



christian psychology around the world

THE EMCAPP JOURNAL

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Auswege aus dem Scham-Angst-Zyklus, Friedemann Alsdorf
(Deutschland)
- Comment: Kelvin f. Mutter (Canada) and Nicholas Difonzo (USA)
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editorial

This summer Eric Johnson (USA) and his wife Becky visited us here in Germany. It was a pleasure to meet them again. I particularly appreciated our bike tours with Eric through the fields and vineyards around Würzburg, where we live. Twice we cycled to a small chapel in the hills, took a breather there on the bench.

I placed three larger stones in front of us as a symbol for the future of Christian psychology.

I wrote "synergy" on one of them.

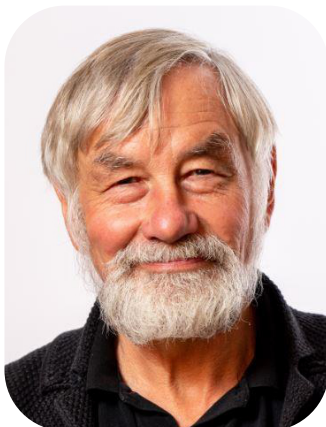
Christian psychology was not and should not be the work of a single person, but the interaction of different people, worldwide, from all churches and psychological backgrounds.

What unites them is their conviction that when we talk about human being, we also have to talk about Jesus Christ.

I emphasize "we have to", everything else reflects a reduced view of the world and people.



Here you can see the original stone.



The eJournal *Christian Psychology Around The World* bears witness to this, and this new issue also wants to invite you to discuss a Christian psychology. Please write us your comments about it. Thanks.

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

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

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

Languages are an expression of cultures, countries and of their people. By writing in two languages, we want to show our respect to the authors of the articles, to their origin and heritage, and at the same time symbolically show respect to all the readers in other foreign countries.

There are many foreign languages that we do not understand. Within our own language, we intend to understand one another, but we fail to do so quite often. To really understand one another is a great challenge, and we also want to point to this challenge by offering a bilingual journal.

"When languages die, knowledge about life gets lost." (Suzanne Romaine, 2011)

Finally, there is a pragmatic reason: As we want to have authors from one special country to write the main articles of every journal, it will be easier for them to distribute the journal in their own country, when it also is in their own language.

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

about the artist

„My series of paintings in monumental format is a specialty of painting I grew to love as a result of my study in Germany. Having been classically trained, I was equipped to move into a freer sort of painting that enabled spontaneity in the form and anatomy of the figures, vegetation, and the rich fabrics and patterns, all of which evolve as I work. I emphasize movement and intense color while maintaining the planned order necessary to create complicated compositions. I especially enjoy painting narratives that weave a harmony between the Old and New Testament Scriptures.

My art studies were in three schools that embraced three totally different philosophies of working. My earliest study was at the American Academy of Art in Chicago, and the Art Institute of Chicago. At the first school I learned to paint, at the second I learned to think more deeply about my painting as it related to the history of art in the centuries before me. At my third school, the State Academy of Fine Art in Karlsruhe, Germany, I combined my classical influence with the freedom of my spontaneous compositions and figures. Blending these flowing compositions with refined detail has become nothing short of exhilarating for me as an artist.

It is my desire to draw my viewers into the beauty of a colorful composition as though they were entering a new world. It is also my passion to share an ancient faith in a fresh and vibrant way, displaying a part ancient, part future story, wherein we dwell somewhere between, with our lives connected to the entire narrative.“



Rosemarie Adcock - USA

See www.RosemarieAdcock.com

In this issue of the eJournal we have selected works by Rosemarie from her Biblical Paintings series.

Artwork ©Rosemarie Adcock. All rights reserved.

From all the other works, here are two more selected ones from the Paintings from Life.



HIGHLY FAVORED



This painting was made in November of 1989, days after the Berlin Wall opened for the first time. It depicts people chipping off pieces of the Wall for souvenirs before it was later completely torn down.

This oil painting on canvas is framed with a traditional beige frame, and has been in my own private collection since the end of the tour of paintings through the US and Europe.

(Thank you from our German perspective for BERLIN WALL IN SUNLIGHT, Werner May)

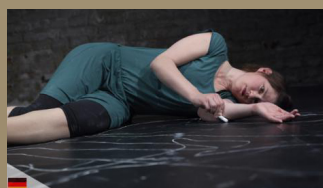
the first 17 numbers of the ejournal christian psychology around the world

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.



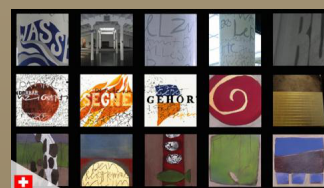
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JOURNAL NO. 2 - 2012
Germany



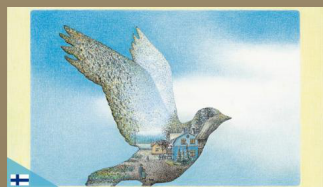
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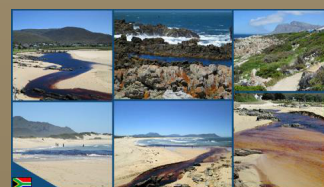
JOURNAL NO. 5 - 2014
USA



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Finland



JOURNAL NO. 7 - 2015
Canada



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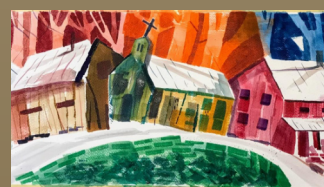
JOURNAL NO. 9 - 2016
Focus Topic: „Therapy Goals“



JOURNAL NO. 10 - 2017
„Conscience“



JOURNAL NO. 11 - 2018
„Who is leading me during practicing Christian Psychology?“



JOURNAL NO. 12 - 2019
„Christian identity“



JOURNAL NO. 13 - 2019
Body Aspects in Christian Psychology, Psychotherapy and Counseling



JOURNAL NO. 14 - 2020
„Coping with Stress in Theory and Practice of Christian Psychology“



JOURNAL NO. 15 - 2020
„Basic trust and secure attachment - Christian anthropological, educational and psychotherapeutic aspects.“



JOURNAL NO. 16 - 2021
„A Christian Perspective on the True Self and False Self“



JOURNAL NO. 17 - 2022
„Situating Grief in Redemptive History for the Sake of Joy“

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

main
articles



Friedemann Alsdorf

Psychologist,
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Married, three adult children.
1988-1997 therapeutic director of
a facility for addiction therapy
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Change to IGNIS in
1997, www.ignis.de, board
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His main topics as a lecturer are
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Friedemann Alsdorf

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Verheiratet, drei
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1988-1997 Therapeutischer Leiter
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Seit 1997 bei IGNIS www.ignis.de
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Mitarbeit beim Aufbau einer Höhe-
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Ways out of the Shame-Fear Cycle

(adapted from an author's lecture at APS-Con-
gress, Germany 2017-06-02)

Introduction

Feelings of shame are extremely unpleasant,
but are normal alarm signals for overstepping
boundaries (humiliation, exposure, ...). In that
case, the task is not to rebut the shame, but
the shaming! If one does not succeed in doing
this in the long term, the contempt often beco-
mes directed against oneself, turning into sha-
me-fear. As a "way out", we work on a fine fa-
cade, which in turn builds up fear and rebellion
in ourselves. How do we enter into a greater
freedom and also help those who come to us
for advice?

Much of the content of this text is drawn from
John Bradshaw's book "Healing the shame that
binds you". Impulses found there have been
developed over many years by Bodo and Han-
ne Baar and also by Daniel and Monika Hess.

Auswege aus dem Scham-Angst- Zyklus

(nach einem Vortrag am APS-Kongress,
02.06.2017)

Einleitung

Schamgefühle sind äußerst unangenehme,
aber normale Alarmsignale für Grenzüber-
schreitungen (Herabsetzung, Bloßstellung, ...).
Treten sie auf, gilt es nicht die Scham zurückzu-
weisen, sondern die Beschämung! Gelingt das
auf Dauer nicht, richtet sich die Verachtung oft
gegen das eigene Selbst, wird zur Scham-
Angst. Als „Ausweg“ bemühen wir uns um eine
schöne Fassade, was wiederum Angst und Re-
bellion in uns aufbaut. Wie kommen wir in eine
größere Freiheit hinein und können auch unse-
ren Ratsuchenden helfen?

Viele Inhalte dieses Textes beruhen auf dem
Buch von John Bradshaw: „Wenn Scham krank
macht.“ (1988; 2006). Dessen Impulse sind
über Jahre hinweg weiterentwickelt worden

What is shame?

- A man tells a large group of persons about his life and breaks into tears. He feels ashamed about this.
- Someone complains about teachers – and one of those present then says he is a teacher. This is very embarrassing for the first speaker.
- One's own partner did not behave well in public.

Shame comes from the Indo-Germanic language and stands for "to cover oneself, veil oneself, hide oneself". The Hebrew word of the OT for shame "bosh" means "defective", i.e. to be worthless, to have transgressed against God's order. In the Greek NT, "aidos" denotes a deprivation of the sacred, the opposite of purity. To harm someone means to expose them before God and man in their wrongdoing.

Feelings of shame can be traced back to a discrepancy between the ideal and the real self. The feeling of shame is particularly strong when there is a public dimension involved, when "embarrassment" results... Feelings of shame are expressed as follows: turning one's face away,... avoiding eye-contact, one speaks more quietly, tries to make oneself smaller. (Städtler, 2003: 949f.)

The feeling of shame can describe the feeling with which a person reacts to a threat to his self-esteem. This threat can result from unreflected instinctive impulses arising in the living situation, from the intrusion of an environment felt to be alien to one's person, from a perceived discrepancy between one's own behaviour and cultural or ethical norms [or one's own values (FA)]. The feeling of shame therefore has a pronounced function in securing the value of the person and extends, in lesser degrees, to everything associated with this person. The feeling of shame builds something like a protective wall around a person's intimate sphere, which also includes his body. Shame is not simply the result of societal training: it develops from a natural predisposition. In the long term, this process is affected, of course, by external influences. For this reason, a substantial variati-

on Bodo und Hanne Baar sowie von Daniel und Monika Heß.

Was ist Scham?

- Ein Mann erzählt einem größeren Personenkreis von seinem Leben und die Tränen kommen. Er schämt sich dafür.
- Jemand schimpft über Lehrer – und einer der Zuhörer outet sich als Lehrer. Das ist dem bisherigen Sprecher recht peinlich.
- Der eigene Partner benimmt sich nicht gut in der Öffentlichkeit.

Scham kommt aus dem Indogermanischen und steht für „sich zudecken, verschleiern, verbergen“. Es besteht eine sprachliche Verwandtschaft zu „Schande“. Das hebräische Wort des AT für Scham „bosh“ bedeutet „fehlerhaft“, d. h. wertlos sein, sich gegen Gottes Gebot vergangen zu haben. Im griechischen NT bezeichnet „aidos“ eine Entehrung des Heiligen, das Gegenteil von Reinheit. Jemanden zu beschämen heißt, ihn vor Gott und Menschen in seinem Fehlverhalten bloßzustellen.

Schamgefühl lässt sich auf eine Diskrepanz zwischen idealem und realem Selbst zurückführen. Das Schamgefühl ist besonders dann stark ausgeprägt, wenn eine Art Öffentlichkeit gegeben ist, wenn „Peinlichkeit“ entsteht ... Schamgefühl hat folgenden Ausdruck: Abwenden des Gesichts, ... Blickkontakt wird vermieden, man spricht leiser, versucht, sich klein zu machen. (Städtler, 2003: 949f.)

Als Schamgefühl kann jene Empfindung beschrieben werden, mit der ein Mensch auf die Bedrohung seines Selbstwertes reagiert. Diese Bedrohung kann entstehen durch unreflektierte Triebimpulse aus der Vitalsphäre, durch den Einbruch einer als personfremd empfundenen Umwelt, durch die erfahrene Diskrepanz zwischen dem eigenen Verhalten und kulturellen oder ethischen Normen (oder eigenen Werten, Erg. FA). Schamgefühl hat also eine ausgesprochene Sicherungsfunktion für den Wert der Person und erstreckt sich in je abgestufter Weise auf alles, was mit dieser Person in Zusammenhang steht. Das Schamgefühl bildet gleichsam einen Schutzwall um die Intimsphäre



ADAM NAMING ANIMALS & THE APPEARANCE OF EVE

on in the feeling of shame can be observed both individually and culturally. (Gauly, 1975: 935f).

For us, shame feels very negative. The gaze is lowered, one blushes, one is almost rooted to the spot and frozen, with emptiness, dizziness, tension, contraction of the stomach. Raised cortisol levels in the blood indicate stress. Hiding oneself, putting on fig leaves like Adam and Eve. I do not wish to be visible because I am afraid of being considered worthless and of being excluded from the community.

Nevertheless, shame has many positive functions. Shame...

- looks back (in regret and horror at one's own faulty behaviour),
- conceals (keeps one's own secrets hidden or prevents me passing on intimate things concerning other people),
- looks ahead (warns me of possible embarrassing situations).

Shame is a warning signal for something which one could ultimately designate as "social death", meaning being despised, being avoided, without friends, receiving no esteem. Hardly anyone still wants to be seen with me. Almost as bad as social death itself is the fear of it: it can dominate me so much that I will do anything simply to avoid friction, to avoid any possible experience of shame.

One of the best-known examples of social death is the **crucifixion of Jesus**. Of all his friends and supporters, who was still with him in those hours? Jesus took this death upon himself – and thus robbed it of its enslaving power.

Hebr.2:14f. Since these children have flesh and blood, he too shared in their humanity so that by his death he might render powerless him who exercises his power with the help of death – that is, the devil – and free those who all their lives were held in slavery by their fear of death.

What triggers feelings of shame?

Other people overstep our boundaries

You intrude into my private or intimate sphere

des Menschen, zu der auch sein Leib zu rechnen ist. Schamgefühl ist nicht nur das Ergebnis sozialer Dressur; es entwickelt sich aus einer naturhaften Anlage. Dieser Vorgang wird freilich nachhaltig von äußeren Einflüssen geprägt. Deshalb ist sowohl individuell wie kulturell eine nicht geringe Bandbreite des Schamgefühls zu beobachten. (Gauly, 1975: 935f).

Scham fühlt sich für uns sehr negativ an. Der Blick ist gesenkt, man errötet, ist wie angewurzelt und blockiert, Leere, Schwindel, Verkrampfung, der Magen zieht sich zusammen. Erhöhte Kortisolspiegel im Blut zeigen Stress an. Sich verstecken, sich wie Adam und Eva Feigenblätter nehmen. Ich möchte nicht sichtbar werden, weil ich befürchte, als wertlos geachtet und aus der Gemeinschaft ausgeschlossen zu werden.

Dennoch hat Scham viele positive Funktionen. Sie...

- blickt zurück (in Reue und Erschrecken über eigenes Fehlverhalten),
- verbirgt (hält die eigenen Geheimnisse verborgen oder verhindert, dass ich intime Dinge über andere weitererzähle),
- blickt voraus (warnt mich vor möglicherweise peinlichen Situationen).

Scham ist ein Warnsignal vor etwas, was man in letzter Konsequenz als „sozialen Tod“ bezeichnet, das heißt: verachtet, gemieden zu sein, keine Freunde, keine Wertschätzung mehr zu haben. Kaum jemand möchte noch mit mir zusammen gesehen werden.

Fast so schlimm wie der soziale Tod ist die Angst davor: Sie kann mich so beherrschen, dass ich alles dafür tue, um bloß nicht anzuecken, nichts möglicherweise Beschämendes zu erleben.

Eines der bekanntesten Beispiele für sozialen Tod ist die Kreuzigung Jesu. Wer von all den Freunden und Anhängern war in diesen Stunden noch bei ihm? Jesus hat diesen Tod auf sich genommen – und ihn damit seiner versklavenden Macht beraubt.

Hebr.2:14f. Weil nun aber alle diese Kinder Geschöpfe aus Fleisch und Blut sind, ist auch er

without permission:

- Someone stares at me in the train or in the elevator.
- Other people laugh at me/criticise me a humiliating way.
- Someone passes on information which I had given them confidentially.

Someone living in an intact house can decide himself who is allowed into his garden, who is allowed into the house, who can enter certain rooms.

Unfortunately, some people find that **their boundaries are not respected** and that they have no influence over this. Any person whose boundaries are repeatedly overstepped and violated without permission – whether by impositions or in words – often experiences great shame, but this does not apply to the person overstepping the boundaries. This can even go so far that the sense of healthy boundaries is completely lost, and shame can no longer carry out its task as a guard.

We overstep the boundaries of others

- Someone causes a fatal traffic accident under the influence of alcohol (as resulting feelings not only of guilt, but also of shame)
- Over many years, a Christian was active as an elder in his church, which then gradually moved towards becoming a sect and committing spiritual abuse. Only after he had left did he realise how deeply involved he had been in abusing and damaging spiritual brothers and sisters in the congregation. He is ashamed of his “blindness” in this regard.

We violate our own or cultural values or behave inappropriately for the situation (losing face)

- Someone is caught lying or committing adultery.
- Two friends, laughing and chatting, enter a room already occupied by other people. Everyone else is silent. After a while, they both notice this, ask about it and discover that the preceding conversation in the room

ein Mensch von Fleisch und Blut geworden. So konnte er durch den Tod den entmachteten, der mit Hilfe des Todes seine Macht ausübt, nämlich den Teufel, und konnte die, deren ganzes Leben von der Angst vor dem Tod beherrscht war, aus ihrer Sklaverei befreien.

Wodurch werden Schamgefühle ausgelöst? Andere Personen überschreiten unsere Grenzen

Sie dringen unerlaubt in meine Privat- oder Intimsphäre ein:

- Jemand starrt mich an im Zug oder Aufzug.
- Andere lachen mich aus / kritisieren mich in herabsetzender Weise.
- Jemand erzählt etwas weiter, was ich ihm im Vertrauen gesagt habe.

Der Bewohner eines intakten Hauses kann selbst entscheiden: Wen lasse ich in meinen Garten, wen ins Haus, wen in einzelne Räumlichkeiten.

Leider erleben manche Menschen, dass ihre Grenzen nicht geachtet werden und sie das nicht steuern können. Wessen Grenzen ohne Erlaubnis wiederholt übertreten und übergangen werden – durch Übergriffe oder in Worten – der erlebt oft große Scham, nicht hingegen diejenigen, die die Grenzen überschreiten. Das kann so weit führen, dass das Gespür für gesunde Grenzen ganz verschüttet wird und die Scham ihr Wächteramt nicht mehr ausfüllen kann.

Wir überschreiben die Grenzen anderer

- Jemand verursacht unter Alkoholeinfluss einen Verkehrsunfall mit Todesfolge (und hat sowohl Schuld- als auch Schamgefühle deshalb).
- Ein Christ hat sich jahrelang als Ältester in einer Freikirche engagiert, die sich dann schleichend in Richtung Sekte und geistlichem Missbrauch entwickelt hat. Erst nach seinem Ausstieg wird ihm klar, wie stark er an Missbrauch und Schädigung seiner Gemeindeglieder beteiligt war. Er schämt

had been about the sudden death of someone close to them.

We witness the overstepping of a boundary or inappropriate behaviour by a third person we are close to

- At a big family celebration, someone has to rush to the toilet. But he rushes back into the corridor even faster because an elderly relative is already sitting on the toilet and had forgotten to lock the door.
- While eating in a restaurant, one's husband starts a loud argument with the waiter. One feels ashamed of his behaviour.

Feeling shame because of a third person is especially intensive if this person is a member or perhaps even a representative of one's **own** group. Embarrassing utterances by a president of the USA are most likely to cause shame to US citizens, but hardly to Germans or Russians.

Healthy or toxic shame?

Healthy shame

Shame – unpleasant though it may feel – is protective and preservational. It is good that shame exists, giving us this signal: There is something wrong here! Shame occurs when a boundary is violated. It is meant to offer protection, particularly for the intimate sphere, our bodily sphere, protecting it from all-too enquiring and penetrating eyes. Shame is the guard of our boundaries and our **integrity**.

Toxic shame: repeated shaming

Two factors can lead to shame turning into toxic shame. One of them is **repeated shaming** from an exterior source: "Be ashamed of yourself! There is something wrong with the way you are!" In shaming, it is not the behaviour, but the entire person, that is degraded.

- If a person is repeatedly given the blame for failure or some other negative outcome by another person: "If you had not been like that ..., this would not have happened to me just now!" The message is: "If you did not exist, things would be better for me!", or "You are nothing but a burden to me!"

sich für seine „Blindheit“ in dieser Sache. Eine begeisterte Kommunistin in der DDR hat sich freiwillig der Stasi als Informelle Mitarbeiterin zur Verfügung gestellt und geholfen, „Staatsfeinde“ und „Landesverräter“ hinter Gitter zu bringen. Nach der Wende wird sie von Stasi-Opfern mit ihrem Verhalten konfrontiert.

Wir verstoßen gegen eigene oder kulturelle Werte oder verhalten uns situationsunangemessen (Blamage)

- Jemand wird einer Lüge oder eines Ehebruchs überführt.
- Ich habe die Aufgabe, am Ende einer Großveranstaltung einer Kollegin als Dank für hervorragende Organisationsarbeit ein Blumengesteck zu überreichen. Ich gehe ans Mikro, spreche meine Dankesworte, überreiche dann aber versehentlich statt des Gestecks eine danebenstehende Schale mit Tischdekoration. Gelächter im Saal. Zwei Freunde betreten lachend und schwatzend einen Raum, in dem sich schon andere Personen aufhalten. Alle anderen sind still. Nach einer Weile merken das die beiden, fragen nach und erfahren, dass das bisherige Gespräch der anderen um einen plötzlichen Todesfall in ihrer näheren Umgebung ging.

Wir werden Zeuge einer Grenzverletzung oder eines unangemessenen Verhaltens eines nahestehenden Dritten

- Auf einer größeren Familienfeier muss jemand rasch auf die Toilette. Er ist aber noch schneller wieder auf dem Gang, denn auf der Toilette sitzt schon ein älterer Verwandter, der vergessen hat abzuschließen.
- Bei einem Restaurantbesuch fängt der eigene Ehemann einen lauten Streit mit dem Kellner an. Man schämt sich für dessen Verhalten.

Das „Fremdschämen“ ist besonders intensiv, wenn es um ein Mitglied oder gar einen Repräsentanten der eigenen Gruppe geht. Für peinliche Sprüche eines US-Präsidenten werden sich

- If one is constantly laughed at, e.g. for a speech defect or a physical fault. Especially if this comes from older, stronger or socially superior persons. The messages: “You are inadequate!”
- When healthy and appropriate forms of behaviour are repeatedly discredited, e.g. emotional sensitivity or mourning: “Pull yourself together, for heaven’s sake, stop crying like that!” The message is: “Do not pay any attention to yourself!” or “Your feelings/perceptions are askew!”

Shaming of this kind disparages not the behaviour, but the **whole person**. If one is not successful in rebutting such shaming, one then wishes to hide oneself as a whole person and is ashamed of existing. Shame becomes **internalised**. This toxic shame (using Bradshaw’s phrase) is no longer directed against the overstepping of a boundary or inappropriate behaviour, but against one’s own person. A transitory feeling turns into a permanent basic attitude of **inferiority** and of having to hide oneself.

There is a particularly problematic aspect here, namely that anyone living with shame directed against himself and who has already learnt as a child how to shame others may certainly consider it an option in social conflicts (based on one’s own sense of inferiority) **to shame others**: “Now let him and others simply realise how bad he is, so that he is thoroughly ashamed of it!” In this way we change from victims to perpetrators and pass shaming onto others.

The most important solution is for shaming to be **identified** as such. I look at my shame and ask myself if this is an appropriate warning of potential wrong behaviour, thus belonging to the (usually small) area where I feel ashamed in a natural way?

Or is it a reaction to shaming statements which I rebut in the presence of the “sender”, which I can “dispose of in the rubbish bin”? I take first steps in the learning process of distinguishing third-party shaming from my own shame.

And I make the decision to work with determination against my own tendencies to shame others.

“It is not possible to ‘lay aside’ or ‘rebut’ shame, which is what many people would like to do, but only the shaming.” Baer & Frick-Baer, 2008:30

am ehesten US-Bürger schämen, kaum aber Deutsche oder Russen.

Gesunde oder krankmachende Scham?

Gesunde Scham

Scham – so unangenehm sie sich anfühlt – ist schützend und bewahrend. Gut, dass es Scham gibt, die uns anzeigt: Hier ist etwas nicht in Ordnung! Scham schützt uns, weil wir in einer Welt leben, wo Offenbarung riskant sein kann – wir leben nicht mehr im Paradies.

Scham tritt auf beim Überschreiten einer Grenze. Sie soll etwas schützen, vor allem den intimen Raum, unseren Körperraum, ihn schützen vor allzu neugierigen und zudringlichen Blicken. Scham ist die Wächterin unserer Grenzen und unserer Integrität.

Krankmachende Scham:

Wiederholte Beschämung

Zwei Faktoren können dazu führen, dass aus Scham eine krankmachende Scham wird. Der eine davon ist wiederholte Beschämung von außen: „Schäm dich! Du bist nicht richtig, wie du bist!“ Bei Beschämung wird nicht das Verhalten, sondern die ganze Person abgewertet.

- Wenn einer Person wiederholt die Schuld für das Versagen oder für anderes Negativfinden einer zweiten Person zugeschoben wird: „Wärest du nicht so ..., dann wäre mir das jetzt nicht passiert!“. Die Botschaft ist: „Gäbe es dich nicht, dann ginge es mir besser!“ oder „Du bist nur eine Last für mich!“
- Wenn man z.B. für einen Sprachfehler oder einen Haltungsfehler ständig ausgelacht wird. Vor allem, wenn es häufig vorkommt und/oder wenn es von älteren, stärkeren oder sozial überlegenen Personen kommt. Die Botschaft dahinter ist: „Du genügt nicht!“
- Wenn gesunde und angemessene Verhaltensweisen wiederholt diskreditiert werden, z.B. bei Empfindsamkeit oder Trauer: „Reiß dich gefälligst zusammen, heul nicht so!“ Die Botschaft ist: „Spüre dich nicht!“ oder „Deine Gefühle / Wahrnehmungen sind nicht okay!“



THE ARRIVAL OF JONAH AT NINEVEH

Toxic shame: "Anything else, only not that!"

The second factor which can turn shame into toxic shame is connected with our own reaction. A healthy reaction is to say a clear 'No' to patterns of behaviour and situations which lead to shame and to choose one's actions accordingly.

But if the healthy 'No' turns into an exaggerated "No, no matter what it costs!" (e.g. out of panic or a feeling of inferiority), one is drawn into having-to-avoid, drawn into an idol-worship of **"Anything else, only not that!"**. A real-life example:

- A woman comes for counselling because she cannot speak in large groups, although she is competent and certainly has something to say. After a number of sessions, she remembers an event from her school days: during a class, she offered an answer which turned out to be wrong. Several fellow pupils laughed. At that moment she swore to herself that she would never offer an answer again or voluntarily say anything at all, hoping never to have to undergo that experience again. When she released herself from this oath in the name of Jesus and accepted the risks involved in being more open, she was able to break out of her silent role for the first time.

If everything which could possibly trigger feelings of shame has to be avoided **no matter what it costs**, it may happen (as with a phobia) that fears and avoidance behaviour become more and more pronounced:

I am unable/forbidden to show a certain aspect of my character!

I am unable/forbidden to show a number of aspects of my character!

I am unable/forbidden to have a certain aspect of my character!

I am unable/forbidden to have a number of aspects of my character!

I am unable/forbidden to show myself as I am!

I am unable/forbidden to be as I am!

I am unable/forbidden to be!

(after Bodo Baar, 1995:52)

Solche Beschämung wertet nicht das Verhalten, sondern die ganze Person ab. Wenn es nicht gelingt, solche Beschämung zurückzuweisen, möchte man sich als ganze Person verstecken und schämt sich für sein Dasein. Scham wird internalisiert. Diese krankmachende (Bradshaw: „toxische“) Scham richtet sich nicht mehr gegen eine Grenzüberschreitung oder ein unangemessenes Verhalten, sondern gegen die eigene Person. Aus einem vorübergehenden Gefühl wird eine dauerhafte Grundhaltung von Minderwertigkeit und Sich-verstecken-Müssen. Besonders problematisch ist: Wer mit Scham gegen sich selbst lebt und bereits als Kind gelernt hat, wie man andere beschämt, für den kann es in sozialen Konflikten (aus dem eigenen Unterlegenheitsgefühl heraus) durchaus eine Option sein, andere zu beschämen: „Sollen er und andere doch nur merken, wie schlimm er ist, so dass er sich tüchtig dafür schämt!“ So werden wir aus Opfern zu Tätern und geben Beschämung weiter.

Die wichtigste Lösung ist, dass Beschämung als solche identifiziert wird. Ich schaue meine Scham an und frage mich: Ist sie eine angemessene Warnung vor falschem Verhalten und gehört somit zu dem (meist kleinen) Bereich, wo ich mich auf natürliche Weise schäme?

Oder ist sie eine Reaktion auf beschämende Aussagen, die ich dem „Absender“ gegenüber zurückweisen oder „in die Mülltonne stecken“ kann? Ich trete in den Lernprozess ein, fremde Beschämung von eigener Scham zu unterscheiden.

Und ich entscheide mich, eigenen Tendenzen, andere zu beschämen, energisch entgegenzutreten.

„Nicht die Scham kann ‚abgelegt‘ oder ‚zurückgewiesen‘ werden, was viele Menschen wünschen, sondern die Beschämung.“ Baer & Frick-Baer, 2008:30

Krankmachende Scham:

„Alles, nur das nicht!“

Der zweite Faktor, durch den aus Scham eine krankmachende Scham wird, hängt mit unserer eigenen Reaktion zusammen. Verhaltensweisen und Situationen, die zu Scham führen, ein klares Nein entgegenzusetzen und entsprechend zu handeln, ist eine gesunde Reaktion.

When the word shame-fear is used in what follows, this refers to a combination of internalised shame (which is directed against one's own person) and the fear of renewed shaming (on the principle of "Anything else, only not that!").

The wrong solution: shame-fear cycle Withdrawal...

Repeated shaming can lead to withdrawing from others and lining up my heavy artillery. I want to make my boundaries **impregnable** and impenetrable, yet behind the intimidating gestures there is often intense loneliness and a lack of self-esteem.

... or a fine facade

But I can also hide myself behind a fine and inviting facade. On the outside, everything looks perfect and friendly, but no-one is allowed to see how I am on the inside. In contrast to healthy self-protection/healthy shame, what we have here is a disproportionate covering-up, one in which no-one is allowed to see what is happening within me because I would otherwise be afraid of being despised and put to shame. The danger is that I may keep up this hiding game in God's presence and try to show him, too, only my pious facade – like Adam and Eve after the Fall or, as in the New Testament, the Pharisees. Humility would mean that I am prepared show myself as I really am.

Two mutually conflicting wishes

If I am influenced by shame-fear, I attempt to compensate, with great **efforts**, for my inadequacy (of which I am ashamed) or to hide it. I produce impressive performances over a long period or attempt to please everyone with what I do.

At the same time, I have the feeling of **being deprived** – of missing out on the essentials. The wish to finally feel better in myself is precisely what I do not fulfil by investing so much energy in constructing my facade. At some point I go on strike and allow myself things I had denied myself for so long, follow my greed, do something which I may regret afterwards. Until I get a shock: Where have I ended up? And then I want to make up for it again and renew my efforts.

Wenn aber aus dem gesunden „Nein“ (z.B. aus Panik oder Minderwertigkeitsgefühl) ein übertriebenes „Nein, um keinen Preis!“ wird, gerät man in den Sog des Vermeiden-Müssens, in den Götzendienst eines „Alles, nur das nicht!“

Ein Fallbeispiel:

Eine Frau kommt in die Beratung, weil sie in einer größeren Gruppe nicht reden kann, obwohl sie kompetent ist und durchaus etwas zu sagen hätte. Nach einigen Sitzungen erinnert sie sich an ein Ereignis ihrer Schulzeit: Sie meldete sich im Unterricht und gab eine falsche Antwort. Etliche Mitschüler lachten. In diesem Moment schwor sie sich, sich nie wieder zu melden oder von sich aus etwas zu sagen, um so etwas nicht noch einmal erleben zu müssen. Als sie sich von diesem Schwur im Namen Jesu löst und akzeptiert, für mehr Offenheit Risiken in Kauf zu nehmen, kann sie ihre schweigende Rolle erstmalig durchbrechen.

Wenn alles, was ein möglicher Auslöser für Schamgefühle werden könnte, um jeden Preis vermieden werden muss, können (ähnlich einer Phobie) Ängste und Vermeidungsverhalten immer mächtiger werden:

Ich kann / darf einen bestimmten Aspekt meines Wesens nicht zeigen!

Ich kann / darf mehrere Aspekte meines Wesens nicht zeigen!

Ich kann / darf einen bestimmten Aspekt meines Wesens nicht haben!

Ich kann / darf mehrere Aspekte meines Wesens nicht haben!

Ich kann / darf mich nicht zeigen wie ich bin!

Ich kann / darf nicht sein, wie ich bin!

Ich kann / darf nicht sein!

nach Bodo Baar, 1995:52

Wenn im Folgenden das Wort Scham-Angst gebraucht wird, ist damit eine Kombination aus internalisierter Scham (die sich gegen die eigene Person richtet) und der Angst vor erneuter Beschämung (nach dem Motto: „Alles, nur das nicht!“) gemeint.

Die falsche Lösung: Scham-Angst-Zyklus Abschottung...

Wiederholte Beschämung kann dazu führen,



THE EXPULSION OF ADAM & EVE

dass ich mich von anderen abschotte und meine Geschütze auffahre. Ich will Grenzen uneinnehmbar und undurchdringlich machen, doch hinter dem abschreckenden Gebaren stehen oft große Einsamkeit und Wertlosigkeit.

...oder schöne Fassade

Ich kann mich aber auch hinter einer schönen und einladenden Fassade verstecken. Äußerlich sieht alles prima und freundlich aus, aber wie ich in meinem Inneren bin, sollte keiner sehen. Im Gegensatz zu einem gesunden Selbstschutz / zu gesunder Scham handelt es sich hier um ein übermäßiges Verheimlichen, wo niemand wissen darf, was mit mir los ist, weil ich sonst Angst habe, verachtet und beschämt zu werden. Die Gefahr ist, dass ich dies Versteckspiel auch vor Gott betreibe und auch ihm nur meine fromme Fassade zeigen will – wie Adam und Eva nach dem Sündenfall oder wie im Neuen Testament die Pharisäer. Demut würde heißen:

Ich bin bereit, mich so zu zeigen, wie ich wirklich bin.

Zwei gegeneinander streitende Wünsche

Wenn ich von Scham-Angst beeinflusst bin, versuche ich unter großer Anstrengung, meine Mängel (für die ich mich schäme) auszugleichen oder zu verbergen. Ich bringe über lange Zeit beeindruckende Leistungen oder versuche, es allen recht zu machen.

Dabei habe ich das Gefühl, selbst zu kurz zu kommen – das Eigentliche zu versäumen. Der Wunsch, mich endlich wohler zu fühlen, wird gerade nicht dadurch erfüllt, dass ich so viel Energie in den Aufbau meiner Fassade investiere. Irgendwann streike ich und gönne mir lang verbotene Dinge, folge meiner Gier, mache etwas, das mir hinterher eventuell Leid tut. Bis ich einen Schreck bekomme: Wo bin ich gelandet? Und es dann wieder gut machen will und mich neu anstrenge.

Shame-fear cycle Pseudo-conscience

Motivated by the wish to enjoy respect, not to have to be ashamed, I make efforts to be a "pleasing" person, not to disappoint others, to contribute to the community, to control myself.

DOMINANCE / SELF-DISCIPLINE

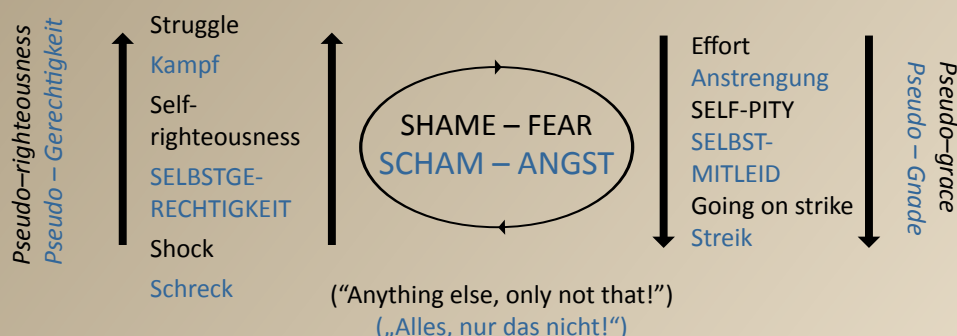
I am in danger of condemning those who contribute less to the community than I do, of being demanding and perfectionist. It is important for me to have everything under control. Deep within me I feel a certain fear of what could happen if I do not keep this up and if I should possibly "fail".

Der Scham – Angst – Zyklus Pseudo – Gewissen

Motiviert vom Wunsch, in Ansehen zu stehen, mich nicht schämen zu müssen, bemühe ich mich, ein „liebenswürdiger“ Mensch zu sein, andere nicht zu enttäuschen, gute Leistungen zu erbringen, mich zu beherrschen.

DOMINANZ / SELBSTDISZIPLIN

Ich bin in Gefahr, andere, die nicht so viel leisten, zu verurteilen, anspruchsvoll und perfektionistisch zu sein. Mir ist wichtig, alles im Griff zu haben. Tief in mir spüre ich eine gewisse Angst, was passieren könnte, wenn ich das nicht durchhalten und „versagen“ sollte.



To compensate for my great efforts, I allow myself something, I reward myself, follow my desires and let go of myself. In such moments, the only thing that counts is what I want or what I think I need.

REBELLION / SELF-REWARD

I am in danger of doing “pleasant” things which I afterwards regret, losing myself in addictions or parallel worlds, violating my own values. At some point I am ashamed of my own behaviour – and heaven help us if anyone notices it!

Pseudo-free-will

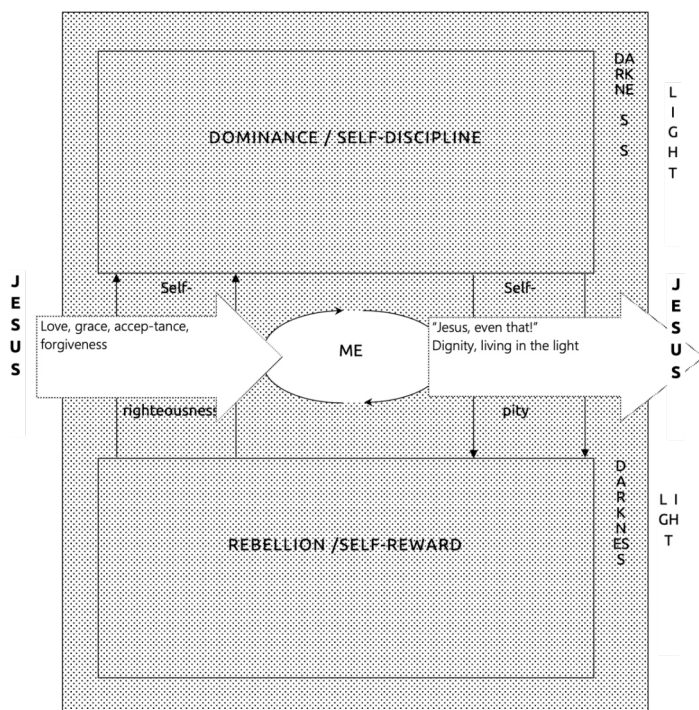
Zum Ausgleich für meine große Anspannung gönne ich mir etwas, belohne ich mich, folge meinen Wünschen und lasse mich gehen. In solchen Momenten zählt nur noch das, was ich will oder meine zu brauchen.

REBELLION / SELBSTBELOHNUNG

Ich bin in Gefahr, „angenehme“ Dinge zu tun, die ich hinterher bereue, mich in Süchten oder Parallelwelten zu verlieren, gegen meine eigenen Werte zu verstoßen. Irgendwann schäme ich mich für mein eigenes Verhalten – und wehe, es hat jemand gemerkt!

Pseudo – Willensfreiheit

Disempowering the shame-fear cycle

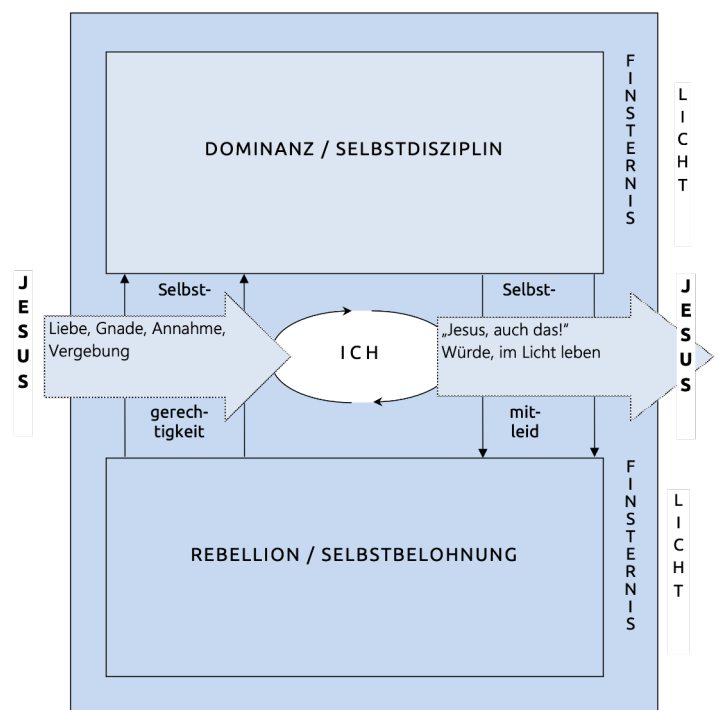


Escape

Recognising rebellion and dominance as wrong paths.

When I recognise how my desperate struggle for self-esteem and satisfaction of my needs by following the path of dominance and rebellion

Den Scham – Angst – Zyklus entkräften



Ausstieg

Rebellion und Dominanz als falsche Wege erkennen.

Wenn ich erkenne, wie ich in meinem verzweifelten Ringen um Selbstwert und um Befriedigung meiner Bedürfnisse auf den Wegen von



THE RESTORATION OF ISAAC

has actually achieved neither of these, and I see how much damage I have done with this, and when I recognise how much I still afraid about letting go of these strategies, I can then capitulate before God and make this admission: "This is something that I cannot achieve myself, something where I am completely dependent on you for my entire existence."

1.Joh.1:8f. If we claim to be without sin, we deceive ourselves and the truth is not in us. But if we confess our sins, he is faithful and just and will forgive us our sins and purify us from all unrighteousness 'that we have caused'.

Invite Jesus – into the feeling of shame

I ask Jesus to meet me precisely in those points about which I am ashamed. Instead of hiding myself from God, too, I expose myself to his presence – he will not subject me to a new shaming!

Ps.34:18 The Lord is close to the broken-hearted and saves those who are crushed in spirit.

Mt.12:20 He will not break the bruised reed, and he will not snuff out the smouldering wick.

Spr.28:13 He who conceals his sins does not prosper, but whoever confesses and renounces them finds mercy.

When severe or repeated shamings from my life history come into my mind, I look to the Crucified One and see how close he is to me. Holding his hand, I can start on a process of forgiveness (for which, in the case of severe hurts, plenty of time should be allowed if needed).

Freeing oneself from wrong survival strategies

At any point where I have said, in my pain or despair, "Anything else, only not that!", I have subjected myself to the **slavery** of my own avoidance strategies. I recognise the difference between a healthy 'No' and an enslaving, absolute "No, no matter what it costs!".

Rom. 14:8 f we live, we live to the Lord; and if we die, we die to the Lord. So, whether we live or die, we belong to the Lord.

Dominanz und Rebellion beides verfehlt habe und wieviel Schaden ich damit angerichtet habe, und wenn ich erkenne, wieviel Angst es mir immer noch macht, beide Strategien loszulassen, dann kann ich vor Gott kapitulieren und zugeben: „Das ist eine Sache, die ich selbst nicht leisten kann, wo ich in meiner ganzen Existenz auf Dich angewiesen bin.“

1.Joh.1:8f. Wenn wir behaupten, ohne Sünde zu sein, betrügen wir uns selbst und verschließen uns der Wahrheit. Doch wenn wir unsere Sünden bekennen, erweist Gott sich als treu und gerecht: Er vergibt uns unsere Sünden und reinigt uns von allem Unrecht, 'das wir begangen haben'.

Jesus einladen – in das Schamgefühl hinein

Ich bitte Jesus, mir genau in den Punkten zu begegnen, für die ich mich schäme. Statt mich damit auch vor Gott zu verstecken, setze ich mich Seiner Gegenwart aus – Er wird mich nicht neu beschämen!

Ps.34:19 Der HERR ist nahe denen, die zerbrochenen Herzens sind, und hilft denen, die ein zerschlagenes Gemüt haben.

Mt.12:20 Das geknickte Rohr wird er nicht zerbrechen, und den glimmenden Docht wird er nicht auslöschen.

Spr.28:13 Wer seine Sünde leugnet, dem wird's nicht gelingen; wer sie aber bekennt und lässt, der wird Barmherzigkeit erlangen.

Wenn mir schwere oder wiederholte Beschämung aus meiner Lebensgeschichte in den Sinn kommt, schaue ich auf den Gekreuzigten und sehe, wie nah er mir ist. An seiner Hand kann ich in einen Vergebungsprozess eintreten (dem bei schweren Verletzungen ggf. viel Zeit gegeben werden muss).

Sich von falschen Überlebensstrategien lösen

Wo ich in meinem Schmerz oder meiner Verzweiflung gesagt habe: „Alles, nur das nicht!“ habe ich mich in die Sklaverei meiner eigenen Vermeidungsstrategien begeben. Jetzt erkenne ich den Unterschied zwischen einem gesunden Nein und einem versklavenden, absoluten



THE EXPULSION FROM THE GARDEN OF EDEN

Trusting in Jesus, I let go of the old survival strategy, i.e. my absolute 'No': "Jesus, even that – if it is of help on my way with you." This caveat is important, for it is not a matter of welcoming shaming or of not taking preventive action! On the contrary, we start the learning process holding Jesus' hand, learning to distinguish healthy and unhealthy feelings of shame, rebutting shaming and preserving our dignity.

Restoring dignity

The basis of our dignity is that we are creatures made in God's image; this is therefore founded on God's unchangeable word of assurance to us.

The dignity of every person is founded on the relationship with God, not on the relationship man has with God, but on the relationship God has with him, Independent of intellectual capacities, merit, achievement, moral condition and religious condition, founded solely on the fact of being a human being. (Roderus, 2017)

In both philosophy and jurisprudence, this Christian understanding of the dignity of man has become established. Dignity is considered an unalterable fundamental right of the human being, it is not granted and cannot be withdrawn, it is eternal, inalienable and unconditional. It cannot be earned (in contrast to honour). No one can annul or award it, take it away or confer it. One can only respect or disrespect dignity.

"The dignity of the human being is inalienable. Respecting and protecting it is the duty of all state authority." The German Constitution, Article 1

As helpers, one of our most important tasks is to encourage our clients to become conscious once again of the dignity which is always present in them and – in view of possible disrespect or shaming – to defend it vigorously, also and particularly against oneself. For example:

Luk.15:22-24: But the father gave his servants orders: ›Quick, fetch the best robe and put it on him, place a ring on his finger and bring him a pair of sandals! Bring the fatted calf and slaugh-

„Nein, um keinen Preis!“

Röm.14:8 Leben wir, so leben wir dem Herrn; sterben wir, so sterben wir dem Herrn. Darum: wir leben oder sterben, so sind wir des Herrn Im Vertrauen auf Jesus lasse ich die alte Überlebensstrategie, d.h. mein absolutes Nein los: „Jesus, auch das – wenn es Deinem Weg mit mir dient.“ Der Zusatz ist wichtig, denn es geht nicht darum, Beschämung willkommen zu heißen oder nicht abzuwehren! Im Gegenteil, wir treten an der Hand Jesu in den Lernprozess ein, gesunde und ungesunde Schamgefühle zu unterscheiden, Beschämung zurückzuweisen und unsere Würde zu wahren.

Würde wiederherstellen

Unsere Würde gründet sich darin, dass wir Geschöpfe nach dem Ebenbild Gottes sind; sie beruht also auf einem unverlierbaren Zuspruch von Gott.

Die Würde jedes Menschen ist in der Gottesbeziehung begründet, nicht in der Beziehung des Menschen zu Gott, sondern in Gottes Beziehung zu ihm, unabhängig von intellektueller Ausstattung, Verdienst, Leistung, moralischer Befindlichkeit und religiöser Befindlichkeit, allein in der Tatsache des Menschseins. (Roderus, 2017)

Sowohl in der Philosophie als auch in der Rechtsprechung hat sich dies christliche Verständnis der Würde durchgesetzt. Würde wird als unveränderliches Grundrecht des Menschen angesehen, sie wird nicht gewährt und kann nicht entzogen werden, ist unvergänglich, unveräußerlich und unbedingt. Man kann sie (im Unterschied zur Ehre) nicht verdienen. Man kann sie niemandem aberkennen oder zuerkennen, nehmen oder verleihen. Man kann Würde nur achten oder missachten.

„Die Würde des Menschen ist unantastbar. Sie zu achten und sie zu schützen ist Verpflichtung aller staatlichen Gewalt.“ Deutsches Grundgesetz, Artikel 1

Als Helfer ist es eine unserer wichtigsten Aufgaben, unsere Klienten zu ermutigen, sich ihrer immer vorhandenen Würde wieder bewusst zu werden und sie – angesichts möglicher Missachtung oder Beschämung – energisch zu verteidigen, auch und gerade vor sich selbst. Zum Beispiel:

ter it; we are going to have a celebratory feast and rejoice. For my son was dead, and now he is alive again; he was lost, and now he has been found again.‹ And they began to celebrate.

The best robe, the ring, the sandals and the feast have a clear message: humiliation and failure have to be left behind completely; the son who has returned enjoys the full dignity of sonship.

Walking in the light

1.Joh.1:7 But if we walk in the light, as he is in the light, we have fellowship with one another, and the blood of Jesus, his Son, purifies us from all sin.

Coming into the light: that is what is new compared with the old, shameful-fearful state of not permitting oneself to be known. When I do this, I experience how God forgives me and is close to me. Then I no longer sit alone behind my facade, lost in myself, but can have fellowship with other people and with God.

This does not mean that I am completely transparent in every regard. I am allowed to keep back things to protect myself. But I no longer put all my vital energies into my facade, but into genuine relationships – with myself, with God and with my fellow man.

Sometimes you cannot heal everything

The following poem by Phil Bosmans (1978:29) points out that in this time of “already” and “not yet” (we are already redeemed, but not yet glorified), despite serious prayer and despite readiness on our part, not every healing will be complete – and encourages us to accept that.

Do not start today with the fragments of yesterday!

The day that was yesterday,
all earlier days and years
are past,
buried in time.

There is nothing more about them that you
can change!
Were there broken fragments?

Luk.15:22-24 Doch der Vater befahl seinen Dienern: ›Schnell, holt das beste Gewand und zieht es ihm an, steckt ihm einen Ring an den Finger und bringt ihm ein Paar Sandalen! Holt das Mastkalb und schlachtet es; wir wollen ein Fest feiern und fröhlich sein. Denn mein Sohn war tot, und nun lebt er wieder; er war verloren, und nun ist er wiedergefunden.‹ Und sie begannen zu feiern.

Das Festgewand, der Ring, die Sandalen und das Fest machen deutlich: Schande und Scheitern müssen ganz in den Hintergrund treten; der Zurückgekommene genießt die volle Würde der Sohnschaft.

Im Licht wandeln

1.Joh.1:7 Wenn wir jedoch im Licht leben, so wie Gott im Licht ist, sind wir miteinander verbunden, und das Blut Jesu, seines Sohnes, reinigt uns von aller Sünde.

Ans Licht zu kommen, das ist das Neue gegenüber dem alten, scham-ängstlichen Nicht-bekannt-werden-Dürfen. Wenn ich das tue, erfahre ich, dass Gott mir vergibt und mir nah ist. Dann sitze ich nicht mehr allein hinter meiner Fassade, verloren in mir selbst, sondern kann mit anderen Menschen und mit Gott Gemeinschaft haben.

Damit ist nicht gemeint, dass ich vor jedem in jeder Hinsicht völlig transparent bin. Ich darf Dinge zurückhalten, um mein Selbst zu schützen. Meine Lebensenergie stecke ich aber nicht mehr in meine Fassade, sondern in echte Beziehungen – zu mir selbst, zu Gott und zu meinen Mitmenschen.

Manchmal kannst du nicht alles heilen

Das nachstehende Gedicht von Phil Bosmans (1978:29) zeigt uns auf, dass in dieser Zeit des „schon jetzt“ und „noch nicht“ (wir sind schon jetzt erlöst, aber noch nicht verherrlicht) trotz ernsthaften Gebetes und trotz Bereitschaft von unserer Seite nicht jede Heilung vollständig sein wird – und ermutigt uns, das anzunehmen.

Fang den Tag von heute

nicht mit den Scherben von gestern an!

Der Tag von gestern
alle Tage und alle Jahre von früher
sind vorbei,



NOAH AND THE ANIMALS BEFORE THE GREAT FLOOD

Do not drag them around with you!
 But they will injure you, day by day,
 and in the end you cannot go on living.
 There are fragments
 which you get rid of
 when you lay them in God's hands.
 There are fragments
 which you can heal
 when you forgive sincerely.
 And there are fragments
 which you cannot heal with all your love.
 You have to leave them behind you!

(German: Phil Bosmans, 1978:29)

begraben in der Zeit.
 An ihnen kannst du nichts mehr ändern!
 Hat es Scherben gegeben?
 Schlepp sie nicht mit dir herum!
 Denn sie verletzen dich Tag für Tag,
 und zum Schluss kannst du nicht mehr leben.
 Es gibt Scherben,
 die wirst du los,
 wenn du sie Gott in die Hände legst.
 Es gibt Scherben,
 die kannst du heilen,
 wenn du ehrlich vergibst.
 Und es gibt Scherben,
 die du mit aller Liebe nicht heilen kannst.
 Die musst du liegenlassen!

(Phil Bosmans, 1978:29)

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Appendix:

Prayer for Forgiveness and new Orientation

During the whole process of leaving the shame-fear-cycle we are in relationship with God by prayer. I here present a prayer for forgiveness and new orientation and a conscious Christian meditation on our body as the Temple of the Holy Spirit. The following sentences are meant as a suggestion; where they do not fit for you, speak them in your own words, as they correspond to your heart!

Lord Jesus Christ, I ask you for forgiveness for all rebellion and self-reward where I have bypassed you, where I have greedily looked for satisfaction of my desires and have done things which were not right. I ask you to purify me and also all those whom I have soiled in the process. I now name to you in silence the things that I am thinking of here:

Jesus, I likewise ask you for forgiveness for all dominance where I have put far too much effort into building up a fine facade instead of being known as the persons I am. Forgive me especially where this has led to elevating myself over others and shaming them. Heal them and let them recognize anew their dignity before you. I now name to you in silence the things that I am thinking of here:

Jesus, I thank you for your word, in which you tell us this: If we acknowledge our sins, you are faithful and just and forgive us our sins and purify us from all unrighteousness (see 1.Joh.1:9). Thank you that I can now receive this forgiveness and purification from your hand.

Jesus, I ask you to meet with me anew with all your love, grace, acceptance and forgiveness. You know where others have shamed me repeatedly or severely and how bad this was for my self-esteem. I now name to you in silence the things I am thinking of here:

Jesus, you do not leave me alone with this pain. You took upon yourself the worst of shaming in the presence of Caiaphas and Pilate and on the cross in order to redeem me. Jesus, I ask you to hold me to your heart now. Take me with you to share in your death and in the life of your resurrection. Touch all toxic feelings of shame and all self-condemnation with the light of your presence with us.

Jesus, you also know the places where I said, in my despair, "Anything else, only not that." You

Anhang:

Gebet um Vergebung und Neuausrichtung

In unterschiedlicher Ausdrucksweise sind wir im gesamten Ausstieg aus dem Scham-Angst-Zyklus durch Gebet mit Gott verbunden. Ich stelle hier speziell ein Gebet um Vergebung und Neuausrichtung vor, mit einer anschließenden bewusst christlichen Meditation über unseren Leib als Tempel des Heiligen Geistes. Die folgenden Sätze sind als Anregung gedacht; wo sie für Dich nicht passen, sprich sie in eigenen Worten, wie sie Deinem Herzen entsprechen!

Herr Jesus Christus, ich bitte Dich um Vergebung für alle Rebellion und Selbstbelohnung an Dir vorbei, wo ich gierig die Befriedigung meiner Wünsche gesucht haben und Dinge getan habe, die nicht in Ordnung waren. Ich bitte Dich, dass Du mich reinigst und auch alle, die ich damit beschmutzt habe.

Ich nenne Dir jetzt im Stillen die Dinge, an die ich hier denke:

Jesus, ich bitte Dich ebenso um Vergebung für alle Dominanz, wo ich viel zu viel Kraft in den Bau einer schönen Fassade gesteckt habe, statt als der Mensch bekannt zu sein, der ich bin. Vergib mir insbesondere, wo ich mich damit über andere erhoben und sie beschämt habe. Heile sie und lass sie ihre Würde vor Dir neu erkennen. Ich nenne Dir jetzt im Stillen die Dinge, an die ich hier denke:

Jesus, ich danke Dir für Dein Wort, in dem gesagt ist: Wenn wir unsere Sünden bekennen, so bist Du treu und gerecht, dass Du uns die Sünden vergibst und uns reinigst von aller Ungerechtigkeit (s. 1.Joh.1:9). Danke, dass ich jetzt aus Deiner Hand diese Vergebung und Reinigung annehmen darf.

Jesus, ich bitte Dich, dass Du mir neu begegnest mit all Deiner Liebe, Gnade, Annahme und Vergebung. Du weißt darum, wo andere mich wiederholt oder schwer beschämt haben und wie schlimm das für meinen Selbstwert war. Ich sage Dir jetzt im Stillen, woran ich denke:

Jesus, Du lässt mich in diesem Schmerz nicht allein. Du hast bei Kaiaphas, bei Pilatus und am Kreuz schlimmste Beschämung auf Dich genommen, um uns zu erlösen. Jesus, ich bitten Dich, nimm mich jetzt an Dein Herz. Nimm mich mit hinein in Deinen Tod und in Dein Auferstehungsleben. Berühre alle krankmachen-

also know how I then submitted myself to the slavery of my own avoidance strategies. I now name to you in silence the things of which I thinking here: Jesus, by your death you have freed from their slavery those whose entire lives were dominated by the fear of death (see Hebr.2:15). In the same way, I now bring you all the fear that arises when I let go of old survival strategies which I recognize as wrong. Instead of "Anything else, only not that", we want to say, "Jesus, even that – if it is of help on our way with you." I ask you to protect me and teach me how to rebut shaming in a good way. Jesus, send me now your spirit so that he takes possession anew of everything that until now was possessed by shame-fear. Thank you for the body which you have given me – let it be the Temple of the Holy Spirit.

Holy Spirit, you give us the breath of life. Take complete possession of your Temple, fill it with your light, your dignity and your strength all the way to the furthest corner. (To help here, I can imagine to myself that every breath that I take draws your fresh life and your light into me, and that with every breath that I expel I give up to you everything that burdens and wishes to block me...)

I ask you, Holy Spirit, to come into every corner of your Temple and to make it your own. (Here I take about 20 minutes to go through all the parts of my body and to invite the Holy Spirit to flow into them, from toe to head.)

Because I was made by you, Holy Spirit, I am a **royal child** with an unalienable **dignity**. (This can be experienced in depth by using the preceding meditation – more than by head knowledge.) I say yes to this, and for that I thank you with my whole heart. Let this truth accompany me today and every day of my life.

And because I have been called, as a royal child, to inherit the blessing and to be a blessing, I pass on this blessing and this meeting in dignity to the people whom you send to me today.

den Schamgefühle und alle Selbstverdammnis mit dem Licht Deiner Nähe.

Jesus, Du weißt auch, wo ich in Angst oder Verzweiflung gesagt habe: „Alles, nur das nicht.“ Du weißt auch, wie ich mich damit in die Sklaverei eigener Vermeidungsstrategien begeben habe. Ich sage Dir jetzt im Stillen, woran ich denke: Jesus, durch Deinen Tod hast Du die, deren ganzes Leben durch die Angst vor dem Tod beherrscht war, aus ihrer Sklaverei befreit (Hebr.2:15). So bringe ich Dir jetzt alle Angst, die aufkommt, wenn ich alte, als falsch erkannte Überlebensstrategien loslasse. Statt „Alles, nur das nicht“ will ich sagen: „Jesus, auch das – wenn es Deinem Weg mit mir dient.“ Ich bitte Dich, dass Du mich schützt und mich lehrst, Beschämung auf gute Art zurückzuweisen.

Jesus, sende nun Deinen Geist, damit er alles, was bisher von der Scham-Angst besetzt war, neu in Besitz nimmt. Danke für den Leib, den Du mir gegeben hast – er soll der Tempel des Heiligen Geistes sein.

Heiliger Geist, Du schenkst mir den Atem des Lebens. Nimm ganz Besitz von Deinem Tempel, fülle ihn bis in den letzten Winkel mit Deinem Licht, Deiner Würde und Deiner Kraft. (Als Hilfe kann ich mir vor-stellen, dass ich mit jedem Atemzug Dein frisches Leben und Dein Licht in mich aufnehme und mit jedem Ausatmen alles, was mich beschwert und blockieren will, an Dich abgebe.)

Ich bitte Dich, Heiliger Geist, in jeden Winkel Deines Tempels zu kommen und dort Wohnung zu nehmen. (Ich lasse mir Zeit, alle Gliedmaßen durchzugehen und den Heiligen Geist einzuladen, dort hineinzuströmen, von den Füßen bis zum Kopf.)

Weil ich durch Dich geschaffen bin, Heiliger Geist, bin ich ein Königskind mit unverlierbarer Würde. (Das kann durch die vorausgegangene Gebetszeit in der Tiefe erfahrbar werden – mehr als ein Kopfwissen.) Dazu sage ich Ja, und dafür danke ich Dir von ganzem Herzen. Lass diese Wahrheit mich begleiten, heute und alle Tage meines Lebens.

Und weil ich als Königskind berufen bin, den Segen zu erben und ein Segen zu sein, gebe ich diesen Segen und diese Begegnung in Würde an die Menschen weiter, die Du mir heute schickst.

comment

Friedemann Alsdorf's article permits the reader to reflect on the emotion of shame from multiple perspectives. At first reading this article offers an accessible reflection on some of John Bradshaw's key ideas about the causes, expressions, and effects of shame in a person's life. Owing to the fact that there is an enduring quality to these ideas the succinctness of Alsdorf's reflections has the capacity to draw the reader to reflect on their own experiences of shame and the role of shame in their life.

Next, the depth of Alsdorf's reflections is evident the fact his discussion illustrates three important components of emotional experience. First, our bodily-felt emotions inform us about our perceptions or knowledge of the world (e.g., fear tells me a situation is unsafe), others (e.g., anger may be a response to being treated unfairly), and ourselves (e.g., toxic shame conveys the message that I am a failure or "the problem"). Second, when handled well emotions such as healthy shame can contribute to a sense of well-being and integrity. However, all too often this potentially positive outcome is crowded out by negative self-appraisals such as occur with toxic shame and the Shame-Fear cycle. Lastly, Alsdorf's reflections are a reminder that emotions have a motivational quality, i.e., an action tendency, that results in behaviours that either harm self and others or are life-giving.

Two major contributions of this article are the author's humility and his efforts to reflect theologically and biblically on both the problem and the solution. Humility is a key feature of Alsdorf's reflections in the section "Escape." This is seen in his willingness to locate himself as one who both knows what it means to struggle with shame and negative self-esteem and who is also aware of his tendency to use coping strategies that are harmful to himself and others. As for his biblical and theological reflection, Alsdorf's reflection on the process of change and healing is informed by two theological motifs—i.e., Christ's identification with humanity in the incarnation and His death, and the believer's experience of new life in Christ and reflect their identification with Christ.

All in all, readers are invited to sit and dwell with this article so that its heartbeat speaks to the inner person.



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Former contributions in our eJournal by Kelvin you can see here:

<https://emcapp.ignis.de/7/#/72>

comment

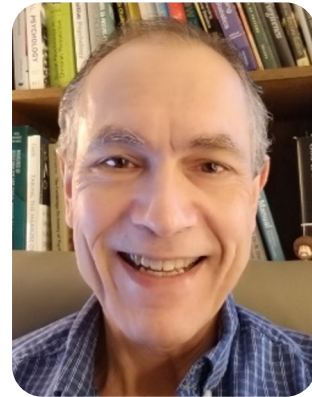
Like a helpless ship in the grip of a powerful ocean current, the cycle of shame and fear can quickly suck us into a downward-spiraling whirlpool of despair. Friedemann Alsdorf's article "Ways out of the Shame-Fear Cycle" offers an insightful and ultimately Christ-centered experiential way of understanding and gaining release from this destructive cycle. I offer here my interpretation of Alsdorf's article and some complementary reflections.

Alsdorf first offers a way of understanding shame that is rooted in concealment. We hide from others the gap between our real and ideal selves. The feeling of shame is characterized by an intense desire to hide, and a global negative sense of worthlessness that is quite painful. Indeed, the desire to avoid of shame can become all-consuming—"Anything else, only not that!"

Shame, he says, is triggered by "boundary" violations. For example, we feel shame when others harm or disrespect us, when we violate our own values, or when someone from our in-group harms or disrespects others. When this happens repeatedly, the shaming is "toxic."

In response to these boundary violations a person can experience the "shame-fear cycle," by either conforming to social expectations out of fear of public exposure, or by losing oneself in "addictions or parallel worlds" which then results in more shame. The former response Alsdorf calls "dominance/self-discipline"; the latter "rebellion/self-reward". The former is characterized by self-righteousness; the latter by self-pity. These responses are motivated an all-consuming desire to enjoy respect and to avoid shame. These responses are ineffective and harmful.

A third response is to "invite Jesus into the feelings of shame". This way of responding first recognizes that the all-consuming desire to enjoy respect and to avoid shame is idolatrous. That



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<https://emcapp.ignis.de/14/#p=49>

is, the sentiment, “Anything else, only not that!”, is tantamount to worship; it is posturing toward social respect as the idol that must be satisfied; without it, life is unendurable. It is my treasure, my fulfillment.

Instead, in inviting Jesus into the feelings of shame, we recognize how close he is to our suffering (he is here, with me in my suffering) and we place our contentment in his hands. We no longer need to put on a fine façade for fear public exposure, nor do we need to lose ourselves in avoidant or rebellious self-indulgence. Rather, we experience a sense of God’s forgiveness, acceptance, and closeness. In fellowship with God and other people, I am free.

Alsdorf then presents a meditative poem that expresses a lovely image of laying the broken fragments of our life in God’s hands. His appendix then helpfully offers a contemplative prayer that requests forgiveness for rebellion and for façade-making, expresses sorrow for shaming others, asks Jesus to meet us anew in our shame-fear prison, and asks the Spirit fill every part of his Temple (our body).

It is evident that the understanding of shame-fear cycle, ineffective responses, and resolution in Jesus, are all rooted in an understanding of humans as essentially relational. This relational essence is part of the *imago Dei*. “Boundaries” is a term that is tied to thinking of ourselves as essentially separate selves (e.g., “a person should not let others violate their personal rights, space, or dignity”), but I think that Alsdorf uses the word in a way that reflects a human relational essence. The examples he provides show that shame arises when we—individually or collectively—fail to act in virtuous loving relationship with God, our selves, others, or community. It is indeed a “social death” be-

cause it harms the relationships that constitute our life.

Shame is therefore tied to relational harm. This helps us see why the responses of the self-righteous false façade and self-pitying self-indulgence are ineffectual and harmful. These responses do not address the relational ruptures, in fact, they compound them. Real relationship cannot happen with a false façade, and so a healing relationship cannot ensue. Real relationship cannot happen when we focus inward—through self-indulgence, or cast off community altogether—through rebellion.

In contrast, the response of inviting Jesus into the feelings of shame is profoundly relational. It severs a relationship with the idol—the all-consuming desire for respect, and replaces it with relationship with Jesus—who joins us in our suffering and satisfies our central longings. Jesus’ yoke is much easier than the burdensome desire for respect from others.

Similarly, I think Alsdorf’s third response—inviting Jesus—is a sort of mental pivot strategy that is characteristic of contemplative prayer. Indeed, Alsdorf offers a contemplative poem and meditative prayer. Rather than fighting shame-fear directly (e.g., “It is not rational to feel shame”), the approach is indirect. That is, the approach redirects our sustained attention toward Jesus and away from the idol. Inviting Jesus into our feelings of shame is intended as a spiritual discipline, a practice of the heart that we express throughout the day. In this way, Alsdorf’s third way is akin to the ancient meditative prayer, “Lord Jesus Christ, Son of God, have mercy on me”, because it reflects a realistic understanding of oneself and places us in a properly-oriented relational posture of attention and worship.



NOAH AND THE ANIMALS BEFORE THE GREAT FLOOD

Throughout the 2017 AACC World Conference www.aacc.org there was a Christian psychology track, where besides others Jonathan Badgett, spoke on "A Christian Approach to Shame".

2018, I, Werner May, asked Jonathan for an interview.

out of the gutter by god's grace

A Christian Psychological Approach to Shame

Werner: You have told me that you had two aims with this session?

Jonathan: First, I was hoping to illuminate the interpersonal roots of shame. Most of what I have seen on shame from an evangelical perspective tends to focus on sin/transgression as the root of shame. I think too much emphasis on personal guilt can obscure the relational/covenantal nature of the self. While sin always leads to shame, it's not always my sin that is the cause.

Werner: And the second aim?

Jonathan: I wanted to challenge the counselors in the session to reflect on their own struggle(s) with shame. It can be very difficult to identify shame intrasubjectively. Sensitivity to our countertransference is one of the best ways to uncover unresolved shame in ourselves. Besides this, we become better counselors as we apply these truths to ourselves first. It has certainly helped me in my work as a pastor and pastoral counselor!

ge|halt|voll: And in your own family? Your wife Alison and you have four nice children in the age of 13, 11, 8, and 6. Do you have experiences like you can avoid the development of shame?

Jonathan: Primordial or "original" shame only has one cure - our personal union with Christ. Like most parents, my wife and I began to recognize signs of shame-proneness and avoidance in our kids as soon as they started making comparisons between themselves. We



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Here you can read the report from the workshop:

https://emcapp.eu/AACC_2017_Shame_session-_handout.pdf

work hard at modeling healthy transparency with our kids, accepting blame for our faults, and teaching by example our belief that the Lord is gracious and merciful. Since secondary or developmental shame arises in the context of relationship, we strive to create an environment of openness and approachability in age-appropriate ways. Shame only worsens the longer it remains hidden. So, we especially want our kids to know that life goes better when we "talk it out."

Werner: Now a question for you as a pastor. What do you mean, what role shame plays during the church service?

Jonathan: What a great question! I think most pastors underestimate how shame adversely influences the individual worshipper. And so they fail to see how much freedom and healing

comes to those who worship God "in Spirit and truth" (John 4:24). Corporate worship can be profoundly therapeutic when it centers on the person and work of Christ with clear and specific application for all who are struggling with personal failings, relational wounds, and feelings of isolation/abandonment. Pastors who seek the right balance of the objective and subjective aims of worship will endeavor to keep the focus on Christ and the truthfulness of the Scriptures while simultaneously finding ways to encourage believers to appropriate those truths for personal and communal transformation. The result can be, in a word, heavenly!

Werner: Thank you very much, Jonathan, and for the possibility too to publish your contribution here now.



JOSEPH & HIS BROTHERS

a poem about “shame”

loser winner twin-overcomer

I still remember
when mother hit me.
with her little hands.
for shame, for rage, helplessness.
in front of everybody.
her every blow and shout
a yes and no to me.
round my neck
hung a big question mark.

I still remember
how they buffeted me,
threatened, mocked,
till the first silent tears flowed.
a fly that came too near
for these boys, one year older.
when they let me fly free again,
I learned, in the shadow of the hedgerows,
my life-skills as a shirker.

I still remember
when, as a youngster,
during hide-and-seek with neighbours’
children,
I threw one, two pebbles
into where my friends were hiding.
then again and again, larger, sharper.
With more and more of a rage I had never
known.
because I trusted neither myself
nor that they could be on my side.

I still remember
how, as a young man, I lied my way through.
half-truth lifestyle.
amid the astonished protests of my
opponents
I lied and won,
lived out the slogan
I give
as good as I get.
adorning myself with a fake halo.

I still remember
how, many years later, someone suddenly said
“yes, gladly” when I asked
to take something off my hands
which I was too cowardly for.
and he really meant gladly,
just for me, on my side for no reason.
in his voice, his gestures, his eyes,
he began to share bread and wine with me.

I still remember
when, out of habit,
I looked for fast and easy answers
and found them
no longer.
rigid with fear.
sending a silent, powerless cry heavenwards
a breath of wind prodded me,
caused my hand to open word by word.
an impulse of non-violence.

I still remember
how I found it easier and easier
to tear up black and white thinking.
hostile projections, projectiles,
which concealed the fear in the other,
could no longer fool me,
I dared to stop
hiding the other cheek.
how the first step towards the we became the
new weapon.

I still remember
when I acquired a taste
for the grace of the twin-overcomers,
two victors, me, and you, my enemy.
without you no me.
when it emerged, by forgetting
where we come from,
where we are going,
who we are in Jesus Christ.

Werner May (Germany)

ein gedicht zu "scham"

loser winner doppelsieger

ich weiß noch
als mich mutter schlug.
mit ihren kleinen händen.
aus scham, aus wut, hilflosigkeit.
vor aller leute augen.
jeder schlag und schrei von ihr
ein ja und nein zu mir.
um meinem hals,
ein großes fragezeichen.

ich weiß noch
wie sie mich schuppsten,
drohten, höhnten,
bis die erste träne sprachlos flehte.
eine fliege, die zu nahe kam,
für die buben, ein jahr älter.
als sie mich wieder fliegen ließen,
lernte ich im zäune-heckenschatten
meine drückeberger-überlebenskunst.

ich weiß noch
als ich als junge
beim suchenspielen mit nachbarskindern
in die verstecke meiner freunde
ein, zwei steinchen schmiss.
dann immer mehr, größere, spitzere.
mit immer mehr an unbekanntem zorn.
weil ich mir selbst nicht traute,
auch ihnen nicht, dass sie für mich waren.

ich weiß noch
als ich, ein junger mann, betrog im leben.
halbwahrheitenlebensstil.
im erstaunten aufschrei meiner gegner
log und siegte,
den slogan übte,
wie du mir,
so ich dir.
scheinheiligenzier.

ich weiß noch
als viele jahre später jemand plötzlich
„ja gerne.“ sagte, als ich ihn bat,
mir etwas abzunehmen,
wozu ich zu feige war.
und wirklich gerne meinte,
mir zuliebe, ohne grund für mich schien.
in seiner stimme, seinen gesten, seinem blick,
brot und wein begann mit mir zu teilen.

ich weiß noch
als ich aus gewohnheit
nach der faust aufs auge suchte
und sie nicht mehr fand.
vor angst erstarrte.
im stummen ohnmachtsschrei nach oben
ein rückenwind mich stupste,
die hand wort für wort zum öffnen brachte.
gewaltlosigkeitenschub.

ich weiß noch,
wie es mir immer leichter fiel,
schwarz-weiß-gedanken zu zerreißen.
feindbilderprojekte,
die die angst des anderen verbargen,
mich nicht mehr täuschen konnten,
ich es wagte, die andere backe
nicht zu verstecken.
der erste schritt zum wir zur neuen waffe wurde.

ich weiß noch
als ich appetit bekam
auf doppelsiegergnade,
zwei sieger, ich und du, mein feind.
ohne du kein ich.
wenn aus dem vergessen stieg,
woher wir kommen,
wohin wir gehen,
wer wir in jesus christus sind.

Werner May (Deutschland)

“Why would you call yourself a Christian psychologist?”

Questions to Steven L. Voss

How did you come to study psychology?

I grew up on a farm in the Midwest of the United States. I was a first-generation college student as neither of my parents had gone to college. I was not sure I wanted to go to college but approximately two years after I graduated high school the Lord worked in my life to follow him by going to a two-year Bible college to study the Bible. I was thinking about missions or education at the time. Through my interactions with a friend who was receiving counseling, I began to think about counseling and psychology as a way to minister to people. Prior to that, I was unfamiliar with psychology and I had never known anyone who received counseling. The thought had been planted. When I transferred to a four-year college to earn my Bachelor's Degree, I changed my focus. I became a double major in psychology and philosophy/religion.

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

My focus at the bachelor's level was general psychology (Buena Vista University). However, because I had a lot of Bible, religion, and philosophy courses, I was immediately drawn to the idea of understanding psychology through the lens of the scripture. My education in psychology, though at the bachelor's and master's level was secular, was carefully analyzed through the truth of the Bible. This was in a day when the integration movement was growing in popularity and strength. I read material by Gary Collins, Clyde Narramore, and an early book by Larry Crabb. These, and other authors ignited my passion for both psychology and Christian truth. Another important author that influenced my early education was Arthur Holmes who spoke of all truth coming from God. Thus, understanding psychology through biblical truth was a passion of mine very early on.



Steven Voss (USA)

is a psychology professor and licensed psychotherapist. He teaches at Hannibal-LaGrange University in Hannibal, Missouri, USA.

Dr. Voss has research interests in attachment theory, the psychology of religion, and the integration of psychology and theology. He maintains a private practice and sees clients weekly. When not working, he enjoys wilderness adventure, travel, and spending time with family.

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Former contribution in our eJournal by Steven you can see her:

<https://emcapp.ignis.de/14/#p=13>

<https://emcapp.ignis.de/15/#p=13>

My Master's Degree was in psychology with a clinical emphasis (New Mexico Highlands University). I pursued courses in intelligence testing and personality assessment. At the same time, I was wanting to understand basic psychological processes such as cognition. My thesis was an attempt to better understand the physiological basis of memory. I worked in the lab with rats and injected them with glucose to learn how glucose might serve as a modulator to the formation of memory in a learning task. Though the research was interesting, it seemed God's leading was more toward helping people through psychotherapy than through the laboratory.

I eventually pursued a Master's Degree in Marriage and Family Counseling. This was through a seminary where I could more fully explore both counseling and the Bible. The focus in marriage and family was also important to me as by this time I had come to see the importance of relationships, both in terms of our health and our pathology. My study was completed at Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary. I would eventually go to a sister institution at New Orleans Baptist Theological Seminary where I completed a PhD. The degree focus was in transformation while I was at New Orleans. Originally, the focus was in psychology and counseling, but I ended up with a focus in counselor education.

My dissertation, was in the areas of a psychology of religion. I studied emerging adult men, ages 18-29, and their attachment levels to their fathers. I was exploring the defective father hypothesis as proposed by Paul Vitz. My research suggested that those with an avoidant attachment toward their fathers were more likely to abandon their religious belief systems than those who had secure attachments with their fathers. This was consistent with the defective father hypothesis. Also of interest was the fact that participants who reported more personal misfortune and pain in their lives were less apt to be secular. In my sample, secure attachment was related to a father who modeled a relationship with God.

Why would you call yourself a Christian psychologist?

Technically, my license to practice mental health is in marriage and family therapy. However, on the academic side of my life, I am an associate professor of psychology at Hannibal-La-Grange University in Hannibal, Missouri. I consider myself a Christian therapist and professor because of my relationship with Jesus. I believe that God is the author of truth. My role as a Christian behavioral scientist is to attempt to understand human psychological functioning as designed by God. Understanding humanity through this lens helps me know how humans are designed to function and this leads to applications in the counseling office as well.

What are you actually doing? Tell me about a little bit about your experiences.

For most of my professional career, I have taught full-time as a professor in psychology and have worked as a therapist part time. This past year, I reversed this ratio. I am now engaged full-time in my clinical practice and teach part time as a faculty member at Hannibal-La-Grange University. I see children, adolescents, and adults in my clinical practice. I am more of a generalist with regard to mental health issues but a significant amount of my work is with people in relationships. I especially enjoy working with couples helping them to overcome their struggles and foster deeper levels of intimacy. I believe we are designed for intimate relationships because we are made in the image of God. This informs much of the work I do. I find the combination of clinical and academic work to be complimentary. One informs the other.

As a professor, I have had great opportunities to help students grow and develop as persons. Watching persons develop and find their passions for life and God is a joy. I have also had the experience of taking students on international trips. Through the experience of traveling abroad I have helped them learn about a cross-cultural perspective in psychology.



TRIUMPHAL ENTRY

My clinical work has the added benefit of encouraging my continued growth and development as a person. It is not unusual to see things in clients that reminds me of areas in my own life that need further attention. Many professions don't necessarily point these things out: Clinical work does. As a therapist, the quality of my work is related to my own growth as a person.

I see your life is full of many interesting tasks. You also have a family. Does this create stress?

I have passion for living life and doing many things and this can sometimes result in problems I create. I am married and have four children. They are all grown now and I am a grandfather. Two of my children have followed in my steps. My daughter is in clinical private practice and I have a son who is in graduate school to also become a therapist. Making time for all the areas of life can be stressful. I wish I could say that I have always done a good job of balance, but I have not. I have made errors in this, especially when my focus strays from God being the center. I have learned to say "no" to some opportunities and have had to reduce

other commitments to maintain better balance. Being a husband and father, and now grandfather is incredibly important. Careers are important, but they pale in comparison to being in relationship with the people we love.

What are your dreams for the future?

At this point in my career, I want to finish strong. I want to be at a point where God can say, "Well done good and faithful servant." However, more immediately, I would like to take time to write. Working two careers has not provided the opportunity to write. I have things I want say to the larger Christian community. Personally, I want to engage in more travel. Life is a precious gift and I want to live it to the full.

Former Interviews with a Christian Psychologist: „Why would you call yourself a Christian psychologist?“

Päivimaria Kuivamäki (Finland)
<https://emcapp.ignis.de/17/#p=32>

Olena Yaremko (Ukraine / Germany)
<https://emcapp.ignis.de/16/#p=27>

further contributions

- Eric L. Johnson (USA) about his research program on the heart as a psychological construct
- Esly Carvalho (Brazil): Emotional Recovery and Intervention in Adversity
- Anna Ostaszewska (Poland) recommends reading: Integrating clients' religion and spirituality (R/S) within psychotherapy
- Werner May (Germany): How I open my pictures of others
- Next Number / About us
- Seven Statements of EMCAPP

An interview with Eric L. Johnson about his research program on the heart as a psychological construct

Eric, You started a research project about the subject of the heart. Please tell us why this topic became so important to you and for a Christian Psychology?

To begin with, the Bible uses a variety of psychological terms (like “soul” and “spirit”), but the most common one is “heart.” It’s used over 800 times in the Old Testament (leb and lebab in Hebrew) and over 200 times in the New (kardia in Greek). We’re encouraged, for example, to “pour out our hearts like water before the Lord” (Lam 2:19). God says that in the new covenant he will give his people a “new heart” (Ez 36:26), and he will write his law on their hearts (Jer 31:33). And now in the new covenant, we learn that “God’s love has poured into our hearts through the Holy Spirit” (Ro 5:8) and “God has shone in our hearts the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ” (2Co 4:4). Such teachings are invaluable for a Christian psychology!

In addition, the “heart” was recognized as a highly significant psychological concept by some of the great Christian psychologists in the history of the church. We’re all familiar with Augustine’s observation, early in his Confessions, that “the heart is restless until it finds its rest in you, oh Lord;” and Pascal’s great insight that “the heart has reasons that reason does not know.” Or Pascal again, “It is the heart which experiences God, and not the reason. This, then, is faith: God felt by the heart, not by the reason.” Max Scheler wrote, “Where [one’s] ‘heart’ is attached, there, for him, is the ‘core’ of the so-called essence of things.” Finally, the Christian philosophical psychologist, Robert Roberts, defined the heart as “your inward self, your personality, your ‘actual you;’ and what you treasure—what is important to you, what is important to you, what you are centrally attached to—determines what that self is like.” These few statements, I think, indicate just how valuable a concept the ‘heart’ is for psychology.



Eric L. Johnson (USA)

PhD, is Professor of Christian Psychology and Asst Director of Public Outreach & Scholarship at the Gideon Institute of Christian Psychology & Counseling at Houston Baptist University.

<https://hbu.edu/gideon>

In addition to more than 50 articles in peer-reviewed journals, he edited “Psychology and Christianity: Five Views”, and was a co-editor of “Evidence-Based Practices for Christian Counseling & Psychotherapy” and “Marriage: Its Foundation, Theology, and Mission in a Changing World” and has written “Foundations for Soul Care: A Christian Psychology Proposal” and “God and Soul Care: The Therapeutic Resources of the Christian Faith”, basic textbooks in Christian psychology. He was the founding director of the Society for Christian Psychology and has been doing pastoral counseling weekly for over 20 years. He’s married to Rebekah, and they have two children, Laura and Iain, and three grandchildren: Cash, Jedi, and Seraphina.

Yet, in modern psychology the heart is nowhere to be found. There is an enormous interest in the mind, intelligence and cognition, and of course, these are important too. But in our everyday life – at least in English – people are referring to the heart all the time using very common English idioms, such as “That touched my heart,” “I’m heartbroken,” “He’s faint-hearted,” and “We had a heart-to-heart conversation.”

It seems as if the scientific psychology that emerged in the late 1800’s in the West has had a bias towards the mind and cognition throughout its history and has basically ignored the role of the heart in human psychology, in spite of its very common use in everyday life. I fear that modern psychology so prioritizes the methods and assumptions of the natural sciences that much of it has become biased against uniquely human phenomena like the heart, and this has led to some distortions in its psychology. All this underscores for me the value to Christian psychology of studying the everyday experience of regular laypeople, in order to develop a psychology that can give us what the philosopher Charles Taylor called the “Best Available Account,” that is, the best description of human life as it’s actually lived.

So, I got motivated to do some research on the heart. So far, I have done interviews with twenty-four Christian scholars in fields like theology, literature, philosophy, and psychotherapy, using open-ended questions, like “What is the psychological heart?” “Where in your body is the psychological heart located?” “What are the functions of the psychological heart?”

I have also gathered data from Twitter. I hired someone to write a formula to collect every tweet using the word “heart,” and we obtained 100,000 tweets in five hours. I found that 85% of the uses of “heart” referred to the psychological heart, most of them using various English idioms, and only about 7% referred to the physical heart. I am currently continuing to do analysis on this dataset.

As a next step, I would like to develop a questionnaire that can collect quantitative data about people’s understanding and experience of the heart, using questions with a Likert scale that contrast the mind and the heart. For example, asking subjects where various psychological activities occur, in the mind or the heart?, for example, memory, emotions, visuo-spatial reasoning, perception, values, human relationships, the virtues, and spiritual experience.

I am also interested in the obviously close relationship between the physical heart and the psychological heart. It appears that very early in life, children come to recognize that they have feelings in their chest and stomach, and as they enter into their family’s language-system, they start to use the word “heart” to refer to emotions that they have mostly in their chest. As people gradually develop into moral beings, their emotions come to be associated with important values in life, like good and bad, and eventually, our emotions become attuned to the sacred and the profane. Cognitive development is obviously important in human maturation, especially in modern culture, but maybe the cultivation of the values of the heart is also a very worthwhile aspect of human development.

So, these are some of my early thoughts on this project.

In the future I would also like to find out more about reference to “heart” in other languages. One of my Chinese friends recorded and translated some interviews with Mandarin-speakers, using the same questionnaire, only translated into Mandarin, and I would love to work with others who are interested in doing some interviews with native speakers of their language or who would be willing to collect some “heart-idioms” from their language. If you would like to collaborate on such a project, please contact me at eljohnson@hbu.edu.



THE MIRACULOUS DRAUGHT OF FISHES

Emotional Recovery and Intervention in Adversity: Low-intensity bilateral movement exercises for small groups in Christian settings

This is a report on a pilot project that were done in the US (English) and in Brazil (Portuguese) in Christian settings online where three group exercises were taken and adapted from traditional EMDR (Eye Movement Desensitization and Reprocessing) protocols for use in paraprofessional and pastoral settings.

Background

As a trained group therapist and psychodramaist/trainer, who eventually went on to become an EMDR therapy trainer, the greatest drawback of the latter approach was its limitations for group therapy. Over time, EMDR groups protocols were finally developed to multiply the reach of the healing process to a greater number of people. The first of these was the Integrative Group Trauma Protocol (Jarero: 2009) which came about as the result of Hurricane Paulina in Mexico, and the large number of people needed emotional interventions. An individual intervention format was not feasible because of the large number of people, the reduced number of days in which the EMDR therapists would be present and available, and the locale of the disaster.

A form of bilateral stimulation was developed which was named the Butterfly Hug (Artigas et al: 2014). It was used in a group setting, with the participants drawing in quadrants on paper about their experience. Further research and studies proved that it was useful and safe in group and has been implemented around the world in disasters and crisis situations. It was also adapted for paraprofessionals (Jarero et al: 2015) and likewise was proven safe as well. Another exercise developed by Dr. Carlos Raimundo is called the Pillars of Life. It is a celebration of the positive experiences in our lives, those that have gone well. So often counselors and therapists tend to focus on what is dysfunctional, but Raimundo postulates the importance of giving importance to those experiences that will bring beauty, love, and encouragement into our lives. This exercise was adapted



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She is an experienced Trainer of Trainers in EMDR therapy, as well as a Psychodrama trainer. An author and international speaker, she has spent her life working in Latin America and Brazil, training in three languages, in both pastoral as well as clinical settings. She has written books available on Amazon. Esly is married to a retired missionary, has an adult married daughter who is also a clinical psychologist and trainer in her own right, and loves those grandchildren!!

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by Esly Carvalho as a resource installation for EMDR therapy. More recently, it has been used successfully with groups online.

A third exercise that was adapted to online group intervention is the Flash Technique, developed by Phil Manfield, Ph.D., (Manfield et al: 2017) as a desensitization tool for memories that might be too overwhelming to work through with the traditional EMDR protocol. Perhaps its most interesting aspect is that people's memories lose their high emotional charge without having to think about the painful issue they are working on. This brought in a greater safety net when Esly Carvalho developed it for group settings online (2020) when the COVID-19 pandemic began.

Development of the Emotional Recovery and Intervention in Adversity Program

Building on past group experiences both in pastoral as well as secular settings, this program was elaborated using basic information about trauma and childhood adverse experiences (Fellitti et al: 1998), its impact and consequences as well as the importance of healing the emotional sequelae of such issues. Because these three exercises are easy to implement, and provide fast and safe results, the author integrated these topics regarding adverse experiences with the bilateral stimulation (Butterfly Hug) as a form of multiplying the healing factor. Additionally, Biblical themes were brought in to emphasize God's deep desire to see his creation walk in holiness. This resulted in six meetings with practical exercises for personal healing in group settings. The program also includes training facilitators who can go on to multiply this experience in their own church and groups settings.

The outline of the program is as follows:

- Module 1: Do you want to be healed? John 5: 1-9. The Splinters of the Heart
- Module 2: Remember Lot's Wife! Luke 17:32 Trauma and its Consequences.
- Module 3: Putting away childish things. I Cor. 13: 11. Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACE) and their impact on adult life: why we should care.
- Module 4: Knowledge comes easily to the discerning: Proverbs 14:32 The fine art of discernment and wisdom: When and how to refer
- Module 5: In a flash, in the twinkling of an eye... and we will all be changed. 1 Cor 15:52. The Flash Technique
- Module 6: If one part suffers, every part suffers with it... I Cor. 12:26. Angel Hug Group Protocol for Intervention in Adversities.

Eventually a seventh module was included where we taught the Pillars of Life exercise.

Group Experiences

We have done parts of this program with several groups.

The first group was offered in English online. Half of the 12 participants were therapists and half were not. This was an incredibly diverse group. Six different languages were spoken by different participants: English, Spanish, Portuguese, German, Mandarin, and Cantonese. Several were already involved with some form of recovery groups: refugees, immigrants, grief recovery, men's groups; and others wanted to start this kind of group.

As a pilot project, the experience was very enlightening. We were able to see what worked well, and what needed fine-tuning. The most important takeaway was that we needed to separate the healing portion of the program from the training program. This led to a second group.

A second group was in Brazil: we began an online group called, Healing for the Heart, once a month, where emotional recovery themes were presented, one of the exercises was implemented, and the group was broken into smaller groups for personal sharing.

A third group (in Brazil) began for divorce recovery by virtue of many requests from hurting people in this situation. This was a group that met for 8 months, online, and specific themes that dealt with divorce were brought to each meeting.

A very interesting result in one of these encounters had to do with the power of healing in sharing.

The seventh meeting we worked on the issue of children and divorce. Several had gone through or were going through divorce and separation experiences but there were several women who had not had children and, due to their age, probably would not have that experience. The initial results on a painful scale of zero to ten (SUDS – Subjective Units of Disturbance Scale) were very high: 8, 9 and 10. Using the Group flash Technique, the numbers came down to 4, 5 and 6, after three rounds of the exercise in period of about 15 minutes total. The participants then went into small groups to share for approximately 45 minutes. As we wrapped up that night, the inquiry regarding their disturbance about the children and divorce issue resulted in



THE LAST SUPPER

a report of zeros and ones, and one three on the SUDS scale.

This was surprising and unexpected and leads to the importance of further investigations regarding the power of healing in sharing groups.

Observations:

These groups have been formed from all denominations and churches. Our experience has been that programs that do not come from inside specific church activities will not be promoted by the local church. Since this is just in its initial stages, we sent out invitations to those individuals who had participated in previous Christian events.

The meetings began and ended regularly with prayer. Short Biblical explanations were given at the beginning of each one, weaving scientific knowledge and Biblical truth before moving to reprocessing exercises, sharing and prayer for each other.

Conclusion:

As this report is being written, a Healing for the Heart group has been opened to the public in Brazil, and over 90 people are participating monthly. A facilitator training is planned for the leadership in October 2022, so they can begin to learn to implement these exercises in the settings where they work. A mentoring group for these facilitators will be offered to those who desire to receive further guidance regarding the groups they are leading or wish to start. Training and healing groups online in Spanish and English are also planned for the near future.

We hope this experience can be replicated and implemented worldwide and in different languages. We are setting up the recordings in the languages with which we are familiar with the intention that they can be subtitled into other languages in the future. We have learned from the Lord that, 'without healing there is no holiness'. This is our contribution to the worldwide healing process, since it is easy to learn, simple to implement, produces fast results and provides safety in adversity.

Special thanks to Brent Lindquist and Sik-Lam Wong who supported this project with their presence, ideas, and prayers.

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Presentations on the Pillars of Life by Esly Carvalho:

- Pillars of Life: EMDR and resource installation, EMDR Europe, Madrid, June 2012
- EMDR and the Pillars of Life, EMDR Iberoamerican Conference, October, 2010, Quito, Ecuador, with practicum.
- EMDR and the Pillars of Life, EMDRIA Conference, Atlanta, August, 2009, with a live practical demonstration.

Integrating clients' religion and spirituality (R/S) within psychotherapy

I would like to present a very significant article. It is especially important for psychotherapists working in secular centers, where faith is not always respected, and even sometimes it is forbidden to talk to patients about religious or spiritual matters.

The article Integrating clients' religion and spirituality within psychotherapy: A comprehensive meta-analysis was adopted from a chapter of the book by Norcross and Wampold Psychotherapy relationships that work. The book presents results of meta-analyses conducted on request of the American Psychological Association.

The scientific results state unequivocally that psychotherapy tailored to a patient's religiosity / spirituality (R/S) is as effective as other psychotherapies, or even more effective.

We can read already in the abstract that R/S-adapted psychotherapy resulted in greater improvements in clients' psychological and spiritual functioning compared to no treatment and psychotherapies without R/S. In more rigorous additive studies, R/S-accommodated psychotherapies were equally effective to standard approaches in reducing psychological distress, but resulted in greater spiritual well-being.

It means that psychotherapists who tailors therapy to spirituality or religiosity (R/S) practice so-called "evidence-based psychotherapy" - which is necessary in psychotherapy today.

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psychotherapist, supervisor, European Certificate of Psychotherapy (ECP). President of the Association of Christian Psychologists in Poland 1995-2009. President of the ACP Psychotherapy Section (2009-2014). Lecturer at the ACP Psychotherapy Study (2003-2015). At present she works at the Integrative Psychotherapy Centre in Warsaw. Author of the book „Psychoterapia integratywna w podejściu chrześcijańskim” (Integrative Psychotherapy: A Christian Approach). Sopot: GWP, 2015. First published ej 2, 2012
Former articles by Anna available here:
<https://emcapp.ignis.de/11/#p=62>
<https://emcapp.ignis.de/1/#p=58>
<https://emcapp.ignis.de/1/#p=78>

Abstract from the article:

“Some religious or spiritual (R/S) clients seek psychotherapy that integrates R/S values, while others may be reticent to disclose R/S-related aspects of struggles in a presumably secular setting. We meta-analyzed 97 outcome studies (N = 7,181) examining the efficacy of tailoring treatment to patients’ R/S beliefs and values. We compared the effectiveness of R/S-tailored psychotherapy with no-treatment controls, alternate secular treatments, and additive secular treatments. R/S-adapted psychotherapy resulted in greater improvement in clients’ psychological ($g = 0.74$, $p < 0.000$) and spiritual ($g = 0.74$, $p < 0.000$) functioning compared with no treatment and non R/S psychotherapies (psychological: $g = 0.33$, $p < 0.001$; spiritual: $g = 0.43$, $p < 0.001$). In more rigorous additive

studies, R/S-accommodated psychotherapies were equally effective to standard approaches in reducing psychological distress ($g = 0.13$, $p = 0.258$), but resulted in greater spiritual well-being ($g = 0.34$, $p < 0.000$). We feature several clinical examples and conclude with evidence-based therapeutic practices”.

This article is adapted, by special permission of Oxford University Press, by the same authors in J. C. Norcross & B. E. Wampold (Eds. 2018), *Psychotherapy relationships that work*. volume 2 (3rd ed.). New York: Oxford University Press. The Interdivisional APA Task Force on Evidence-Based Psychotherapy Relationships and Responsiveness was cosponsored by the APA divisions of Psychotherapy (29) and Counseling Psychology (17).



THE WEDDING AT CANA

And finally, a more popular article:

How I open my pictures of others

"A man sees what is before his eyes, but the Lord looks at the heart" (1 Sam. 16:7).

I want to put a question mark behind all the images I have of other people, no matter who the other person is, how long and how well I have known him or her.

The other person is different from what I think. In contrast: Openness to others being different from what I have thought so far brings hope into our relationships. I want to open up my images of others.

Various results of psychological research into the perception of persons show that our images of each other are formed very quickly and

- consciously and unconsciously influence the way we treat each other,
- promote or disrupt the building of trust and
- define a wide or narrow developmental space for the relationship.

We usually do not wait until we have more extensive information about a person, but we form an overall impression as soon as we have received a few pieces of information, whatever these may be. This is called a first impression.

This first impression has two characteristics: it is relatively stable in relation to further information and it influences me in my behaviour towards this person (and thus in turn influences this person towards my impression).

When constructing images about other people, errors occur that are called errors of judgement.

Because we often make these errors when judging others, our perception of others depends more on the person making the judgement (and what is going on inside them) than on the individual characteristics of the person being observed.



Werner May (Germany)

was the senior chairman of the IG-NIS 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.icp.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.

Opening our images of others has four prerequisites:

1. The first and basic prerequisite is that we become aware of our spontaneous, concrete judgements of others and admit that they are flawed.
2. To really do without these, however, also means to renounce the benefit that these quick images bring to me. They give me orientation and protect me: for me, then, I must instead seek my protection in God and endure a certain uncertainty of orientation.
3. We need a real heartfelt desire not to constrict others by our self-tailored images! This means that just a few arguments will not be enough for us to renounce protection and orientation. We need empathy and compassion for the damage these images can do.
4. The next thing is to learn to resist all spontaneously occurring images of our counterpart and to exercise discipline in this. The question of whether the other person could still be different from what I think should become a constant, everyday question.

Then we extend four "antennas of perception":

Why "antennae"?

The metaphor "antenna" clarifies for me:

- I receive something, but it is 1:1 with what was sent out at the transmitter. There are transmission and reception interferences.
- I have to convert linguistic "electromagnetic waves".
- And I can have several antennas.

1. The appreciative antenna

Every human being has a high value in God's eyes! He is a creature of God. God was willing to give Himself for him.

We can learn to look at people in the same way as we normally look at something very valuable, e.g. a beautiful flower or a precious picture. Look up to your neighbour once again!

"Your value is not only dependent on your performance, what you have or can do, or what relationships you have."

But what do I do if I don't discover anything that appears valuable in my eyes? Perhaps I should first check my standards of value and where they come from.

And then: If you cannot discover anything valuable in your counterpart, then this value must be "loved into reality".

How does that work?

If I am convinced that every person is valuable, then I treat them accordingly "in advance", so to speak, until what is valuable shows itself to me. Because it is there!

We have mastered appreciation! Each one of us! And we should apply this appreciation competence to every person:

- I want to treat her/him with care.
- I am happy that she/he exists.
- I spend time with her/him.
- I want to speak positively about her/him.

2. The gift antenna

Every person has gifts, even if I cannot recognise them immediately.

I will take time to discover these gifts.

I resist seeing only negative things in another! Everyone must ask themselves self-critically why they tend to see mainly negative traits.

Have I myself been criticised a lot?

Do I need the negative view of others to enhance myself?

The truth is: Everyone has something! Something they can do, something someone else needs, something someone else finds beautiful.

Discover the other person's gifts and encourage them to give them, that is, to apply them.

But I will always have my own glasses on that define what I see as a gift.

If I don't discover anything then, it will be because of my glasses. It will be difficult to discover gifts outside of my preconceptions of gifts.

But to be convinced that they exist "anyway" should be a goal for everyone.

And if I have this conviction in my heart, it will help influence my relationships.

3. The flaw antenna

Every human being has weaknesses and faults - as an expression of this fallen creation.

The other person's faults and weaknesses should not deter us from trusting them!



THE CONVERSION OF ST PAUL ON THE ROAD TO DAMASCUS

We may realistically perceive the other person's faults and still accept him. God does the same with us!

People tend to idealise or judge others.

But we Christians know that no human being is perfect, and we can deal with that!

First of all, there is a danger that we trivialise the mistakes of others because we are struggling in the same area.

But mistakes of others can also tempt us to become proud because we do not commit them. Other people's mistakes, on the other hand, can make us afraid because we are somehow involved if the other person makes mistakes, e.g. driving a car, or at least our reputation would be at risk.

Couldn't this open up a new perspective, a re-evaluation of the mistakes of others as an important personal learning process for myself? For, first of all, every person is a chance and opportunity for me personally to get to know myself better.

Jesus points this out to us: "But why do you see the splinter in your brother's eye and not notice the plank in your own eye? Or how can you say to thy brother, Wait, and I will pick the splinter out of your eye? But in fact, there is a plank in your eye." Matt.7:3,4.

The helpful question is: Why does this particular fault upset me so much? Why can't I accept the other in this or that?

Does it perhaps have something to do with the fact that I cannot accept this same thing in myself?

If I start with the other person's splinter, my own planks and blind spots are revealed and I can get to know myself anew and the faults of the other person lose their threat.

And then: Instead of threat, see potential.

The uniqueness of the other person also includes his or her dark sides, that which makes it difficult for me to accept him or her. Let us ask God to help us to discover these weaknesses and faults of the other as potentials for positive developments!

Let us pray that hope will arise and remain in us that God will make something fruitful out of these faults and shortcomings in his time.

4. The longing antenna of the heart

I am convinced of this: every human being has a longing for love and redemption in the depth of his heart, no matter how he behaves towards me.

"For love", that is clear to all of us. "Redemption" means two things: first of all, to be able to love again, and then to receive both, to be loved and to be able to love, at no cost, undeserved (which means grace), that is, not to have to do anything for it and not to run the risk of failing.

Outwardly, we all look different, from our height to the smallest piece of clothing.

(The ego-destructive vice of "comparing oneself with others in order to devalue or enhance oneself" must be resolutely opposed).


But inside, in our hearts, everyone has this same longing.

Inside, we are all much more alike and thus much closer than we think, with this longing.

The French philosopher Emmanuel Lévinas formulates this cry of the heart thus: >You shall not kill me<, and >You shall not leave me alone as I die<.

This hidden cry or thirst and hunger of the heart silences the differences between us. All the built-up self-presentations collapse: Both of us need grace and long for it.

It is something precious to experience a oneness with the other in this longing.



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

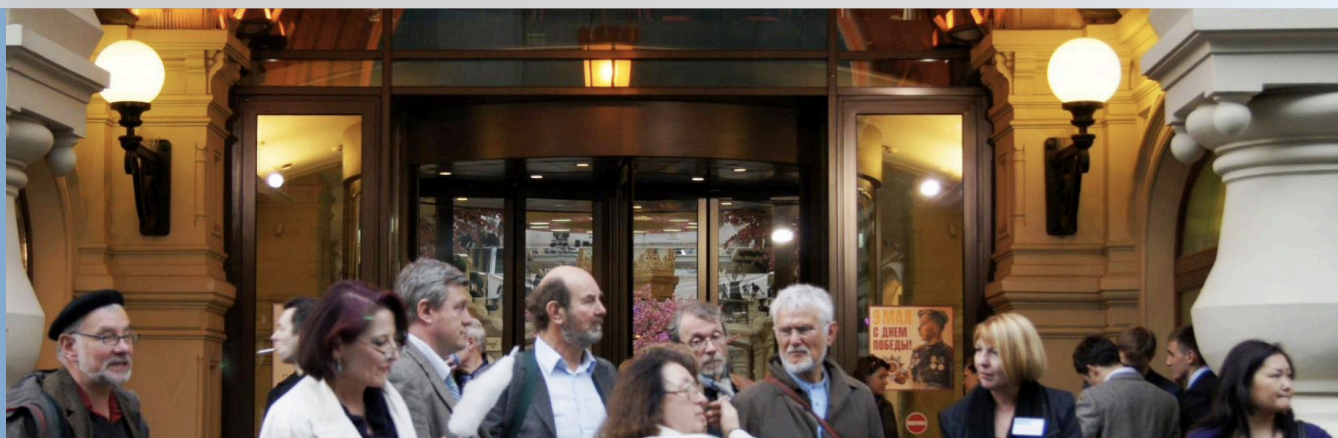
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seven statements of emcapp



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.**