тематика релігійності, стосунків із Богом, релігійних досвідів обговорювалася під час сесій лише тоді, коли була внесена в терапевтичний простір самими пацієнтками.

Ти є членом EMCAPP. Що саме ти цінуєш у цій Спільноті?

EMCAPP для мене це перш за все можливість взаємного навчання, ділення досвідом та відчуття спільної справи та діалогу. Я дуже ціную те, що один із Симпозіумів у 2013 році був у Львові в Україні, і з нетерпінням очікую наших наступних зустрічей.

in between



let it be done





werner may

Werner May was the first chairman of the IGNIS Institute for Christian Psychology in Kitzingen for more than 25 years (www.ignis.de). As a teacher his main interest was in basic questions of Christian Psychology and in counseling of foster families. He also helped to build up the Institute for Christian Psychology, Education and Therapy in Switzerland (www.icptp.ch). Now he is the chairman of the European Movement for Christian Anthropology, Psychology and Therapy (www.emcapp.eu) and publishes the free

e-journal Christian Psychology Around The World (<https://emcapp.ignis.de>). Since 2016 he has also published another e-magazine (www.gehaltvoll-magazin.de) to encourage people that they can live their everyday life in relationship with God and others as an extraordinary life.

Werner has been married to Agnes for more than 45 years. They live in Würzburg, Germany, and have six adult children.

Werner May war mehr als 25 Jahre erster Vorsitzender des IGNIS-Instituts für Christliche Psychologie in Kitzingen (www.ignis.de). Als Dozent galt sein Hauptinteresse den grundlegenden Fragen der Christlichen Psychologie und der Beratung und Betreuung von Pflegefamilien. In der Schweiz baute er das Institut für Christliche Psychologie, Pädagogik und Therapie mit auf (www.icptp.ch). Heute ist er Vorsitzender der Europäischen Bewegung für Christliche Anthropologie, Psychologie und Therapie (www.emcapp.eu) und gibt das kostenlose eJournal Christian Psychology Around The World heraus (<https://emcapp.ignis.de>).

Seit 2016 publiziert er auch das eMagazin www.gehaltvoll-magazin.de, um Menschen zu ermutigen, ihren Alltag in Kontakt mit Gott und anderen zu einem außergewöhnlichen Leben zu gestalten.

Werner ist seit über 45 Jahren mit Agnes verheiratet. Sie leben in Würzburg, Deutschland, und haben sechs erwachsene Kinder.

Former articles by Werner available here:
<https://emcapp.ignis.de/12/#p=29>
<https://emcapp.ignis.de/2/#p=>

My Challenge 1: „What is Reality?“

Five Challenges for a Christian Psychology

Five Fundamental Challenges

In 2019, at a conference in Barcelona, I listed five personally important challenges in my lecture “Christian Psychology - A Challenge for Me!” They have accompanied me over the years because they are fundamental to developing and representing Christian psychology. And they are always a new

Meine Herausforderung 1: „Was ist die Wirklichkeit?“

Fünf Herausforderungen für eine christliche Psychologie

Fünf grundsätzliche Herausforderungen

2019, bei einer Konferenz in Barcelona, habe ich in meinem Vortrag „Christliche Psychologie – Eine Herausforderung an mich!“ fünf für mich wichtige Herausforderungen aufgeführt. Sie haben mich über die Jahre begleitet, weil sie grundlegend sind, um Christlich Psychologie zu entwickeln

challenge and have to be implemented in concrete terms in thought and action.

- Challenge 1: What is Reality?
- Challenge 2: The human being as a relational being is also a part of systems.
- Challenge 3: Thinking through psychological results more deeply and comprehensively.
- Future challenge 4: Love - in three dimensions
- Current challenge 5: Reconciliation with saying no

In this edition of the eJournal, I present what I see as the first challenge and how it concerns me.

My challenge 1 is: "What is reality?"

I think this first challenge is nothing new to most readers. But it is and will remain a challenge. Isn't it?

The well-known German theologian Dietrich Bonhoeffer wrote in his Ethics in 1949: "The place where the question of the reality of God and the reality of the world are answered at the same time is indicated by one name: Jesus Christ. In this name God and the world are encompassed. In him everything has its existence (Col 1:16). From now on, neither God nor the world can be rightly spoken of without speaking of Jesus Christ. All concepts of reality that ignore it are abstractions."

In other words, our relationship with the Triune God must be a fundamental reality in psychology, too. Or, as Eric Johnson, my American friend, put it in the title of an article: Jesus, Lord of Psychology. The former scientific director of the IGNIS Institute, Peter Hübner († 2003), has made it clear to us since IGNIS was founded in 1986:

You absolutely have to delve deeper into the connection between science and their worldview, between psychology and their concept of man. Every science, but above all every human science, has been developed on the basis of a certain fundamental worldview and cannot

und zu vertreten, sie fordern immer wieder neu heraus und müssen konkret in Denken und Handeln umgesetzt werden.

- Herausforderung 1: Was ist die Wirklichkeit?
- Herausforderung 2: Der Mensch als ein Beziehungswesen ist auch Teil von Systemen.
- Herausforderung 3: Psychologische Ergebnisse tiefer und umfassender durchdenken.
- Zukunftsherausforderung 4: Liebe - in drei Dimensionen
- Aktuelle Herausforderung 5: Die Versöhnung mit dem Neinsagen

In der vorliegenden Ausgabe des eJournals stelle ich vor, was ich als erste Herausforderung sehe und wie sie mich beschäftigt.

Meine Herausforderung 1 lautet: „Was ist die Wirklichkeit?"

Ich denke, diese erste Herausforderung ist für die meisten Leser nichts Neues. Aber sie ist und bleibt eine Herausforderung. Oder? Der bekannte deutsche Theologe Dietrich Bonhoeffer schrieb 1949 in seiner Ethik: „Der Ort, an dem die Frage nach der Wirklichkeit Gottes wie die nach der Wirklichkeit der Welt zugleich beantwortet wird, ist allein bezeichnet durch den Namen: Jesus Christus. In diesem Namen sind Gott und die Welt beschlossen. In ihm hat alles seinen Bestand (Kol 1,16). Von nun an kann weder von Gott noch von der Welt recht geredet werden, ohne von Jesus Christus zu reden. Alle Wirklichkeitsbegriffe, die von ihm absehen, sind Abstraktionen."

Mit anderen Worten, unsere Beziehung zum dreieinigen Gott muss eine grundlegende Realität auch in der Psychologie sein. Oder, wie es Eric Johnson, mein amerikanischer Freund, im Titel eines Artikels ausdrückte: Jesus, der Herr der Psychologie. Der frühere wissenschaftliche Leiter der IGNIS-Akademie, Peter Hübner (†2003), verdeutlichte uns seit der Gründung von IGNIS 1986:

Man muss unbedingt tiefer in die Ver-

be understood without this basic understanding of human beings. These connections are not always clear to the observer of scientific results and discoveries; the worldview behind it is often assumed as a generally recognized, self-evident truth. It is therefore more honest and sincere to start right away in the title of the science by specifying the worldview to which one feels obliged. "Christian psychology" therefore only reflects the admission that we as Christians need a psychology that is embedded in the Christian understanding of people and the world from the beginning, in theory and in practice.

In addition, Christian psychology is not only to be understood from its view of the world and man and its understanding of science, but is primarily based on trust in the living presence of God in Jesus Christ through the Holy Spirit. In an applied Christian psychology, not only do creative rules come into force, but a living person repeatedly intervenes in this world: the almighty, omnipresent, omniscient Trinitarian God, moved by infinite love.

A Christian psychologist wants to be close to Jesus Christ, who says of himself that he is the truth. It is not knowledge but a person that is true. We only find truth in and with HIM.

There is no room now to delve into this personal definition of truth. At the moment so much should be said: From a Christian point of view and thus for Christian Psychology, the question of truth becomes a question of trust: Whom do I believe/trust? God who has revealed himself in his word? Or which person? If I build on science, then I believe in scientists, and the question is which of them.

That is not to say that scientists have nothing to say to us. However, "honest" empirical research will admit that its results cannot be anything other than hypotheses that are posed and examined within a certain question horizon and that are more or less strongly supported by statistics.

But what is my challenge now?

bindung von Wissenschaft und Weltbild, von Psychologie und Menschenbild einsteigen. Jede Wissenschaft, vor allem aber jede Wissenschaft vom Menschen, ist auf der Grundlage einer bestimmten grundlegenden Weltanschauung entwickelt, ist ohne dieses richtunggebende Grundverständnis vom Menschen unverständlich. Diese Zusammenhänge sind dem Betrachter wissenschaftlicher Ergebnisse und Entdeckungen nicht immer klar, häufig wird das dahinterstehende Weltbild als allgemein anerkannte, selbstverständliche Wahrheit vorausgesetzt. Es ist daher ehrlicher und auf richtiger, gleich damit zu beginnen, die Weltanschauung, der man sich verpflichtet fühlt, im Titel der Wissenschaft zu spezifizieren. „Christliche Psychologie“ spiegelt daher lediglich das Eingeständnis wider, dass wir als Christen eine Psychologie brauchen, die von Anfang an in das christliche Menschen- und Weltverständnis eingebettet ist, in Theorie und Praxis.

Außerdem ist die christliche Psychologie nicht nur aus ihrem Welt- und Menschenbild und ihrem Wissenschaftsverständnis heraus zu verstehen, sondern gründet vor allem in dem Vertrauen auf die lebendige Gegenwart Gottes in Jesus Christus durch den Heiligen Geist. In einer angewandten christlichen Psychologie treten nicht nur schöpferische Regeln in Kraft, sondern immer wieder greift eine lebendige Person in diese Welt ein: der allmächtige, allgegenwärtige, allwissende trinitarische Gott, bewegt von unendlicher Liebe.

Ein christlicher Psychologe möchte Jesus Christus nahe sein, der von sich selbst sagt, dass er die Wahrheit ist. Es ist kein Wissen, sondern eine Person, die wahr ist. Wahrheit finden wir nur in und mit IHM.

Es gibt jetzt keinen Raum, auf diese persönliche Definition von Wahrheit näher einzugehen. Im Moment sei so viel gesagt: Aus christlicher Sicht und somit für die christliche Psychologie wird die Wahrheitsfrage zu einer Vertrauensfrage: Wem glaube ich?

First of all, we need more empirical research with a Christian starting point. And here we have a theological problem: Christian reality includes different churches and theological positions.

In addition to plenteous Protestant specialist literature, I am thinking of the recently published work "A Catholic Christian Meta-Model of the person. Integration with Psychology and Mental Health Practice", ed. by Paul C. Vitz, WJ Nordling and CS Titus, Divine Mercy University, 2020.

I have been facing up to the challenge of denominational differences for years by working with colleagues from all denominations and respecting them in their traditions.

Another challenge for me is that we encourage each other in cooperation to meet our national challenges and responsibilities.

Every country has its own challenges: The role of Christianity, the position of psychology and psychotherapy or the social and political problems are different in the USA to those in Russia or South Africa or other countries.

And then each person lives with their challenges in their own way, has their own psychological training, professional experience, church membership and practiced personal spirituality. These differences - or wealth - are also part of reality.

This is important for psychological practice in therapy, counseling, education and other fields of activity. How does our lived relationship with God shape our psychological actions? What role should or can prayer play in psychological practice? What does this mean for our relationship with colleagues or clients who are distant from the Christian world?

And finally: Does this „old“ challenge now, in 2021, bring concrete new tasks for me, in addition to the tasks already mentioned? The interreligious dialogue ("What is common and what makes us different?") comes more to the fore for me: I want more detailed knowledge and also encounters with people of other religions.

My relationship with God has not stayed

Gott, der sich in seinem Wort offenbart hat? Oder welcher Person? Baue ich auf die Wissenschaft, dann glaube ich an Wissenschaftler und die Frage ist, welchen von ihnen.

Das soll nicht heißen, dass Wissenschaftler uns gar nichts zu sagen hätten. Eine „ehrliche“ empirische Forschung wird jedoch zu geben, dass ihre Ergebnisse nichts anderes sein können als Hypothesen, die im Rahmen eines bestimmten Fragehorizontes gestellt und untersucht und mehr oder weniger stark von Statistiken gestützt werden. Aber worin besteht jetzt meine Herausforderung?

Zuerst einmal brauchen wir mehr empirische Forschungen mit einer christlichen Ausgangsposition. Und dabei haben wir ein theologisches Problem: Die christliche Realität beinhaltet verschiedene Kirchen und theologische Positionen.

Neben zahlreicher evangelischer Fachliteratur denke ich an das kürzlich erschienene Werk „A Catholic Christian Meta-Model of the person. Integration with Psychology and Mental Health Practice“ Hrsg. von Paul C. Vitz, WJ Nordling und CS Titus, Divine Mercy Universität, 2020.

Der Herausforderung konfessioneller Unterschiede stelle ich mich seit Jahren, indem ich mit Kolleginnen und Kollegen aller Konfessionen zusammenarbeite und sie auch in ihren jeweiligen Traditionen respektiere. Eine weitere Herausforderung besteht für mich darin, dass wir uns in der Zusammenarbeit gegenseitig ermutigen, unseren nationalen Herausforderungen und Verantwortungen gerecht zu werden.

Jedes Land hat seine eigenen Herausforderungen: Die Rolle des Christentums, die Position der Psychologie und Psychotherapie oder die sozialen und politischen Probleme sind z. B. in den USA andere als in Russland oder Südafrika.

Und dann lebt jeder Mensch mit seinen Herausforderungen auf seine Weise, hat seine eigene psychologische Ausbildung, Berufserfahrungen, Kirchenmitgliedschaft und praktizierte persönliche Spiritualität. Auch diese Unterschiede oder dieser Reich-

the same: it has deepened, and that means it also affects my work as a Christian psychologist differently. His presence and his love for all people are more and more in the foreground.

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tum gehören zur Realität.

Das ist wichtig für die psychologische Praxis in Therapie, Beratung, Erziehung und anderen Tätigkeitsfeldern. Wie prägt unsere gelebte Beziehung zu Gott unser psychologisches Handeln? Welche Rolle sollte oder kann das Gebet in der psychologischen Praxis spielen? Was bedeutet das für unser Verhältnis zu christlich-fernen Kollegen oder Klienten?

Und zum Schluss: Gibt es mit dieser „alten“ Herausforderung heute, 2021, für mich, neben den schon erwähnten Aufgaben, konkrete neue?

Der interreligiöse Dialog („Was ist das Gemeinsame und was unterscheidet uns?“) tritt für mich mehr in den Vordergrund: Ich möchte mehr Detailwissen und auch Begegnungen mit Menschen anderer Religionen.

Meine Gottesbeziehung ist nicht die gleiche geblieben, hat sich vertieft, und das bedeutet, sie wirkt sich auch in meiner Arbeit als Christlicher Psychologe anders aus. Seine Gegenwart und seine Liebe zu allen Menschen stehen immer mehr im Vordergrund.

density in harmony



gestures of life



Part Two

further
information



mar álvarez segura

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Former articles by Mar you can see here:

<https://emcapp.ignis.de/10/#p=137>

INTRODUCCIÓN LIBRO ANTROPOLOGIA CRISTIANA Y CIENCIAS DE LA SALUD MENTAL. (INTRODUCTION TO CHRISTIAN ANTHROPOLOGY AND MENTAL HEALTH SCIENCES)

Dykinson, Madrid , España, 2021 ISBN: 978-84-1377-378-0, ISBN electrónico: 978-84-1377-448-0

From the nineteenth century to the present day, psychology and philosophy have grown further apart. As a consequence, the mental health sciences began exclusively to use research methods and procedures typical of the experimental sciences. They moved away from an open reflection on philosophy, which led to considering problems that cannot be measured as irrelevant. This rupture between the two disciplines and the rejection of the transcendental nature of this relationship has led to the idea that the vast majority of mental disorders are a mere product of environmental forces, or the result of biological or social conditions. Consequently, there has developed an excessive simplification of mental problems and disorders.

The polarization has been even greater

Desde el siglo XIX hasta la actualidad la psicología y la filosofía han iniciado un distanciamiento cada vez más pronunciado. Como consecuencia, las ciencias de la salud mental empezaron a usar exclusivamente métodos y procedimientos de investigación propios de las ciencias experimentales. Se alejaron de una reflexión abierta a la filosofía lo que llevó a considerar como irrelevantes los problemas que no se pueden medir. Esta ruptura entre ambas disciplinas y el rechazo de una naturaleza trascendental de esta relación ha llevado a la idea de que la gran mayoría de trastornos mentales son un mero producto de las fuerzas ambientales, el resultado de las condiciones biológicas o sociales, en consecuencia, se ha hecho una simplificación desmesurada de los problemas o desórdenes mentales. Esta polarización ha sido incluso mayor al

in the effort to foster dialogue on mental health with properly Christian anthropology. Frequently the attempt at integration has been undermined by those who, in the name of one or the other, seek to exclude rather than integrate. Those of us who have experienced this rupture as mental health professionals know how to recognize the confusion that is experienced when one is immersed in a universe where any transcendent reference is reduced to the minimum expression, not only due to the absence of faith, but also due to the reductionist models with which you work. It starts from premises that are so far removed from the truth of the human being that they leave professionals confused and unable to understand what is truly happening inside the person.

The vast majority of psychotherapeutic models provide partial responses to mental illness and ignore a substantial wealth by denying the origin and end of the human being, and, above all, by denying the presence of God in us as the most constitutive and empowering force.

Despite this prevalent reductionist trend, over the past 30 years an increasingly fruitful debate has reopened, particularly in the Anglo-Saxon world, between the mental health sciences and anthropology-related issues that point directly to the nature of person. A number of professional associations of mental health and philosophy have been created, international conferences are held, and magazines have appeared.

Unfortunately, despite this trend, specific dialogue in international forums between the mental health sciences and Christian anthropology has been poorly represented. However, this reality has been taken more as a challenge than as a defeat. With the conviction of making the limit of each discipline a paradigm rather than an end, and without ceasing to value the speci-

tratar de fomentar el diálogo de la salud mental con la antropología propiamente cristiana. Frecuentemente el intento de integración ha sido socavado por aquellos que, en nombre de una u otra buscan excluir más que integrar. Quienes como profesionales de la salud mental hemos vivido esta ruptura sabemos reconocer la confusión que se ha de atravesar cuando uno se encuentra inmerso en un universo donde cualquier referencia trascendente es reducida a la mínima expresión, no sólo por ausencia de fe, sino por los modelos reduccionistas con los que se trabaja. Se parte de premisas tan alejadas de la verdad del ser humano que dejan a los profesionales desconcertados y con imposibilidad de entender lo que verdaderamente está aconteciendo en el interior de la persona.

La gran mayoría de modelos psicoterapéuticos aportan respuestas parciales a la dolencia psíquica y dejan de lado una riqueza sustancial al negar el origen y fin del ser humano, y, sobre todo, al negar la presencia de Dios en nosotros como lo más constitutivo y potenciador.

A pesar de esta tendencia reduccionista preponderante durante los últimos 30 años se ha reabierto, sobre todo en el mundo anglosajón, un debate cada vez más fructífero entre las ciencias de la salud mental y temas relacionados con la antropología que apuntan directamente a la naturaleza de la persona. Se crean distintas asociaciones profesionales de salud mental y filosofía, se realizan congresos internacionales y aparecen revistas.

Lamentablemente a pesar de esta tendencia, el diálogo específico en foros internacionales entre las ciencias de la salud mental y la antropología cristiana ha estado pobremente representado. Sin embargo, esta realidad se ha tomado más como un desafío que como una derrota. Con el convencimiento de hacer del límite de cada disciplina un paradigma más que un final, y sin por ello dejar de valorar la especificidad de las disciplinas, se han llevado a cabo distintas iniciativas en Europa que han coin-

city of the disciplines, various initiatives have been undertaken in Europe that have coincided at the appropriate time to make possible different national meetings and seminars that converge in an international congress, and in this book.

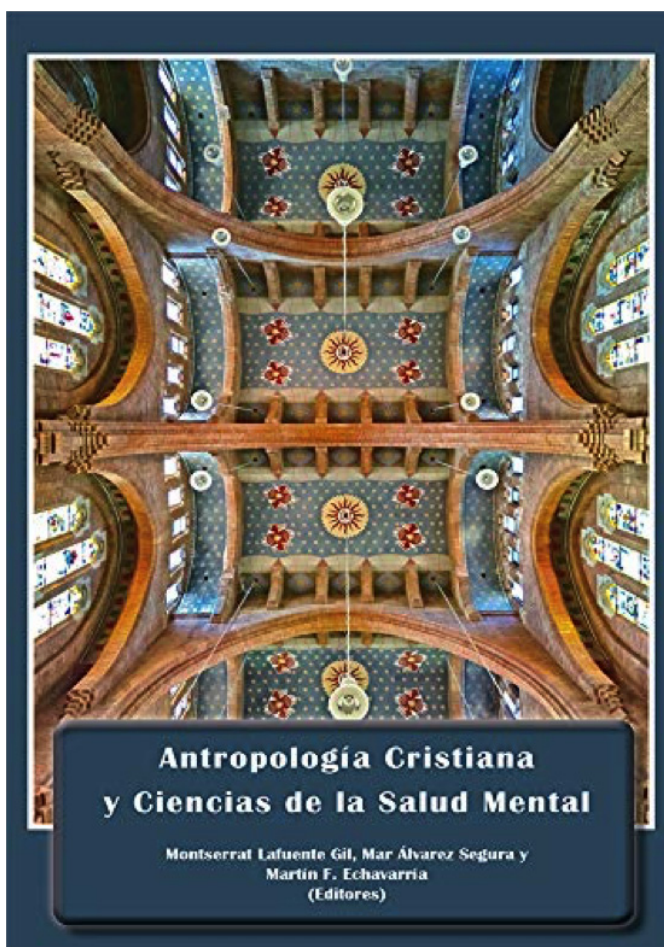
We should note the work carried out in the Department of Psychology of the Abat Oliba CEU University in this field. Since 2010, various workshops have been organized around the formation of character by virtue. In 2015, with the help of Notre Dame University and the John Templeton Foundation, the Department of Psychology [who is she?] launched an investigation into the influence of mystical experience on the development of personality according to Saint Teresa of Jesus and Saint John of the Cross. In addition, the university has offered training to the most inquisitive students, and since 2014 a group of research and reflection students called Psyche has been formalized. Throughout their university studies they analyze and explore the challenges of psychology in today's society under a Christian anthropology umbrella.

The European Movement for Christian Anthropology, Psychology and Psychotherapy has continued to organize different meetings at the European level for almost 30 years with the aim of developing a psychology based on the Christian faith, and promoting dialogue and friendship among its network of professionals.

Finally, the contribution of the Fernando Rielo Chair at the Pontifical University of Salamanca should be recognized for promoting research in psychoethics, a science that encompasses the relationship of two fields, psychology and ethics, based on Christian anthropology.

These initiatives reveal the need for Christi-

cido en el momento oportuno para hacer posibles diferentes encuentros y seminarios nacionales que convergen en un congreso internacional y en el presente libro. Es de destacar la labor llevada a cabo en el Departamento de Psicología de la Universidad Abat Oliba CEU en este ámbito. Desde el año 2010 se han organizado distintas jornadas en torno a la formación del carácter por la virtud. En 2015 con la ayuda de Notre Dame University y John Templeton



Foundation inició una investigación sobre la influencia de la experiencia mística en el desarrollo de la personalidad según Santa Teresa de Jesús y San Juan de la Cruz. Además la universidad ha ofrecido formación a los estudiantes más inquietos y desde 2014 se formaliza un grupo de estudiantes de investigación y reflexión llamado Psyche. A lo largo de la carrera universitaria analizan y profundizan bajo una antropología cristiana los desafíos de la psicología en

the prayer



an mental health professionals to reevaluate our discipline under a dynamic and confrontational relationship with Christ. Only this relationship is capable of illuminating our minds and preventing us from falling into fragmented reasoning and being hijacked by a scientific-materialist mentality or by disembodied piety.

Pope Pius XII, at the V International Congress of Psychotherapy and Clinical Psychology on April 13, 1953, reminded the participants:

“Medicine teaches how to look at the human body as a high-precision mechanism, whose elements overlap each other and are linked together; the place and characteristics of these elements depend on the whole, since they only serve for their existence and their functions. But this conception is much better applied to the soul, whose delicate gears are assembled with much more care.”

This book is an attempt to decipher, from the mental health sciences and Christian anthropology, these delicate gears of the human soul that allow us to know with greater depth and precision the various disorders that manifest themselves on a psychological level.

If we do not promote this dialogue, we impoverish the discourse, and we lose the language needed to name more precisely the states or situations in which the patients find themselves. Just as being sad is not the same as suffering depression, the sorrow of ontological guilt is not the same as the anxiety of neurotic guilt, and the aridity that appears in certain spiritual processes is not the same as the emptiness of lack of commitment.

Developing a fruitful and long-lasting interdisciplinary experience requires an initial and powerful catalyst to provide sufficient

la sociedad actual.

El European Movement for Christian Anthropology, Psychology and Psychotherapy durante casi 30 años no ha dejado de organizar diferentes encuentros a nivel europeo con el objetivo de desarrollar una psicología fundamentada en la fe cristiana, y promover el diálogo y la amistad entre su red de profesionales.

Finalmente, la contribución de la Cátedra Fernando Rielo de la Universidad Pontificia de Salamanca promueve la investigación en la psicoética, ciencia que estudia las relaciones de dos campos, la psicología y la ética con fundamento en la antropología cristiana.

Estas iniciativas revelan la necesidad que tenemos los profesionales de la salud mental cristianos de reevaluar nuestra disciplina bajo una relación dinámica y confrontadora con Cristo. Sólo esta relación es capaz de iluminar nuestra mente y no caer en un razonamiento fragmentado y secuestrado por una mentalidad científico-materialista o por una piedad desencarnada

El Papa Pio XII en el V congreso internacional de Psicoterapia y de psicología clínica el 13 de abril de 1953 recordó a los participantes:

“La medicina enseña a mirar el cuerpo humano como un mecanismo de alta precisión, cuyos elementos se superponen el uno al otro y se enlazan entre sí; el lugar y las características de estos elementos dependen del todo, pues solo sirven para su existencia y sus funciones. Pero esta concepción se aplica mucho mejor al alma, cuyos delicados engranajes están ensamblados con mucho más cuidado”.

Este libro es un intento de descifrar desde las ciencias de la salud mental y la antropología cristiana estos delicados engranajes del alma humana que nos permitan conocer cada vez con mayor hondura y precisión los distintos desórdenes que se manifiestan a nivel psicológico.

Si no potenciamos este diálogo empobrecemos el discurso, perdemos vocabulario

momentum, capable of promoting creativity and guaranteeing growth and subsequent dissemination. With this catalytic intention we have undertaken the writing of this book. We know that multiple and fruitful contributions have emerged from this open dialogue across Europe from different initiatives. And we did not want to stop sharing, as we are aware that reading and dissemination will guarantee the momentum needed to continue this beautiful endeavor.

para nombrar con más precisión los estados o situaciones en que se encuentran los pacientes. Porque no es lo mismo estar triste que tener una depresión, no es lo mismo el pesar de la culpa ontológica que la ansiedad de la culpa neurótica, no es lo mismo la aridez que aparece en ciertos procesos espirituales que el vacío de la falta de compromiso. Así podríamos nombrar más realidades que analizadas solo desde la psicología se pueden llegar a caricaturizar.

El desarrollo de una experiencia interdisciplinaria fructífera y duradera requiere un catalizador inicial y poderoso que proporcione suficiente impulso. Impulso capaz de promover creatividad y garantizar el crecimiento y la difusión posterior. Con esta intención catalizadora escribimos este libro. Sabemos que múltiples y fructíferas aportaciones han surgido de este diálogo abierto en toda Europa a partir de diferentes iniciativas. Y no queríamos dejar de compartirlo pues somos conscientes que su lectura y difusión garantizará el impulso necesario para seguir en este bonito empeño.

love between us





anna ostaszewska

Anna Ostaszewska (Poland), psychotherapist, supervisor, European Certificate of Psychotherapy (ECP). President of the Association of Christian Psychologists in Poland 1995-2009. President of the ACP Psychotherapy Section (2009-2014). Lecturer at the ACP Psychotherapy Study (2003-2015). At present she works at the Integrative Psychotherapy Centre in Warsaw. Author of the book „Psychoterapia integratywna w podejściu chrześcijańskim” (Integrative Psychotherapy: A Christian Approach). Sopot: GWP, second edition in 2017. See also eJ 2, 2012

Former articles by Anna available here:

<https://emcapp.ignis.de/11/#p=62>

<http://emcapp.ignis.de/1/#/58>

<http://emcapp.ignis.de/1/#/78>

The EMCAPP Small Meeting

Who we are? The easiest way to meet Christian psychologists, psychotherapists and leaders from Europe.

The idea of EMCAPP Small Meetings is to have a short session where interested people meet with EMCAPP board members and get to know each other by Skype.

The first Small Meeting took place in June 2021. It was the meeting of six EMCAPP board members with psychologists and psychotherapists from Poland whom I had invited.

All participants received brief information about themselves before the meeting. In addition, Polish participants received an e-mail with the history of the European Movement for Christian Anthropology, Psychology and Psychotherapy. We also made a contact list.

Our program was very simple:

- Welcome and opening prayer by Nicoleene Joubert (South Africa).
- The EMCAPP Board members introduced themselves (Werner May from Germany, Anna Ostaszewska from Warsaw, Andrey Lorgus from Moscow, Nicoleene Joubert from South Africa, Elena Strigo

from Krasnojarsk (Russia), Francesco Cutino from Rome (Italy).

- The nine Polish participants (psychotherapists from different cities of Poland: Warsaw, Toruń, Gdańsk, Lublin, Wyszaków) introduced themselves.
- Werner May gave a presentation of the seven statements of EMCAPP.
- Time for a talk (10 minutes).

The meeting took only one hour. But no more time was needed. It was the essence.

Participants were especially touched by:

- Prayer by Nicoleene Joubert (serious and deep).
- Prayer by Andrey Lorgus at the end (in Russian) – also very deep (and Polish people understood his Russian).
- Contemplative Silence time given by Werner May during his presentation.
- Werner's presentation of the EMCAPP statements.
- Spiritual attitude of all participants.

At the end, we felt something specifically spiritual.

I think I should name it like this:

it was an unexpected mystical experience.

Here some feedbacks from Polish Participants:

...thank you again for the meeting. It was interesting to hear people from different places in the world and with different experiences. I was especially touched by the prayer in Russian - it's beautiful.

I have a reflection-inspiration that maybe from time to time it would be worthwhile to organize such meetings for the Polish group ... For example, we could meet around some topic.

(Katarzyna, Psychotherapist, Lublin)

...this meeting was a special time for me. Thank you, Anna, for the invitation and organization.

It was a great honour for me to meet you and get to know you. I think it's very important to be able to meet like this and share our professional (and also life) experience, thoughts and problems. We live in times of cultural changes in Europe and in the whole world, where our faith and beliefs are treated differently. In Europe there is a crisis of faith. In Asia it is flourishing/growing. Therefore, I think that the opportunity for Christian anthropologists, psychologists and psychotherapists to support each other is something wonderful and extremely important.

Thank you for this opportunity, but most of all for praying together...

I try to pray for my patients, to ask the Holy Spirit for light while working with them, to entrust my work to Jesus. Knowing that I can pray together with other Christian psychologists is very empowering...

Let us pray for fruits from this meeting and the next ones, for all Christians helping

others with their work, may the Holy Spirit come with inspirations. May He guide us.

(Magda, Psychologist, Warsaw)

...It is very optimistic and important to me that I found myself in the environment of people among whom I could openly declare my commitment to Christian values on a professional basis. The idea of EMPCAPP, the members' extraordinary openness to cooperation, and the seven statements of EMCAPP arouse in me optimism and gratitude to God for the existence of such a group. What is valuable to me is the cross-cultural and cross-linguistic understanding in this area.

I hope I will be able to contribute my little part to this work.

(Agnieszka, Psychotherapist, Gdańsk)

...It was such a strong experience of unity during prayer, which I haven't had for a long time.

It surprised me... during the prayer there was a great peace in my heart and an awareness of how much we are all connected in Christ. How important each of us is. This bond was almost tangible. I also realized how much FAITH means in relationships with patients. And that thanks to Jesus I can be closer to them, really. I am grateful to God for meeting you with each other sometime somewhere, and recently me with you.

(Karolina, Psychotherapy student, Wyszaków)

For me this meeting was a surprise, because I expected a gathering of people around a good idea, but I experienced a community of people gathered in the name of Jesus Christ around His person - not an idea, not a celebration of their own mission. Of course I expected only good motivations, but the reality in which I found myself hit me very hard precisely because it authen-

tically reflected the place of God in human life and in the community and made it possible not only to talk about Him but also to experience His Presence. It is a great joy and a real encounter!

(Marta, Psychotherapist, Warsaw)

After the meeting I was overwhelmed with thoughts, ideas and emotions. I knew I needed time in order to look soberly at what had happened during the time we shared together. Now I am ready to reflect upon the event.

It filled me with an incredible sense of joy that participants from so many distant places in the world gathered together around Our Lord - Jesus Christ, to tell Him (Mk 6,30) and to one another how we work, to proclaim His Kingdom every day, in toil and joy of working with other person. I was moved by your authenticity and openness. I felt a strong „Magis“ desire: more, better,

stronger to increase cooperation and closer contacts...

During our meeting I was haunted by the image of a bee. „Small is the bee among flying creatures, but its fruit takes precedence among sweets“. (Sir 11:3).

All over the world there are such hardworking bees devoted to Christ, with no great resources, no banners, no sponsorship. They just earn this hive of earth, but they keep on doing their job. Some of them met online. The sweetness of their work soothes souls and bodies of the people in need. Again, thank you so much for the opportunity to attend the meeting. I wish everyone HONEY that each of us and those we accompany may taste „how sweet the Lord is“. (Ps 34:9).

(Agnieszka, Psychotherapist, Warsaw)

come to the last supper



The first 15 numbers of the eJournal Christian Psychology Around The World

The EMCAPP Journal "The Christian Psychology Around the World" is published in Germany, the main editor is Werner May. Since 2011 the internet bilingual Journal is published two times a year. The authors of articles and comments are psychologists, psychotherapists and scientists from different countries of the world.

This journal is published by the European Movement for Christian Anthropology, Psychology and Psychotherapy in cooperation with the IGNIS-Akademie für Christliche Psychologie.

See here: <https://emcapp.ignis.de>



JOURNAL NO. 15
2020

Focus Topic: "Basic trust and secure attachment - Christian anthropological, educational and psychotherapeutic aspects."



JOURNAL NO. 14
2020

Focus Topic: Coping with Stress in Theory and Practice of Christian Psychology



JOURNAL NO. 13
2019

Focus Topic: Body Aspects in Christian Psychology, Psychotherapy and Counseling



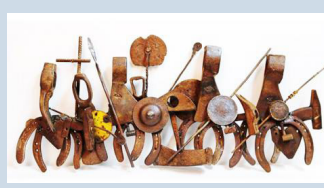
JOURNAL NO. 12
2019

Focus Topic: Christian identity



JOURNAL NO. 11
2018

Focus Topic: Who is leading me during practicing Christian Psychology?



JOURNAL NO. 10
2017

Focus Topic: Conscience



JOURNAL NO. 9
2016

Focus Topic: „Therapy Goals“



JOURNAL NO. 8
2016

Focus Country South Africa



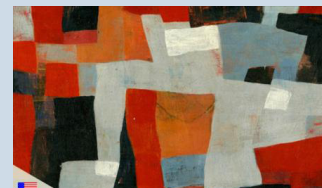
JOURNAL NO. 7
2015

Focus Country Canada



JOURNAL NO. 6
2015

Focus Country Finland



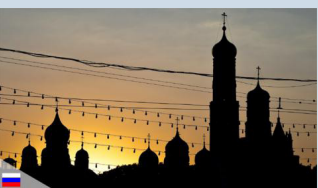
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2014

Focus Country USA



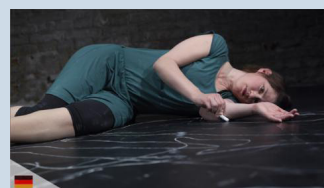
JOURNAL NO. 4
2013

Focus Country Switzerland



JOURNAL NO. 3
2013

Focus Country Russia



JOURNAL NO. 2
2012

Focus Country Germany



JOURNAL NO. 1
2012

Focus Country Poland



About Us

This journal is published by the European Movement for Christian Anthropology, Psychology and Psychotherapy in cooperation with the IGNIS-Academy, Kanzler-Stürtzel-Str.2, D-97318 Kitzingen. EMCAPP as a non-institutional movement enjoys meeting Christian scholars and practitioner in the field of Christian anthropology, psychology, psychotherapy and counseling from all over the world and from most Christian traditions. We are focused on bringing together key persons from different countries. The richness of experience and background always stimulates and refreshes us.

This magazine is free and can be downloaded from our website. We appreciate everyone who recommends it.

Per year, two issues of the journal are planned.

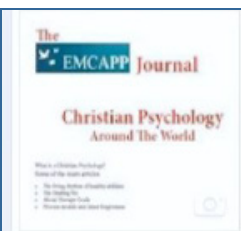
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The Board of EMCAPP

- Francesco Cution (Italy), clinical psychologist and psychotherapist, associate of the Italian Catholic Association of Psychologists and Psychiatrists, president founder of the association "Jonas is on the way", Rome.
- Nicolene Joubert (South Africa) psychologist, Head of the ICP: the Institute of Christian Psychology in Johannesburg www.icp.org.za.
- Rev. Andrey Lorgus (Russia), psychologist, Rector of the Institute of Christian Psychology in Moscow, <http://fapsyrou.ru>.
- Werner May (Germany), psychologist, former President of the Academy for Christian Psychology IGNIS www.ignis.de, President of EMCAPP Board.
- Anna Ostaszewska (Poland), psychotherapist, supervisor, one of the founders of the Association of Christian Psychologists in Poland (ACP). Vice-President of EMCAPP Board
- Elena Strigo (Russia, city of Krasnojarsk, Siberian Region), psychologist, psychotherapist at the Psychological Counselling Center.

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Spring 2022



European
Movement for
Christian
Anthropology,
Psychology and
Psychotherapy



Gefällt mir Nachricht senden Mehr

Kontaktiere uns

seven statements of emcapp



The seven statements of EMCAPP are as follows:

- 1. EMCAPP is based on the belief that there is a God who is actively maintaining this world, and therefore there cannot be any discussions about Man without talking about God.**
- 2. EMCAPP acknowledges the limitations of all human knowledge and therefore appreciates the attempts of the various Christian denominations to describe God and their faith.**
- 3. EMCAPP brings together international leaders and pioneers in the field of Christian psychology and psychotherapy and its underlying anthropology.**
- 4. EMCAPP respects and appreciates the cultural and linguistic diversity of backgrounds of its members.**
- 5. EMCAPP encourages its members to learn how to recognize each other as friends and brothers and sisters in Christ.**
- 6. EMCAPP encourages its members in their national challenges and responsibilities.**
- 7. EMCAPP has a global future and it is open to discourse and joint research opportunities around the world.**