



christian psychology around the world

THE EMCAPP JOURNAL

17 / 2022

The Main Articles

- Paul Loosemore (USA): Situating Grief in Redemptive History for the Sake of Joy
- Lucia Del Carmen Peraltilla Romero (Peru) and Bart Gooijer (Netherlands) about this article
- An Interview with a Christian Psychologist: Päivimaria Kuivamäki (Finland)
- Werner May (Germany): Werner's Challenge: The human being as a relational being is also a part of systems / Werners Herausforderung 2 für eine Christliche Psychologie: "Der Mensch als ein Beziehungswesen ist auch Teil von Systemen."

Editorial

One day before the war started, I got the report about the Online Seminar “Theoretical Foundations of the Christian Psychology” by the Ukrainian Association of Christian Psychology from 29.01.2022, where I was allowed to give a short lecture. (See here page 49)

And not long ago, in 2021, I gave an online-training for trainer and counselors for foster families in Ukraine. The last evening was in January 2022. In my heart I now wonder what is going on in all these families. I see faces of friends, colleagues, and I think of their families, friends, clients...

The eJournal Psychology Around The World has been connected to numerous colleagues in Ukraine, and as well in Russia, for many years.

They now suffer, and send us signals of shock and horror! And with them, many others in their countries!

In my heart, there is solidarity, especially with those we know. Thank you, that you stand up for peace! And we with you.

We are also connected to those who are committed to help and support, those who give, those who take in refugees. Here I especially think of our brothers and sisters in Poland and the other neighboring countries.

Our main article in this journal is about the acceptance of loss of every-day-good-things. It is not about having lost everything, but maybe there are some helpful ideas even in that direction.

We keep praying.

Yours, Werner May
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CONTENTS

- 2 Editorial
- 8 About the artist: Miriam Eva Hofmann (Germany)

MAIN ARTICLES

- 12 Paul Loosemore (USA): Situating Grief in Redemptive History for the Sake of Joy
- 25 Lucia Del Carmen Peraltila Romero (Peru) and Bart Gooijer (Netherlands) comment Paul`s article
- 33 The article by Paul Loosemore in the light of former contributions
- 36 An Interview with a Christian Psychologist: Päivimaria Kuivamäki (Finland)
- 40 Werner May (Germany): Werner`s Challenge for a Christian Psychology: The human being as a relational being is also a part of systems / Werners Herausforderung für eine Christliche Psychologie: "Der Mensch als ein Beziehungswesen ist auch Teil von Systemen."

FURTHER CONTRIBUTIONS

- 48 Review of the Seminar "Theoretical Foundations of the Christian Psychology" by the Ukrainian Association of Christian Psychology on 29.01.2022
- 51 A special Topic: Miguel A. Alcarria (Spain): Idolatry: A Phenomenological Approach from Psychology / Idolatría: una aproximación fenomenológica desde la psicología
- 55 We present Gideon Institute of Christian Psychology and Counseling
- 58 The first 16 numbers of the eJournal
- 59 Next Number / About us
- 60 Seven Statements of EMCAPP

Why do we have a bilingual journal?

In our movement for Christian Psychology, we meet as Christians with very different backgrounds: different churches, different cul-tures, 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.



scream

about the artist

There are many ways for one to encounter the great Creator. From the Christian bible we learn how he manifests himself to a diversity of people in diverse manners. And still today the access is manifold. Some are moved by nature, some by studying scripture or other books, for some music is an access to the triune God and for some the Fine Arts can be a window to the soul.

In my church I have brothers and sisters with whom I can laugh and cry, believe and have doubts. Together we are pupils of the one who invented creativity with all its facets of life.

This is one of the reasons why I named my homepage **www.meisterschüler.com**. The German word "Meisterschüler" means Master-class-student. I am not a student of an artist's master class, but see myself as a pupil of THE inventor of creativity. Contrary to a student in Art School, where you have had to prove your worthiness to become a master student the access to the greatest Artists of all is not bound to certain requirements. The only precondition is ones wish to honestly follow Jesus.

In the book of Exodus one can read how God equipped his artisans and artists with his Holy Spirit. Through their high qualified works they were to honor him by building the tabernacle and all its utensils. These masters of the arts had been raised as slaves in Egypt and there they had learned everything they needed to know to fulfill the given assignment. God had prepared them in a time they probably hadn't dreamed of the task ahead.

This account shows that on the one hand God himself appoints and equips Artists for his plans but it also shows the great responsibility one has when using these God



miriam eva hofmann
germany

given talents for praise.

In Psalm 90:17 Moses prays: "May the favor of the Lord our God rest on us; establish the work of our hands for us – yes, establish the work of our hands."

I work conceptual. With a divers number of materials and techniques I treat themes which I presently have on my mind. The main subject of my Art usually is the relationship between mankind and its Creator. It is not my goal to produce "Christian Art", but Art which encourages reflectiveness and hopefully points out to the one who stand at the beginning of everything.

When I create art the results have to touch my heart first. When it also touches the heart of the viewer, then maybe we speak the same language.

I studied History of Art focusing on museum education. But instead of getting a degree in this field I decided to become a kindergarten teacher because I really wanted to work with children artistically since in the 80s the chances to get a job at a museum weren't so good.

Until we got our first child I worked at a

day-care-center with my main focus on art education. At the elementary school of my two children and in other facilities I have offered a diversity of workshops. I've also been giving seminars and lectures for adults. Here I work both in practice as in theory. Besides teaching different kind of techniques and visiting museums, giving Information on certain artists and art-forms is part of the workshops. In our church I organize exhibitions and offer meditations on works of art.

My mother being a fashion designer and my father an art teacher I held my first drawing pencil before I was able to walk. From childhood on until this day being creative is an important part of my life. After a severe car accident the arts gained even more significance. About one year before, I had started to concern myself with thoughts on "vocation as an artist". After the weeks on intensive care and the time of healing I decided to become a professional artist. I received affirmation through artist friends whose expert's opinion means a lot to me. It was really important for me to have my resolution acknowledged by others. Even though or maybe because I would call myself more of an introvert I set value to interacting with others. I enjoy the exchange and mutual enrichment.

„Actually I'm quite different - I just don't really find enough time to be it.“ I like this quote by the writer Ödön von Horváth. My life is much filled and I'm thankful for that. But sometimes I wonder what would be if I had more time? Maybe I'd be in the studio more often, would implement more projects or be more active in networking? Nevertheless I know that I'm exactly at the spot where I belong: As a master student of the one and only true master!

Miriam Eva Hofmann

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articles



paul loosemore

Dr Paul Loosemore is an Assistant Professor of Counseling at Covenant Theological Seminary in St. Louis, USA. His research and writing investigates both practical application, and theory surrounding Christian Psychology and counseling. Paul is also the clinical director of Covenant's counseling center and maintains a clinical private practice.

Situating Grief in Redemptive History for the Sake of Joy

We consistently experience the loss of every-day-good-things; flowers, a good meal, or time with friends. Redemptive History provides a context within which to understand our lives and the ebb and flow of pleasure and sorrow. We explore this context, and then demonstrate how therapists can assist clients to develop an accurate Redemptive Historical perspective of gain and loss. The culmination of this renewed perspective is increased acceptance of momentary grief, fuller experiences of joy, and life strategies that align with God's kingdom.

The Desire for Joy and Relief

In the western world, happiness is commonly pursued through consumption and experience. We come upon, and lose, pleasurable things on a daily basis. How we interpret and interaction with loss significantly alters our lived experience. Take the humble dandelion as an example. When I use the blooming yellow flower to satiate my hunger for joy and pleasure, I consume it. When the flower wilts, how will I be sustained? Should I find another, and potentially more satisfying flower? Consumerism is fueled as we habituate to our current comforts. We often long for more pleasure, and get immensely frustrated or bitter, when the everyday good-gifts

that supplied our baseline happiness stop working or wilt. For example, how do you feel when your cell phone stops working, your coffee spills, the meal isn't ideal, or your special someone shifts their attention to something else?

This condition is not new. Oswald Chambers (1935) pointed out the dynamics of demand in human relationships, and I suggest his observations also apply to everyday objects and experiences:

If we love a human being [or experience of any kind] and do not love God, we demand of him [or it] every perfection and every rectitude, and when we do not get it, we become cruel and vindictive; we are demanding of a human being [or thing] that which he or she [or it] cannot give.

There is only one Being who can satisfy the last aching abyss of the human heart and this is the Lord Jesus Christ. Why our Lord is apparently so severe regarding every human relationship is because He knows that every relationship not based on loyalty to Himself will end in disaster. (p. 154)

Let us return to the dandelion when it is ready to seed—wispy and white. It is beautiful, but if you breathe heavily or the wind picks up, it is gone. But you can pick another, and then another. This is just an example, but the cycle of gain and loss in life provokes grief. The ebb and flow of everyday life in the already-and-not-yet of the kingdom is just like the dandelion. It comes, and

it goes: plans with friends are cancelled; a restless child is awake in the night (and therefore so are you!); a new dinner recipe didn't work out. Two problems arise for the average modern Westerner. First, our desire for pleasure is thwarted, and the orientation of our entitled heart is exposed. Second, we are sad to lose a genuine good, and we do suffer a real loss.

Approaching the Problem of Loss

These two problems of living drive discontent. To address them we must first address our standing in the world. Charles Taylor and C.S. Lewis each provide fertile inquiry into the human condition that assists us as we consider our two problems, and subsequently how to support clients. Taylor (1991) has critiqued the current popular belief that an authentic self, rests on self-fulfillment. In short, he disagrees that persons define their own purpose, identity, preferences, and joy, and should pursue this self-construal to find happiness. Instead, Taylor argues for a different understanding of people, suggesting we can only discover the authentic self, purpose and identity, in relationship with others as we dialogue, oppose, limit, experience, or find proximity to something or someone else. He argues that objective sources of meaning and morality ultimately exist independent of one's own will or personal satisfaction, and cannot be escaped. Taylor calls the sources of meaning and morality 'Horizons of Significance'. We might call some of these sources 'communities of significance', because the influence of family, friends, and politics cannot be ignored. In this manner, the Redemptive Historical narrative believed by Christians classifies as an important Horizon of Significance.

Turning to work of C.S. Lewis, we find his consideration of the question of morality. Lewis suggested that living well is concerned with three things. "Firstly, with fair play and harmony between individuals. Secondly, with what might be called tidying

up or harmonising the things inside each individual. Thirdly, with the general purpose of human life as a whole: what man was made for: what course the whole fleet ought to be on: what tune the conductor of the band wants it to play" (Lewis, 2015, p. 72). I suggest the modern American therapeutic and entitlement culture, over invests in the second concern—harmonizing the self. Lewis continues, that to think well about morality, we must address all three relations; relations within man (internal), between man (relational), and the power that made him (redemptive history). Given that Christians believe humans are embodied, and operate within relationships and the structure of wider creation, both Lewis and Taylor's contentions are formative for the Christian. In combination they provide significant guidance on living well within daily repetitive cycles of good and loss. One way to think about a Christian orientation to life is to acknowledge and live according to the meaning and morality structures of: Horizon 1—the embodied self (with emotions, perceptions, and interpretive ability that allows a dialogue of sorts with the self), Horizon 2—community (immediate and broader systems of relationships and influence), and Horizon 3—the Biblical World (with its grand design, purpose, and redemptive historical arc). Each Horizon stakes some claim in organizing what it means for any one person to live well within redemptive history.

Scripture and Horizons of Significance

The life of the Corinthian Christians in scripture provides an opportunity to observe the three Horizons in the apostle Paul's thinking. In 1 Corinthians Paul addresses a litany of practices associated with worldly living as these young Christians have prioritized Horizon 1 and 2. Brendsel (2019) comments that it was the Corinthians "everyday, culturally conditioned walk that clarifies, crystalizes, and, we can add, cultivates their fleshliness, their foolishness, their thrall to the wisdom of the world" (p. 14).



vanitas

In other words, culture and pleasure orient their lived experience. In 2 Corinthians chapters 3 through 5, Paul is encouraging these maturing Christians by contextualizing Horizons 1 through 3. Paul frames Horizon 2, a communal life, using the term “we”, and “boasting” in one another as they serve as “ambassadors” for God. Paul recons with Horizon 1 noting the “wasting away” of self, and being “afflicted, carrying in the body”. Yet Paul frames Horizon 1 and 2 within Horizon 3, “as we look not to the things that are seen”, “for the love of Christ controls us”. One key verse holds all three Horizons in tension: “For if we are beside ourselves, it is for God; if we are in our right mind, it is for you” (2 Cor. 5:13). Redemptive historical living requires the interwoven tension of Horizons 1 through 3, and this can help us with moment-to-moment loss, grief, and joy.

Critically, Horizon 3 includes a right perspective of both, creation and fall in the Bible’s redemptive story arc. The purpose of our lives, and the enjoyment of fresh dandelions, fellowship, food, and other pleasures is to glorify God as each gift experientially demonstrates and reflects His glory (Is 43:7, Is 6:3, Ps 19:1). We are made to glorify God through the acts of daily life, corporate worship, experiencing the beauty of creation, and being oriented towards the day of consummation. But, within redemptive history, the fall is present, and we await the next chapter (Gen 3, Rev 21:4). Therefore, we must expect (as did Paul with the Corinthians) that loss will occur, even while God’s glorious creation is still experienced. The hope of the Christian life is felt in the present and sustains us through trials (2 Cor 4:17-18). When we situate life within this redemptive historical Horizon, both loss and joy, are expected and provide meaning and sustenance.

The Application of Horizons of Significance

Let us turn to the clients in our clinical practice. Many are oriented to Horizon 1 (the self), in such a way that the sustenance of redemptive history is rarely experienced.

Frankfurt (2005) articulates a core issue in our social milieu that reinforces our orientation to Horizon 1:

The realms of advertising and public relations, and the nowadays closely related realm of politics, are replete with instances of [distortion] so unmitigated that they can serve among the most indisputable and classic paradigms of the concept [of distortion].

And in these realms there are exquisitely sophisticated craftsmen who – with the help of advanced and demanding technology of market research, of public opinion polling, of psychological testing, and so forth – dedicate themselves tirelessly to getting every word and image they produce exactly right. (p. 22-23)

Western culture is saturated with attempts to make us believe Horizon 1 (our self) is to be perpetually satisfied. Crawford (2015) refers to these sophisticated crafts persons as “Choice Architects”, tirelessly extorting our attention, and manipulating what we internalize as a “good life” for economic gain.

No matter our orientation to life, lament and grief still provides orientation to those who dare listen. These visceral experiences expose our affections, and subsequently what we value. As the dandelion moments pass, or are cut short and we feel loss and pain, we can ask “what did I really long to enjoy?” This question peels back our eyes from the “good life” constructed by “Choice Architects” and culture, allowing us to investigate the longings God has situated within the Imago Dei. We are signaled by feelings of loss and pain (Horizon 1), and simultaneously, when we are saturated in the Kingdom (Horizon 3) we may become aware of the joy intended (Horizon 1+3). Psalm 126:6 beautifully exposes the tension of loss and joy:

He who goes out weeping,
bearing the seed for sowing,
shall come home with shouts of joy,
bringing his sheaves with him.

Great tension exists between cultural pres-

sures that assume the viability of Horizon 1 and 2 to orient our lives, and a Christian life that sees everything in reference to Horizon 3. Living in this tension is no small task. Brueggemann (2001) recommended “Prophetic Imagination” as a method to cut into these tensions, and engage in new ways. His method entails carefully criticizing and dismantling the prevailing expectations, and assumptions of the current narrative, so that a fuller picture of reality becomes apparent. He suggests that the subsequent emergence of a new consciousness about the full story and our experience, allows for new meaning and desire that energizes new choices. Brueggemann utilizes the imagination as a key tool to recognize what new choices may look like when reality is witnessed. For example, we are only able to peel back our eyes from the “choice architects” endless pursuit of more, to acknowledge the common beauty of life when specific realities are engaged. First, the pain of loss is allowed and not medicated or ignored. We must viscerally pronounce “this is not as intended”. Jesus wept (John 11:35), and Paul wrestles with himself and his actions (Rom 7) in expressions that agree with the wider reality (Horizon 3). Second, we must accept the desires of the heart go beyond the current heralds (culture, choice architects) and our feelings. The culture has a myopic view. We thirst after God (Ps 63), and John speaks of the “bread of life”. Third, we have a view of God’s alternative possibilities and ending. The redemptive

narrative of hope (1 Thess 4:13-17), seen in triumph in Revelations 19-21, is actively hoped for. Fourth, we accept the rich possibilities of God can sometimes make us lament more. The good Samaritan (Lu 10) is often out of sight, and the humble and in need are rejected (Lu 7:36-40). When such truths are allowed as we criticize the mirage of our culture, we dismantle the logic of clamoring after moment-to-moment pleasure. A new perspective and desires are energized by the God of the Bible who is on the move. I imagine Aslan, prowling, breathing, creating, to viscerally connect to the alternative story that scripture provides. This is the master stroke of stories like Narnia—they imagine with us. In Aslan we find beauty, hope, joy, and the ability to chuckle at lesser losses while still allowing the sting of loss to be felt.

Lament that is organized by Horizon 1, 2 and 3, has critiqued and dismantled the status-quo. Such lament acknowledges human longings, human pain, social connectedness, and future hope. When using the question “what did I really long to enjoy”, this new perspective energizes new choices, such as chuckling at loss while feeling its sting. Table 1 provides some daily examples of naming the good that we longed to enjoy, the need or interruption that occurred in the already-not-yet, and the beauty of God’s original and longed for design.

Table 1. Good, Interruption, Design

Good	Need/Interruption	Beauty of God’s Design
When about to sit and rest	A child needs you to provide a drink of water	Rest and recovery
Time with a good friend	They cancel	Being known
Drinking coffee	It spills	Creative beauty and sustenance



water of life

Clinical Application

We transition to apply the preceding discussion to clinical practice. In particular we present ways to clinically address the two problems discussed earlier; that many clients desire for pleasure is regularly thwarted by life's small and continual challenges, and second, they are sad to lose a genuine good and suffer real loss. This approach rests upon Horizon 3 (a biblical worldview and Christian Psychology), and incorporates what is coherent from Interpersonal Process Therapy (Teyber & McClure, 2011), Horizons of Significance, Prophetic Imagination, and the Christian tradition. The 'vehicle' for this integrated strategy is the person of the therapist, who provides compassion, attunement, and intervention as conceptualized and organized by Horizons 1 through 3. Such therapists take seriously; the body, its experiences, trials and temptations; social and cultural factors and formation; and life in redemptive historical time. This orientation allows the therapist to remember the following in their work: There is real comfort in the loss of all things for the sake of Christ's name; the privilege of providing acceptance to one another despite shame and sorrow; we must gently name (discover) what is true in the life of a client, including the harm done to them and by them, the self-defeating strategies they use to cope, and the orientation of their hearts (Day, 2006).

Four processes within this clinical approach to loss and joy are outlined below. We include details of specific interventions, and sections of therapist-client dialogue that are based on real client interactions. The four stages include: exploring the clients personal dynamics; utilizing key emotions and responses; assisting in meaning making; and utilizing prophetic imagination and exploration.

Process 1: Exploring Personal Dynamics

Exploring personal dynamics includes a number of therapist foci and actions designed to illuminate a client's experiential re-

lationship to the phenomenon of ongoing daily losses and grief. The therapist notices and names themes, patterns, and rigidity in the client's relationship with grief. This is made possible by tracking and validating salient emotions, asking about desires, and discerning the self-protective function of the client's intra and interpersonal strategies. Attending to these features enables the therapist to experience and explore a client's interpersonal resistance, learned behaviors, schemas, and worldview (Teyber & McClure, 2011). The cumulative picture constructed by a client's personal dynamics begins to reveal the guiding Horizons of Significance in their life. The following therapist-client example is based upon a real case, and models an exploration of a client's lack of awareness and resistance surrounding a perpetual state of dissatisfaction:

Therapist (T): I have noticed you often repeat stories of disappointing experiences when we talk... like that dinner party that was canceled..., and you usually shrug them off each time. I'm wondering what it would be like for you if you shared them more fully with me, or if you stopped sharing them?
Client (C): I'm not sure, I guess you can't just dwell on things – life is hard and you've just got to deal with it.

T: Shrugging helps you deal with the hard parts of life. What is your experience of having shrugged a lot over time, yet repeating disappointing stories?

C: Well... it hasn't changed anything, but I can't just stop and be sad.

T: You can't just be sad — something feels wrong, unsafe, or uncomfortable about that...

C: It wouldn't do anything. You can't fix everything.

T: Aah, I see... You have sadness about all these broken things, and you can't just fix them—so you shrug. I am curious why you might still repeat the disappointments with me. What do you long for here with me?

In the interchange above the therapist is curious about the thematic presentation of disappointing events, the client's response of shrugging, and how the client may be using these behaviors to cope and communicate. The effectiveness of the client's strategies is explored to generate client insight, which leads to the client's schema of the world. The therapist investigates this schema by asking about the client's contrasting desires. In this short exchange, exploring 'stuck disappointment' moves to the client's perceptions and desires.

Process 2: Emotion and Response Focus

A second process the therapist can engage is a focus on the client's emotions and responses, which helps illuminate unacknowledged grief/loss and how the client copes with these feelings. To engage this work, the therapist can invite further exploration of the most salient feelings. This requires helping the client to express the full meaning of the feelings as they experience them in the present. Teyber and McClure (2011) make clear, "Simply allowing clients to be able to have the feelings that are commensurate with what actually happened to them is a lifelong gift to many" (p. 197). As client's become honest with life in the Kingdom of God, loss is experienced more fully, and the meaning the client associates with the loss is available for exploration. This work usually adds to the illumination of the client's primary Horizons. Building on awareness of the salient emotion, the therapist explores the full constellation of associated feelings. For example, anger and shame commonly occur around sadness. When the therapist helps the client tolerate and acknowledge each important emotion the client can often then explore the actions and choices they make in the light of the emotion (Teyber & McClure, 2011). This further illuminates Horizons and coping strategies. The therapist can assist the client to notice and examine their responses, and the underlying values and heart orientation. The therapist supports the client to consider what

they are learning about their approach to, and perspective on life, and assists them in finding value-aligning alternatives. This can provoke great ambivalence between safety, pain reduction, and an orientation to thriving within the kingdom.

C: I just want to feel better, to feel ok about all these things I get distressed about.

T: How do you feel right now as you name that you want relief from distress and shrugging?

C: I'm just so frustrated that everything goes wrong so much!

T: You want relief from disappointment but you also see how this world has so many losses.

C: yes... exactly. It just keeps coming—one thing, then the next. I just hate it, it's so depressing.

T: Depressing. It really weighs on you.

C: well... I feel really stupid... I mean I know things go wrong!? But I just want something... to have something go right for me... to enjoy it!

T: You feel stupid—like there is something wrong with you that you long for good things and to enjoy something going right. I can really appreciate wanting things to go well, to be joyful, to be OK. I can see why you would shrug and tell me about it—wanting relief, even while knowing life keeps going like this.

C: yeah... I hate that I end up just talking about it over and over, I know shrugging doesn't really do anything—But what else can I do!?

T: That's a great question. You seem to want something other than how you currently see and respond to this cycle of disappointments, shrugging, wanting comfort. Can we explore that together?

C: sure, I guess...

T: I notice that you long for good things to go as you hoped—things to work out well, to be pleasurable, even though the world has shown you its far more unpredictable... there is a tension between your hopes and the realities of life... what do you notice?

The prior exchange provides an example of

traversing from a client's current desire to feel better, to setting up a collaborative exploration of ways to live in the tension of the already-not-yet of the kingdom. This work often provokes strong ambivalence within clients, with felt sorrow juxtaposed with hope, as they come face-to-face with their lived reality and how their focus on specific Horizons of significance impacts their choices. From such discussions, the therapist can assist the client in a process of meaning making.

Process 3: Meaning Making

The Christian therapist does not simply teach the redemptive historical moment and its meaning. Rather, the therapist recognizes that the client must internalize their own experiential understanding of meaning over time. Said differently, the therapist assists the client to personally re-evaluate, and re-organize the three Horizons of Significance (self, community, God). To do this, therapists wonder about the client's primary focus (often the self) as it relates to other Horizons. An exploration of the original contexts and systems that led the client to their understanding of life is paramount. It is within this exploration that clients discover what taught and sustained their views of how life should/would work. Curiosity is warranted, and the therapist can assist the client in courageously criticizing distorted aspects of the client's understanding of life. This is facilitated as both therapist and client name, hold, and dismantle, harmful, distorted, and inaccurate understandings and internalizations of life experiences. The client's new awareness, emotions, and emerging sense of meaning come to the fore, and the Christian therapist can assist the client to explore Godly longings, and redemptive historical truth and meaning, through scripture and other sources. This process energizes a new perspective of self, community, and God's world, that undergirds new behaviors. Clients are supported by experientially and intellectually engaging the three Horizons through active

practices both in, and out of session. For example: homework may include reading about God's presence, or comfort; Psalm 126 may be used to work with ambivalence surrounding good, yet hard choices; the Apostles Creed may be meditated upon to restructure a habitual focus on just one of the three Horizons. The Christian tradition supplies plentiful resources to assist in this work. A thorough examination of these resources is beyond the scope of this work, but the interested reader is directed to Johnson's work on Soul Care (2017).

T: It seems to me that your present moment experiences of "if things are going OK or not" has a lot of power over your whole life experience, even though you feel like your faith says other things to you.

C: Yeah, I wish I could believe better! Or, really, I guess it just stinks that Heaven is so far away... then at least things would go right!

T: Part of you really just wants to get to heaven where it feels good. I get that. And I notice even as you say it, that "feeling good" has a very primary position in your life. Loss or broken doesn't fit in.

C: Are you suggesting wanting to feel good is bad?

T: Not at all, I think it fits right in with being human—that God made us with that intention. We so often learn that feeling bad just shouldn't exist. Yet it does. Your faith holds out that heaven is coming, but we aren't there yet. That comes to mind as we hold this in tension?

C: In my family, if you were sad, you weren't 'trusting God enough'... that seems so... backwards.

The interchange above, both begins an exploration of the client's Horizons, and assists the client to begin criticizing what they previously knew. The therapist is not shy about asserting worldview truths that are shared with the client, which is necessary to avoid a purely individualistic critique. When the client begins to show energy towards a new understanding and choices,



god allows to be mocked

the therapist can assist them to imagine new options and focus outwards.

Process 4: Imagination and Outward Focus

As a client's energized focus increasingly aligns with God's Imago Dei in the redemptive narrative, clients can be helped to express their new orientation. It is often less threatening (yet exciting) for clients to initially enact this change in artistic, poet, or other forms, that allow the client to imagine themselves living in a new way, with balanced Horizons. Traditional therapeutic techniques such as the 'empty chair' can also facilitate imaginal expression and embodied action that assist learning. Four practical strategies are offered to help clients acknowledge the consistent loss within life and enact a satisfying response: first, invite clients to a new relationship with God, modeling this as necessary, and helping them express requests, concerns, and sit within God's perspective. Second, encourage clients to find symbols for hope and 'way pointing', such as images, ornaments, or even people, and place these in areas of need or regular contact. These symbols often provide critical reminders and a chance for the client to continue reorienting themselves. Third, discuss concrete life practices that align with the three Horizons and facilitate the expression of genuine lament, hope, love, and faithfulness. These practices may be private, communal, declarative, or anything else that supports the client's formation. Fourth, help clients practice a fully embodied and honest response to small losses of letting go, appropriate sadness, looking to kingdom hope, and enacting current minded gratitude. These practices are not all easy, yet they assist clients in actively changing maladaptive and non-kingdom minded living. Below are four example questions that may prompt clients to imaginatively pursue new choices.

T: You have said that God's view of His world and your place in it—when experienced personally—impacts your choices, expectations, hopes, and more. Can you

imagine and describe how you might live, interpret, and react to _____ if you were to embrace the world God has you in?

T: What do you imagine you would be talking to God about as this occurs? What challenges might come up?

T: Given what you just shared; how might this impact your experience of loss? ... Ok, and how can you see yourself acting?

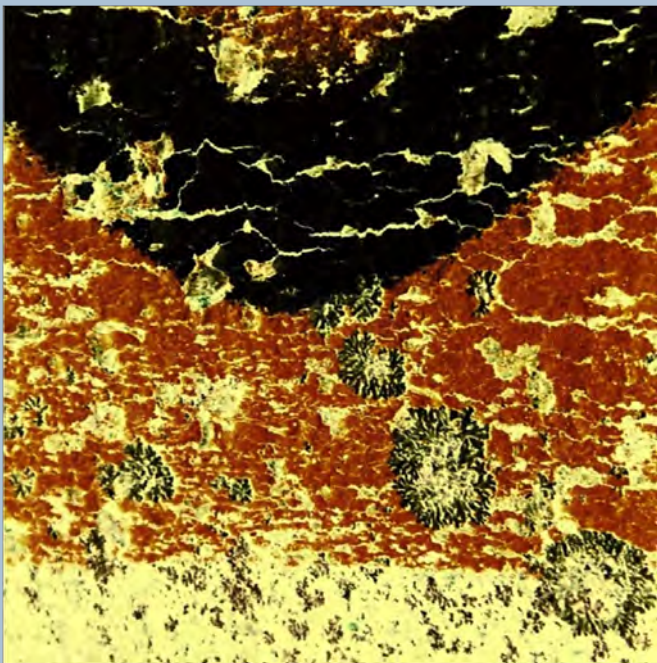
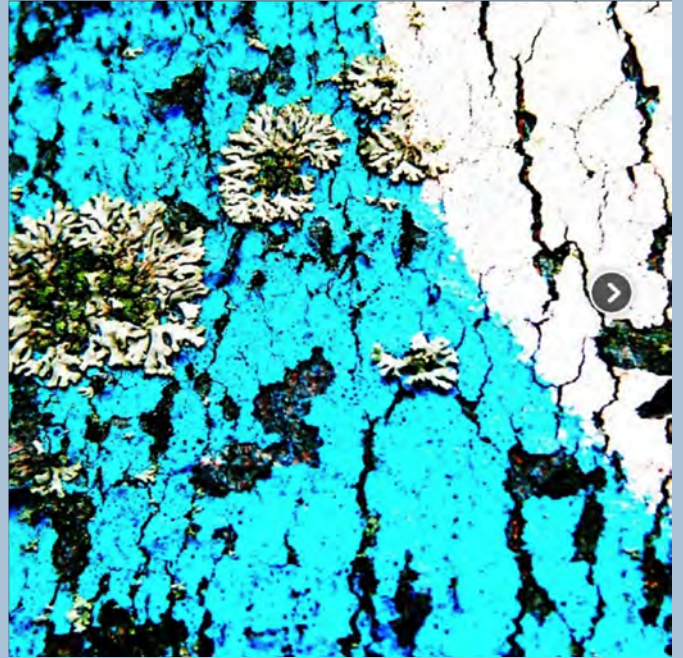
T: Are there any reminders, or signs you have in your life to help orient you to this rich perspective on loss and joy that you are showing yourself right now?

Conclusion

We all face two persistent issues: our desire for pleasure is often thwarted, exposing our corrupt hearts along the way; and we do often lose genuine good and suffer real loss. When unaddressed, these predicaments can lead us to choices and reactions that create mental anguish, and increase the distress of broader habitual patterns. This article argued that a large amount of personal distress occurs because we have distorted views of three primary sources of meaning that orient our values and actions. These sources were named as Horizons of Significance, and include: our embodied self and its experience, the influence of our community and history, and our place in God's world. Our experiences and choices distort our view of the Horizons, and also the relationships we perceive between them. Clients can be greatly assisted to reorganize their lived experience and make functional choices within redemptive history when therapists courageously engage them in the following ways: first, engage and reorder their own lives, perceptions, and actions in redemptive history; second, provide the safety of an incarnational presence; third, explore the clients personal dynamics; fourth, engage clients key emotions and responses; fifth, assist clients in new meaning making; and sixth, utilize prophetic imagination in the exploration of new option.

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abstract photography



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I am a Psychologist graduate from the Universidad Católica San Pablo (UCSP) in Arequipa-Peru, and currently I am studying to get a master's degree in Humanities.

In the past years I worked in different schools as a children and families counselor, and now I work with college students in the Psychopedagogical Service of UCSP.

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Comments to Paul's article

Within all the indicators that make differences between people, there are some transversal experiences that everybody has in common. These experiences talk about something which goes beyond agreements and consensus, and puts in front of us a deep and serious human reality. One of those experiences is the grief, the sadness over the loss, issue that has been highlighted by Paul Loosemore in the article entitled *Situating grief in redemptive history for the sake of joy*, showing a comprehensive and christian point of view in order to strengthen a perspective of loss and joy in the framework of knowing we are children of God. Thanks to a critical analysis, the article also applies this perspective into the day-to-day work of the psychologist or counselor who accompanies the client who suffers, acknowledging the specialists has the necessity of acquiring a solid basis of who is the human being and, at the same time, the responsibility of care for the client.

When Loosemore approaches the grief, he does not narrow the discussion to the sorrow of losing a dear one, but includes the sadness that comes when anything that generated joy gets lost. The loss of an object, an opportunity, a friendship, among other

situations, may trigger grief in various forms and intensities. That being said, it is evident that everyone has lived through the sorrow and probably will go through it in the future, each one according to their own particularities and different consequences. Very clearly, Loosemore mentions that "how we interpret and interact with loss significantly alters our lived experience", which leads to thinking about the importance of questioning contemporary foundations that put the seek of pleasure and the escape from everything that causes pain as ultimate goals. This perspective has a reductionist tinge because it limits the coping strategies of the person and creates an egocentric approach to life.

Taking Charles Taylor and C.S. Lewis, Loosemore considers that there are Horizons of significance which are objectives and guide the moral behavior of the person beyond his personal satisfaction, resulting in three dimensions of relationship: with oneself, with the other members of community and with the world and life. These relationships are intertwined and when harmonious they are beneficial for the person and for the experience of grief and joy. This is where Loosemore has a comprehensive and transversal look by recognizing that the Redemptive



unbreakable

historical narrative believed by Christians is a parameter for the human behavior included in the third dimension (the relation with the world and life) that, at the same time, unifies and gives meaning to the first and second dimensions (the relation with oneself and with the others).

This is not a small fact for the specialist who accompanies the client who is suffering from the loss thus, as Loosemore mentions, “when we situate life within this redemptive historical horizon, both loss and joy, are expected and provide meaning and sustenance”. This premise leads to two important consequences: first, the psychologist or the counselor needs to have an integral understanding of the person by recognizing in the client the longing of God, the meaning attributed to his/her experi-

ences and the resulting behavior, and knowing that pleasure is not the ultimate goal of human existence; second, gives rise for the psychologist or counselor to, from the beginning, aim to delve in the assist of the client and not to settle with any apparent or surface solution of unpleasant symptoms.

In conclusion, the article written by Paul Loosemore delves into the reflections of grief, loss and joy, as well as in the importance of having a comprehensive look free from bias. On this path it can not be left out the long thought and discussion about the human being and his immensity as a creature of God. Therefore, the article responds to a need of everyone who works in counseling: know how to look and act with charity and justice towards all clients to not fall into reductionisms.



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Comments to Paul's article

If I correctly understand Paul Loosemore's article *Situating grief in redemptive history for the sake of joy*, it discusses how people coping with daily loss and frustration tend to get stuck in disappointment, and can be helped to transform their coping process so they find joy in living through life's ups-and-downs with God. The article consists of a theologically-informed theoretical half (mainly a critique on our individualistic therapeutic culture) followed by a more practical clinical application in the second half. Allow me to comment backwards. I tend to do so, first of all because the clinical section is more clear to me than the theoretical section. But on a more personal level, my reverse approach has to do with my inclination towards bottom-up reasoning in clinical practice, starting with felt experience and then searching to support or validate emotional processes through theoretical and/or theological understanding.

Loosemore's clinical section outlines four stages in his approach to the experience of coping with loss, all illustrated by short examples of therapist-client dialogue. These stages are therapeutic processes with a focus on: 1. exploring the client's personal dynamics; 2. utilizing key emotions and responses; 3. assisting in meaning making; and 4. utilizing prophetic imagination and exploration.

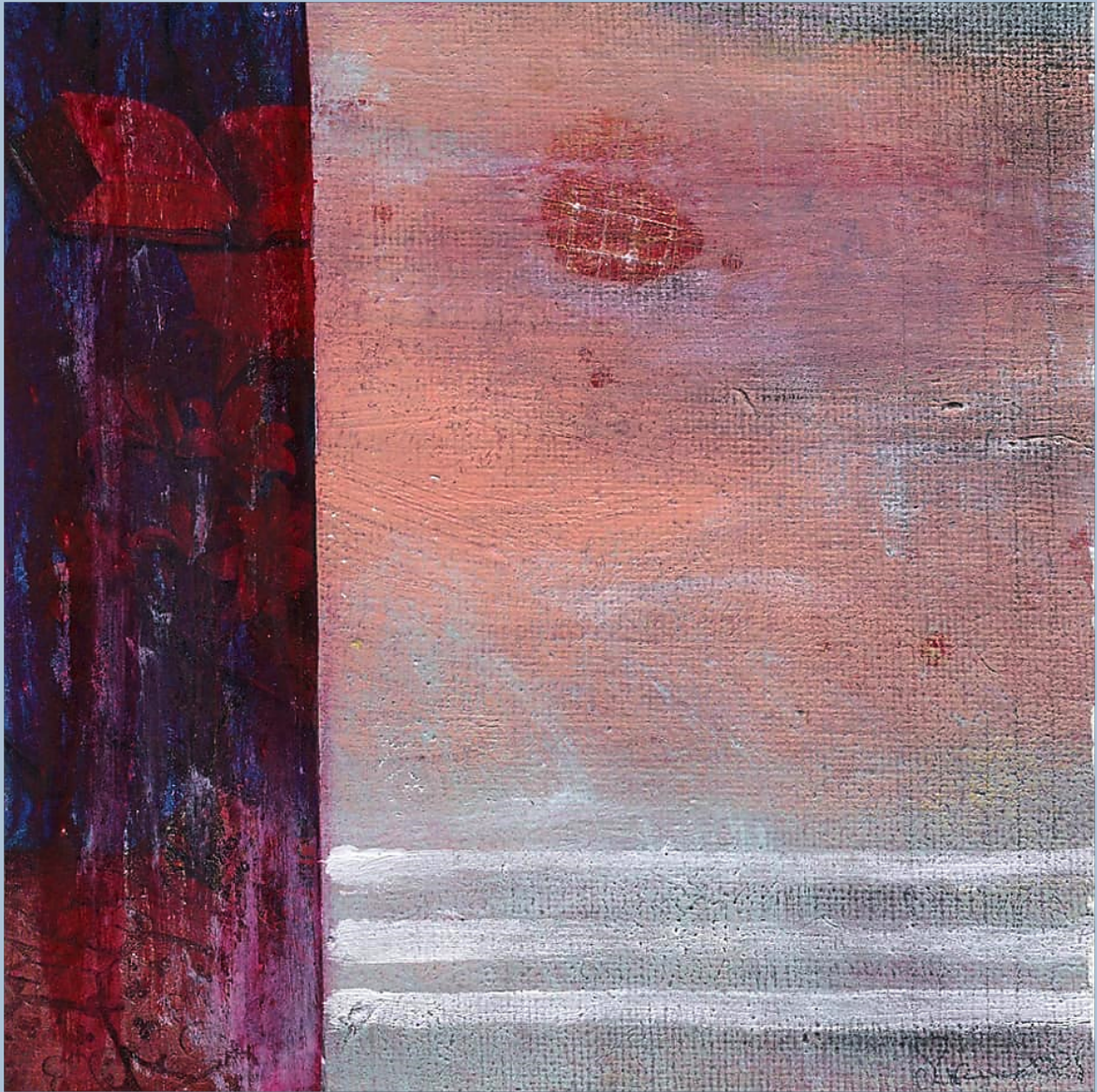
The dialogue presented as first process, exploring personal dynamics, is a very nice example of reflecting and exploring client defensive manoeuvres. The therapist exposes the defenses and starts to evoke feelings, shifting client attention towards them.

In the second process, focusing on emotions and responses, the therapist appears to guide the client in exploring ambivalent underlying emotions, touching on feelings like frustration as well as sadness - and underlying longings for comfort and feeling good.

Next comes the meaning making process. Loosemore introduces this part by stating that the therapist can assist the client in criticizing distorted worldview aspects and dismantling harmful understandings and internalizations of life experiences. The illustrative dialogue reveals the client starting to understand that feeling good has become a goal in itself in the client's life, not having learned to integrate slightly more difficult feelings like sadness.

In the fourth process, which Loosemore calls utilizing prophetic imagination and exploration, he doesn't give an illustrative dialogue but lists several therapist interventions and examples which can help the client to imagine and experiment with new ways of living.

Reading through all this, I get the impression that the approach will mainly effect



without title

cognitive change. Of course the brevity of the article does not really allow space to illustrate the possible depth of exploration of feelings. But each of the four processes could gain in strength in the following ways:

1. More can be done to soften defenses, by not just reflecting and exploring but also validating them. Of course defenses suppress and minimize difficult feelings, but they are also useful and widely used coping strategies to protect the vulnerability of feelings (McCullough, Kuhn, Andrews, et al., 2003). The client in the dialogues surely needed defenses to protect sadness from family criticism.

2. Phase two, a focus on emotions, runs parallel to what emotionally focused therapists strive to do: help clients connect more deeply to previously suppressed feelings by providing a supportive and facilitating environment and by the therapist empathically connecting to client feelings. Here, the therapist interventions could gain in strength by differentiating between secondary (inhibiting) emotions like frustration and primary (activating) emotions such as the sadness the client mentions and the fear of rejection which is touched on but not explored. The work with emotions could be enhanced by integrating focusing (Gendlin, 1996) into psychotherapy, which can help to deepen experiential processing of newly discovered feelings.

3. In the third stage, meaning making, I sense Loosemore's proposal is lacking something important. Maybe it's the result of not validating defenses and not helping the client to understand and accept feelings well enough, which is paying off. The emphasis on (assisting the client in) criticizing distorted aspects of his understanding of life, is not therapeutically commendable. Therapists should be aware that when wanting to criticize or confront, a stance 'against' defensive cognitions or behaviors is not what is helpful. Rather, it is the clarification of defenses and underlying feelings which is therapeutic (McCullough, L., et al., 2003). After clarifying defenses and making them understandable

in light of past experiences, and after clarifying underlying secondary (inhibiting) and primary (activating) feelings, meaning making can ensue in a natural way. Because all these (often ambivalent) feelings flow forth from deep attachment needs. This is the integrative and enriching perspective which Emotionally Focused Therapy (Johnson, 2018) has outlined. And it is precisely these attachment needs - the need for loving connection and the need to be able to share self-experience within this connection - which form the intrapersonal basis for meaning making. When people get in touch with their activating primary feelings, which are closely linked to attachment needs, they naturally move from defensive coping strategies to more open and connecting strategies. Maybe this process is what Proverbs 4:23 points to when it says: "Above all else, guard your heart, for everything you do flows from it." The connection which attachment needs strive for, have an emergent property in and of themselves; feeling that makes one sense a "life-forward direction", as Gendlin (1996) would call it. Feeling this deep inside is more than an individual experience; it is also energized and urges from within towards interpersonal experience. Furthermore, attachment longings maybe very well be experienced and enacted in relationship with God (Granqvist, 2020).

4. The fourth therapeutic process Loosemore mentions, would gain in strength if the prophetic imagination and exploration he proposes would be linked to attachment needs.

This brings us to the main thrust of Loosemore's article. The first half of the article appears to me to be something like a critique on our individualistic therapeutic culture, borrowing critical assessments from a philosopher and some renowned theologians, especially the 'prophetic imagination' part from Walter Brueggemann. Interesting, but may I suggest: please leave the criticizing up to them. And surely, please don't extend it to the consulting



am anfang

room as a critique on individual coping strategies. As explained above: exploring, clarifying and validating defenses, feelings and attachment needs will move clients forward in relational direction – better relating to their inner selves, other people, and God. Maybe I’m a bit too optimistic here, perhaps some criticism on therapeutic cultures is due. If so, I suspect it is western therapeutic culture dominated by cognitive behavioral approaches that needs to be criticized for poorly attending to attachment needs. But as for individual clients – let’s recognize that people are ‘created for connection’ (Johnson, & Sanderfer, 2016) and need to be helped to understand and experience this more fully.

In the end, this seems to be what Loosemore is trying to do. He proposes routes to an extension of horizons from individual self to the social horizon to the horizon of a Biblical worldview. This is an important proposal, potentially broadening clients’ view of self and the world to a fuller life in relationship with others and with God. Especially the utilization of prophetic imagi-

nation is, to me, a new formulation of what therapists can do. I would very much like to see a future elaboration of this proposal, but then linked to and building on attachment theory and therapy. Because, the way I see it, Loosemore’s proposal has the potential of adding theological grounding to attachment needs and thereby strengthens the viability of these fundamental human needs for personal value and connection.

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The article by Paul Loosemore in the light of former contributions of “Christian Psychology Around The World”

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free spirits



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An Interview with a Christian Psychologist: Päivimaria Kuivamäki

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

After I had finished graduation from high school, I applied to study psychology at Jyväskylä University. That was not the only option for me, I applied also to industrial design, I attended an exam in Helsinki, but didn't get in. I was interested in maths and arts, but my tutor psychologist encouraged me that it would be better to use one's personality as well. As an adult, I can see that interest in psychology was a way to try to understand myself.

What was the focus of your study/training? Did you get any results that you would especially like to emphasize?

My training was a developmental psychology program- in that, I did my Masters's degree. As a side subject, I studied Art Education and Art History. My Theses in

Miten ryhdyit opiskelemaan psykologiaa?

Kirjoitettuani ylioppilaaksi hain Jyväskylän yliopistoon opiskelemaan kehityopsykologiaa. Se ei ollut ainoa kiinnostus, hain myös taideteolliseen korkeakouluun opiskelemaan teollista muotoilua, mutta en päässyt sisälle. Tuo ei ollut ainoa mahdollisuuteni, pyrin nimittäin opiskelemaan teollista muotoilua, olin pääsykokeissa Helsingissä, mutta en päässyt opiskelemaan sinnekään. Olin kiinnostunut matematiikasta ja taiteesta, mutta tutor psykologini sanoi, että voisi olla parempi, että voisit käyttää persoonallisuuttasi. Nyt aikuisena näen, että psykologian opiskelu on ollut minun tapani yrittää ymmärtää itseäni.

Mikä on ollut opiskelusi ja työsi painopiste? Onko sinulla jotain, mitä haluat erityisesti korostaa?

Koulutusohjelmani oli kehityopsykologian

Masters's degree was comparing what kind of experience the same story would make for children as a film or as an audio story.

Why would you call yourself a Christian psychologist?

I have been a Christian since my youth. I have been processing my identity as Christian Psychologist or Christian Psychotherapist later many times. As a student, a professor asked me, if I have found it difficult to bind together my faith and psychology studies. I said no. Even I didn't understand hardly anything about the integration of those too at that time... After my studies, I went to London for two years. I went through one year program of church-planting in South- East London.

That time I started my own inner-healing/therapeutic process on a deeper level. Same time I got to know some prayer counseling clinics and did some practice also there. I heard of ACC England. My own journey, The healing touch of God on me, and many both Christian counseling sessions, seminars, groups and books, and secular therapy have led me to the point where I am right now. I needed secular therapy and psychodrama to process the death of my dad when I was 2 years old, and all changed with that. I needed security from God to cry those cries and mourn those sorrows and to get a safe place and give up the walls around me and to be more vulnerable in relationships. Healing from rejection has been important in my life. Most meaningful for me has been some deep prayer moments either with a counselor praying for me or having some healing images and visions in prayer alone.

What are you actually doing? Can you please tell us a little bit about your experiences?

I have been working now as a psychodynamic childpsychotherapist over twelve years. I work in Christian Counselling/therapy centre in Tampere Finland. Because my therapy is placed in Christian context,

koulutusohjelma, josta siis tein ylemmän korkeakoulututkinnon. Sivuaineinani opiskelin taidekasvatusta ja taidehistoriaa. Gradun tein vertaamalla lasten elokuvan ja kerrotun kertomuksen tuottamaa kokemusta.

Miksi kutsut itseäsi kristityksi psykologiksi?

Olen ollut uskossa nuoruudesta asti. Olen moneen kertaan joutunut pohtimaan identiteettiäni krisittynä psykologina tai krisittynä psykoterapeuttina. Opiskelijana professori kysyi minulta että eikö ole vaikea yhdistää uskoa ja psykologian opintoja. Vastasin, että ei, vaikka tuskin ymmärsin mitään noiden kahden integroinnista vielä silloin.

Opiskelujeni jälkeen olin kaksi vuotta Lontoossa. Suoritin vuoden koutuksen liittyen seurakuntien perustamiseen Itä- Lontoossa. Tuono aikana alkoi oma sisäinen parantumisen prosessini syvemmällä tasolla. Samaan aikaan tutustuin muutamiin kristillisen terapian klinikoihin ja olin yhdessä sellaisessa harjoittamassa. Kuulin ACC- yhdistyksestä Englannissa.

Oma matkani, Jumalan parantava kosketus ja monet sielunhoitotapaamiset, seminaarit, ryhmät ja kirjat ja maallinen terapia ovat johtaneet minut siihen, missä nyt olen. Tarvitsin maallista ammatillista terapiaa ja psykodraamaa prosessoidakseni isäni kuolemaa silloin kun olin kaksi vuotias ja sen jälkeisiä muutoksia. Tarvitsin Jumalta turvaa itkeäkseni itkut ja käydäkseni koko surun läpi ja päästäkseni turvallisella paikalle luopuakseni muureista ja ollakseni haavoittuvaisempi ihmissuhteissa. Parantuminen hylkäämisestä on ollut tärkeää elämässäni. Merkityksellisimpiä ovat olleet syvät rukoushetket joko jonkun rukoillessa puolestani tai omassa rukouksessani koetut parantavat mielikuvat tai visiot.

Mitä nykyään teet? Kertoisitko jotain kokemuksistasi työssäsi?

Olen työskennellyt psykodynaamisena lasten psykoterapeuttina yli 12 vuotta. Teen töitä kristillisessä terapiakeskuksessa Tampereella. Koska työskentelen kristillisessä

I ask parents and psychiatric clinics if that would be ok, background values of this place and mine are Christian. I clarify that with telling how everybody is valuable and unique. Most of people feel it fine.

Because a funding for therapy comes from government my work need to be professional and following the training I have. I am supervised and reporting my work for childpsychiatrist who sends the child. Parents have a guidance sessions at other therapist.

My clients are from 6 to 18 years old and they attend either one or two times a week up to three/four/five years. Many of my clients live in foster families and have many traumatic events in their past. I have sand, toys, two dollhouses, art material etc in my room. I have a box for each child where they collect their drawings and art works. I pray for my clients in my mind to find right words and things to do. I see therapy as a journey I travel with my little/sometimes taller friend.

I do also some training in different christian settings in luteran, free church and pentacostal church contexts. There I can integrate more my psychological and christian thinking. I do christian counselling and counselling of children trainings- mainly from developmental psychology aspect I do supervise groups of families who foster children for a short or longterm. I have been doing that over 10 years.

kontekstissa, kysyn vanhemmilta ja hoitoon ohjaavilta tahoilta onko ok, että paikka on taustaltaan kristillinen. Selvennän kysyttäessä, miten uskoni näkyy esimerkiksi siinä, miten näen jokaisen arvokkaana ja ainutlaatuisena. Useimmiten ihmiset kokevat sen olevan ok. Koska terapian rahoitus tulee KELA:n tai kuntien kautta terapiani on sen mukaista mihin minulla on koulutus ja mihin siinä olen sitoutunut.

Olen työnohjauksen alainen ja teen palautteet terapiasta sekä hoitavalle lastenpsykiatrille että KELAlle. Vanhemmat saavat vanhemapianohjausta toiselta terapeutilta lapsen ollessa terapiassa. Asikkaani ovat 6-18 vuotiaita ja terapia toteutuu kerran tai kaksi kertaa viikossa jatkuen aina kolme neljä jopa viisi vuotta.

Monet asiakaslapsistani asuvat sijaisperheissä ja heillä on monia traumaattisia tapahtumia elämässään. Työhuoneessani minulla on hiekkaa, leluja, kaksi nukkekotia, taidetarvikkeita jne. Laitan jokaiselle lapselle oman laatikon, johon kokoamme terapiassa tehtyjä töitä. Rukoilen mielessäni asiakkaideni osalta, että löytäisin oikeat sanat ja asiat mitä tehdä. Näen terapian matkana, jonka kuljen yhdessä pienen ja joskus isomman ystäväni kanssa. Lisäksi koulutan erilaissa yhteyksissä niin luterilaisessa kuin vapaissa suunnissa. Niissä voin integroida enemmän psykologista ja kristillistä ajattelua. Sielunhoitoterapeuttisissa koulutuksissa opetan lähinnä kehityspsykologista osuutta. Olen tehnyt myös työnohjausta lyhyt ja pitkäaikaisille sijaisperheille viimeiset 10 vuotta.



breakthrough



werner may
(germany)

Five Challenges for a Christian Psychology

My Challenge 2: „ The human being as a relational being is also a part of systems.“

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.

Fünf Herausforderungen für eine christliche Psychologie

Meine Herausforderung 2: “Der Mensch als ein Beziehungswesen ist auch Teil von Systemen.“

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/>

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 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 2 is:

“The human being as a relational being is also a part of systems.”

In her review of Gladys Mwiti’s (Kenya) book on Christian Counseling in an African

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 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 lautet meine Herausforderung 2: „Der Mensch als ein Beziehungswesen ist auch Teil von Systemen.“

In ihrer Besprechung von Gladys Mwiti (Kenia), Christian Counselling. An African Indigenous Perspective schreibt meine

Challenge 2: Humans as relational beings are also part of system.

Herausforderung 2: „Der Mensch als ein Beziehungswesen ist auch Teil von Systemen.“

Psychology as Western science tends to think individualistic and person centered, paying not much enough attention to the systemic connections of the individual.



Die Psychologie als westliche Wissenschaft neigt dazu, individualistisch und personenzentriert zu denken und den systemischen Zusammenhängen des Individuums zu wenig Aufmerksamkeit zu schenken.

Perspective, my wife wrote about that perspective:

“In contrast to western understandings of the self - the holistic African understanding of every individual is as a person within a community. Spiritual, mental, biological, genetic, behavioral, and social elements cannot be understood separately. Therefore, counselling in Africa will need to be guided by approaches that are holistic in nature...”

Psychology as Western science tends to think individualistic and person centered, paying not much enough attention to the systemic connections of the individual.

Our personal challenge in a nutshell

We all face the life-long task of living out the healthy rhythm between independence and attachment.

I am person  I am living in and from relationships

At these two poles we have to deal with the fear of dependency and abuse by too much familiarity at one side and on the other the fear of isolation by too much independence.

This task was described by the French philosopher Levinas (1985) and the Swiss psychiatrist Riemann (1990).

Anxiety of reaction
Loss of attachment
Loss of autonomy and independence
Threat of separation
--
Independence
--
Attachment
--
Encroachment
Threat of violence and abuse

The French philosopher Emmanuel Levinas, as well as the Swiss psychiatrist Riemann, described the challenge for all of us as a field of tension to become an independent

Frau Agnes May über die afrikanische Perspektive: „Im Gegensatz zum westlichen Selbstverständnis stellt das ganzheitliche afrikanische Verständnis jedes Individuums als Person in einer Gemeinschaft dar. Spirituelle, mentale, biologische, genetische, Verhaltens- und soziale Elemente können nicht getrennt verstanden werden. Daher muss die Beratung in Afrika von Ansätzen geleitet werden, die ganzheitlicher Natur sind...”

Die Psychologie als westliche Wissenschaft ist stark individualistisch, Person zentriert und beachtet zu wenig die systemischen Verknüpfungen des einzelnen.

Unsere persönliche Herausforderung in Kürze

Wir alle stehen vor der lebenslangen Aufgabe, den gesunden Rhythmus zwischen Unabhängigkeit und Verbundenheit zu leben.

Ich bin eine Person  Ich lebe in und aus Beziehungen

An diesen beiden Polen müssen wir mit der Angst vor Abhängigkeit und Missbrauch durch zu viel Vertrautheit auf der einen Seite und der Angst vor Isolation durch zu viel Unabhängigkeit auf der anderen Seite umgehen.

Diese Aufgabe wurde von dem französischen Philosophen Levinas (1985) und dem Schweizer Psychiater Riemann (1990) beschrieben.

Vereinnahmung
Verlust von Autonomie und Selbstständigkeit
drohende Gewalt und Missbrauch
--
Verbundenheit
--
Selbstständigkeit
--
Angst vor Ablehnung
Verlust von Verbundenheit
drohende Trennung

Der französische Philosoph Emmanuel Levinas, wie auch der Schweizer Psychiater Riemann (1990), beschreibt die Herausforderung für uns Menschen als ein Spannungs-



between the lines

person and at the same time to live out of communion with others, a lifelong task for each of us and a challenge too: because there are two fears about these two healthy Poles, the fear of dependency and abuse on the one hand by too much familiarity and on the other the fear of isolation, by too much independence. We are living always as a part of systems and as an individual person.

Challenge 2: Humans as relational beings are also part of systems.

We should use more qualitative methods to achieve not just average values, but the uniqueness of each human being, to better explore its systemic integrations and the evolution of systems themselves.



For me, as a psychologist who loves science theory and who appreciates empirical research, another major challenge here is whether, in addition to quantitative methods, we should use more qualitative methods to achieve not just average values, but the uniqueness of each human being and to better explore their systemic integrations and the evolution of systems themselves. For example, Glaser and Strauss's Grounded Theory seeks to formulate a new theory with the help of a constant change of

feld, eine selbstständige Person zu werden und gleichzeitig aus Verbundenheit mit anderen heraus zu leben, eine lebenslange Aufgabe für jeden von uns und eine Herausforderung: denn an diesen beiden gesunden Polen lauern zwei Ängste, die Angst der Abhängigkeit und des Missbrauchs auf der einen Seite bei zu viel Vertrautheit und auf der anderen Seite die Angst der Isolation, bei zu viel Selbstständigkeit.

Herausforderung 2: Menschen als Beziehungswesen sind auch Teil von Systemen.

Wir sollten mehr qualitative Methoden verwenden, um nicht nur Durchschnittswerte zu erreichen, sondern die Einzigartigkeit jedes Menschen, seine systemischen Integrationen und die Evolution von Systemen selbst besser zu erforschen.



Für mich, als eine auch wissenschaftstheoretisch orientierter Psychologe, der empirische Forschungen schätzt, stellt sich hier vor allem eine weitere Herausforderung, ob wir nicht neben den quantitativen Methoden mehr qualitative Methoden einsetzen müsste, um nicht nur Durchschnittswerte zu erzielen, sondern die Einzigartigkeit jedes Menschen, seine systemischen Einbindungen und die Entwicklung von Systemen selbst besser zu erforschen. Zum Beispiel hat die Grounded Theory nach



wandering

data collection and analysis of interviews, observations, and other empirical data. Not to lose the relational aspect is a great task of the future, because research more and more tends to concentrate in and to understand the neuronal and biochemical processes of the individual better and thus more effectively can influence human life. A keyword and a challenge here is transhumanism.

Glaser und Strauss das Ziel, in einem Wechsel von Datensammlung und Auswertung von Interviews, Beobachtungen und anderen empirischen Daten eine neue Theorie zu formulieren.

Das Eingebundensein des Menschen nicht zu verlieren ist eine große Aufgabe der Zukunft, denn die Forschung tendiert immer mehr dazu die neuronalen und biochemischen Prozesse des Einzelnen besser zu verstehen und dadurch wirkungsvoll und wirkungsvoller als bisher menschliches Leben zu beeinflussen. Ein Stichwort: Transhumanismus.

further
contributions

Review of the Seminar “Theoretical Foundations of the Christian Psychology” by the Ukrainian Association of Christian Psychology on 29.01.2022

(It was send to the publisher one day before the war started. We are staying in prayer for peace.)

The Online Seminar consisted on the series of reports with discussions (questions and answers).

The Co-founder and Head of the Ukrainian Association of Christian Psychology, Mrs. Ludmyla Hrydkovets, opened the Seminar with an introductory speech about the Association and reason of its existence: insofar as psychology is the science of the soul, Christian psychology lays in its foundation the Christian understanding of the soul, because we are Christians. It rests on the two pillars: 1. It recognizes the preciousness of the human person from the moment of conception till natural death; 2. It proceeds from love and so rediscovers the foundation of all psychology and takes responsibility for itself, for others and for the future. Mrs. Hrydkovets told about the attacks on Christian psychology from the side of leftists and encouraged not to fear to recognize oneself as a Christian psychologist.

The first speaker was Mr. Petro Husak, Ph.D., the Head of the regional NGO “Pro-life Movement”, on the topic “Theological Anthropology at the Foundation of Christian Psychology”. He elucidated first the main characteristics of human person from the philosophical point of view: self-consciousness, self-presence in knowing him-/herself, self-possession and self-giving, which testify that his/her personal center is immaterial. Then he passed to the theological consideration of the “breathing in of the breath of life” (Gen 2, 7) in a material structure (“dust of the ground”), by which God donated man an existence of an actively living soul (therefore — Himself) and made the man a composed — spiritual-material reality. The spiritual component of

that reality — the immaterial soul — is a foundation of each psychology: theoretical and practical.

The second report titled “On the Spiritual Paradigm of Psychology” and was held by the Professor of the Drohobych Pedagogical University, Mr. Myroslav Savchyn. He told that the spiritual capacities of personality are a ground of his/her psychological health. Prof. Savchyn cited the widespread ideas on the personality’s formation: the corporeal-somatic, the social and the subjective (self-development) components, and showed, that scientists often omit the spiritual dimension: the transcendent spirit which has an immanent existence in humans, — a Divine spark in humans. From the synergy and coordination with it depends integrity and strength of the personality which through repentance, love of God, of the others and of him-/herself reaches his/her happiness in self-sacrifice and service to the other. In order to achieve it, God, the Lord, shall be in the center of one’s life, and one should understand his/her life as a “work in the vineyard” and a preparation to Eternity. A client shall see that a specialist-psychologist lives in such a way: only the client could change him-/herself. Prof. Savchyn told also about his “Test-questionnaire for determining of the fundamental world-view ideas of personality”. The third report was by Werner May from Germany — the President of the European Movement for Christian Anthropology, Psychology and Psychotherapy (EMCAPP — the member of which is the Ukrainian Association of Christian Psychology) and co-founder of the Institute for Christian Social Workers in Switzerland. At he beginning of his speech, Werner May invited the participants to honor the Triune God in the silence of heart. Following his motto that

truth is discovered in dialogue between friends which are different, — also in Ukraine, Werner May expressed his longing: to unite psychology and Christian faith and to form an integral identity of psychologists as specialists and simultaneously Christians, bearing responsibility before science, health care system, psychological societies and Church. Quoting Dietrich Bonhoeffer, that it is impossible to speak about God and the world without Jesus Christ, he stated that our relationship to Jesus Christ — to the Triune God — shall be a fundamental reality of psychology, which forms a life attitude of the psychologists themselves, and determines their practice, and as well influences their relations with clients and colleagues, Christians and non-Christians. Though our theological knowledge is partial and limited (as shown by the plurality of Christian confessions), the dialogue and mutual respect is possible, also towards the non-Christians and non-believers. Concerning our attitude towards the different psychological schools, Werner May cited the position of St. Basil the Great about the Christian evaluation of the different philosophical systems: we shall conduct ourselves like bees gathering nectar from different flowers and transforming it into good honey.

Werner May acquainted the participants with the psychology and psychotherapy system in Germany, where, unlike the USA, there is no academic subject “Christian psychology” at the Universities, but there are two main streams. Nevertheless there is a possibility to join spiritual elements, therefore — also a Christian approach. At the end Werner May encouraged to form interconfessional groups of psychologists in Ukraine, emphasizing, that common friendly meetings (and a common prayer — though from different churches) are more important than the scientific research itself, and wished a blessed “honey harvest”. Mr. Arthur Pohorilenko elucidated the legal aspects of the Ukrainian Association of Christian Psychology activities, showing advantages of its status as a juridical per-

son in relationship with the state structures, concerning its internal decisions and for defense of interests of victims before courts. The legal status of the Association as NGO opens access to the official information and obliges the state employees to respond on its official requests. Mr. Pohorilenko told about the concrete points of the Associations’ statute, its structure and the statute activities, especially — an analysis of educational and informational products (also concerning their destructiveness) and an expert evaluation of the scientific elaborations. A legal status of the Association opens the possibilities of funding the separate units in different countries and of international cooperation, especially concerning observance by Ukraine and by other countries of the international Charters and Conventions, as, e.g., the “European Convention on Human Rights” and the “Universal Declaration of Human Rights”, especially concerning the guaranteeing of the right to live from the moment of conception till natural death, influencing thereby the state juridical structures.

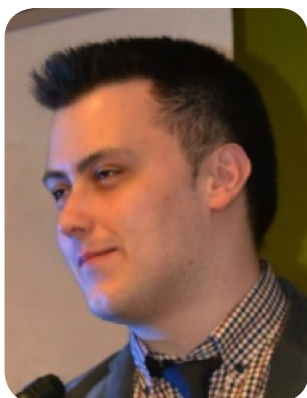
In the following discussions the participants discussed the question of Christian virtues (especially a correct understanding of humility), of a proper motivation for ethical conduct and morally relevant actions, as well the difference of a Christian finding of the true “self” of the personality as distinct from the Buddhist one. At the end they discussed the possibility of legal protection of the Christian psychologists who refuse to grant some services due to conscience reasons; the question of legal protection of the Christian specialists (physicians, philosophers, theologians, scientists of religion...) from the side of the leftist politically influential but pseudo-scientist groups; the question of licensing of the Christian psychology programs and of defense of scientific theses of spiritual direction.

(Written in Ukrainian and translated into English by Petro Husak.)

i am the
door,
john 10:9
aquatint
and line
etching



i am the
good
shepherd
john 10:11 + 14
aquatint
and line
etching



miguel ángel alcarria
(spain / espania)

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Former contributions:

<https://emcapp.ignis.de/13/#p=90>

<https://emcapp.ignis.de/12/#p=104>

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Idolatry A Phenomenological Approach from Psychology Idolatría: una aproximación fenomenológica desde la psicología

In the same way that, within the scientific community, there is no consensus around the definition of love, seeing the results of the studies carried out in this regard conditioned by the very construct that motivates the research; there is no consensual and inclusive definition around the concept of idolatry, which hinders any type of distinction between this concept and others such as love or genuine faith.

Idolatry, despite being a concept used in the ecclesiastical framework, transcends the barriers of the church to include any type of excessive affection directed towards people, activities, or objects. In this way, one sets out to understand the idolatry like that process in which an individual sample excessive affection by an object, a person, or an activity in damage of its self-esteem or well-being, because such object, person, or activity do not have the capacity

Idolatría una aproximación fenomenológica desde la psicología

Del mismo modo en que, dentro de la comunidad científica, no existe un consenso en torno a la definición de amor, viéndose los resultados de los estudios realizados al respecto condicionados por el propio constructo que motiva la investigación; no existe una definición consensuada e integradora entorno al concepto de idolatría, lo cual entorpece cualquier tipo de distinción entre dicho concepto y otros tales como el amor o la fe genuina.

La idolatría, pese a ser un concepto empleado en el marco eclesial, trasciende las barreras del ámbito de la iglesia para incluir cualquier tipo de afecto excesivo dirigido a personas, actividades u objetos. De este modo, se propone entender la idolatría como aquel proceso en el que un individuo muestra afecto desmedido por un objeto, una persona o una actividad en detrimento de su propia autoestima o bienestar, debido a que tal objeto, persona o actividad no tienen la capacidad o voluntad de correspon-

or will of correspondence. Likewise, idolatry would incapacitate the individual to love those people who do have the capacity or willingness to correspond, following the principle of incompatibility.

In this way, we find that the parent who shows a preference for that child who shows few signs of affection over the other children is in a process of idolatry. Such a process can be shown by a spouse, by church pastors, by a job; even in a false sense of patriotism, when the exaltation of the country has no reasonable sense of being, or in a sense of false affection towards the Christian denomination to which one belongs, implicitly affirming that only our denomination saves (already be it Pentecostal, Baptist, etc.).

Analyzing the situations in which this process of idolatry can occur, it can be concluded that idolatry is nothing but the result of a pathological emotional process, and it is similar to the addictive process, due to its irrationally harmful preference and its biochemical expression. Xygalatas (2008), states that „extreme dopamine levels typically occur in schizophrenic patients and increase even more before and during psychotic episodes „. In the same way, it can be affirmed that the release of high doses of dopamine, in idolatrous processes, can create an erroneous sense of lived reality and can give irrational or excessive importance to objects, people, or activities, making such at the center of the life and concern of the individual, as well as displacing the natural sense of priorities, relationships or values. This neurochemistry allows that, in the ecclesial environment, we can find people who manifest idolatrous behaviors even in contexts of spiritual abuse; finding that his sense of love is wrong since love always seeks the good in a bidirectional way.

In the phenomenology of the idolatrous process, we will find in some cases that the individual attributes special characteristics to the idolatrous target, in other cases we will find that the individual delegates their self-esteem or their decisions to the target as a result of the presence of a history of

dencia. Asimismo, la idolatría incapacitaría al individuo para amar a aquellas personas que sí tienen la capacidad o voluntad de correspondencia, siguiendo el principio de incompatibilidad.

De esta forma, encontramos que el progenitor que muestra preferencia por aquel hijo que realiza escasas muestras de afecto sobre los demás hijos, se encuentra en un proceso de idolatría. Dicho proceso puede mostrarse por un cónyuge, por los pastores de la iglesia, por un trabajo; incluso en un falso sentido de patriotismo, cuando la exaltación a la patria no tiene ningún sentido razonable de ser, o en un sentido de falso afecto hacia la denominación cristiana a la que se pertenece, afirmando de forma implícita que sólo nuestra denominación salva (ya sea pentecostal, bautista, etc.).

Analizando las situaciones en las que puede darse dicho proceso de idolatría, se puede concluir que la idolatría no es sino el resultado de un proceso emocional patológico, sólo semejante al proceso adictivo, tanto por su preferencia irracionalmente dañina como por su expresión bioquímica. Xygalatas (2008), afirma que los niveles extremos de dopamina se producen típicamente en pacientes esquizofrénicos y aumentan aún más antes y durante los episodios psicóticos”. Del mismo modo, se puede afirmar que la liberación de elevadas dosis de dopamina, en los procesos idolátricos, puede crear un sentido erróneo de la realidad vivida y puede dotar de una importancia irracional y/o desmedida a los objetos, personas o actividades; convirtiendo a los tales en el centro de la vida y preocupación del individuo, así como desplazando el sentido natural de las prioridades, relaciones o valores..

Esta neuroquímica permite que, en el ambiente eclesial, podamos hallar personas que manifiestan conductas idolátricas incluso en contextos de abuso espiritual; hallando que su sentido de amor es erróneo, ya que el amor busca el bien siempre de forma bidireccional.

En la fenomenología propia del proceso idolátrico encontraremos en algunos casos

abuse, of dependent relationships or states of low self-esteem and, finally, sometimes we will find a deep sense of guilt that seeks some kind of amendment through idolatry. The fact that idolatry exists even in situations of verifiable harm to the person itself obliges us to carefully evaluate which are the predisposing and maintenance factors that give rise to this type of predominantly emotional syndrome. In other words, it forces us to carefully evaluate what is the underlying value, meaning, and purpose of the idolatrous process to be able to understand the case and be able to contribute positively in a preventive or therapeutic way to prevent or limit the harm to the person or the environment.

References

Xygalatas, D. (2008). Fire-walking and the brain: The physiology of high-arousal rituals. *Evolution of religion: Studies, theories, and critiques*, 189-195.

que el individuo atribuye características especiales al target idolátrico, en otros casos encontraremos que el individuo delega su autoestima o sus decisiones en el target como resultado de la presencia de antecedentes de abuso, de relaciones dependientes o de estados de baja autoestima y, por último, en ocasiones encontraremos un profundo sentido de culpa que busca algún tipo de enmienda a través de la idolatría. El hecho de que exista idolatría incluso en situaciones de constatable perjuicio para la propia persona nos obliga a evaluar con detenimiento cuáles son los factores predisponentes y de mantenimiento que dan lugar a este tipo de síndrome predominantemente emocional. Dicho de otro modo, nos obliga a evaluar con detenimiento cuál es el valor, significado y propósito subyacentes al proceso idolátrico con el objetivo de poder comprender el caso y poder contribuir positivamente de forma preventiva y/o terapéutica con el propósito de prevenir o limitar el daño para la propia persona o para su entorno.

Referencias

Xygalatas, D. (2008). Fire-walking and the brain: The physiology of high-arousal rituals. *Evolution of religion: Studies, theories, and critiques*, 189-195.



mea culpa



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Here now the voices of four students



briseyda redmond

I am completing my first year in the MA in Christian Counseling program, and it has been great! From the start, I felt very welcomed and excited about entering the world of Christian psychology. All the professors I've had so far have been amazing: full of knowledge and experience to share. I love the fact that in each class the space is provided to learn not only from the professors, but our classmates as well. I am so glad I found out about this program!

I came to the Gideon Institute with the desire to understand human psychology and soul care from God's point of view. I began with a common (mis)understanding that psychology is a modern tradition that has been developed in the past 150 years. Gideon has not only helped me understand the rich and vast historical development of human psychology and soul care in the Christian tradition but has fueled a new passion for the need of a distinctly Christian psychology, both for educational and practical soul care purposes. This is what the Gideon Institute is all about: teaching and training students to think God's thoughts after him as it pertains to human psychology, soul care and theoretical and practical development.



casey ruff



claire rogers

One of the biggest lessons I have learned from being in the Gideon Institute is that the science of psychology can work alongside scripture. Secular psychology likes to pit them against one another, but God given both science and Scripture to aid professionals in psychological healing. Humans are made of mind, body, and spirit, so it only makes sense that the counseling they receive should be holistic. God has given us the gift of salvation, along with psychology, and the Gideon programs combine both to promote the fullness of healing.

The MA in Christian Counseling at the Gideon Institute is a degree that offers a solid foundation for counseling in Christ and the Scriptures. This program has opened my mind up to knowledge and application of Christ-centered therapies that promote the most complete flourishing and healing of the human soul, according God's original design plan. In addition, as an international student from El Salvador, I have valued the high academic level of the institution and of each professor.



zoila s. mancos medina



the 5th day

the first 16 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.



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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.

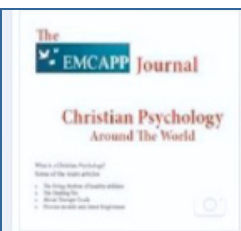
Publisher, Editor: Werner May
Design: Juliane Thoma
Interactive design, Webdesign:
Heiko Gneuß, pro-webART
<http://www.pro-webART.com>

Many thanks to the numerous authors and the translators. Without their commitment and gifts this number would not exist.

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Next Number
Anticipated
publication date:
Winter 2022



European
Movement for
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Anthropology,
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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.**